

The NERA
 Researcher is a
 quarterly
 newsletter for
 members of the
 Northeastern
 Educational
 Research
 Association

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The NERA Researcher

Volume 48, Issue 1

March 2010

The President's Message



Katharyn Nottis

Working Together to Answer the Tough Questions

When I first envisioned the theme of the 2010 conference, *Building Research Partnerships*, my prior knowledge led me to view it as multi-disciplinary or mixed methods research conducted by colleagues at the same or multiple colleges and universities. That has been my academic experience. Also, given the role NERA has played in my professional development, I viewed the theme as encompassing the collaborative efforts of senior researchers and their graduate students. But, as I began to talk with others, it became clear that my view was too limited and

would close out important, potential research associates. There are others involved with and interested in education that could be a part of research partnerships. Peterson (1998) listed some of these "others" who also care about education, "...school boards, principals' associations, subject matter organizations, teachers' unions, PTOs, the NCAA, governors' associations, the chief state school officers" (p. 9). I would also add classroom teachers, deans of schools of education, members of advocacy groups, parents, and state and federal educational policy makers. Each of these groups and the individuals within them come with a unique perspective, a perspective that could lead to new research questions and different ways of finding the answers to those questions. Partnerships between academic researchers and representatives from governmental, parent, or advocacy groups could lead to a fuller understanding of learning and assessment.

The challenges we face in education today cannot be met by one group (Peterson, 1998), nor one research perspective or approach. Nowhere was this more apparent to me than in a mixed method study I did with a colleague in my department. Although we are both in the education department at my institution, we come from two different disciplines within education: educational psychology and educational administration. The research we did (Hoffman & Nottis, 2008) examined the motivation strategies used by a school district with young adolescents prior to their taking a state-mandated, "high stakes" test. The quantitative part of the research had a list of strategies that were employed and students were asked to rank how much each had influenced their performance on the test. The qualitative portion of the study was a letter to the principal where students described the factors that were most influential in helping them put forth their best efforts. Although the quantitative data showed which strategies students felt were most significant, it was in the letters to the principal that unanticipated responses were seen. Most notable was an undercurrent of resentment expressed primarily by a group of gifted and talented boys. The following response came from one young man in this group who thought that the principal had mandated the "high stakes" test in combination with the politicians:

"It's a useless and worthless test and the only good purpose, I think ...would be to start a fire, to light up other tests, in order to incinerate them and lift them from the face of the Earth in a gigantic bonfire" (p. 218).

This resentment would not have been detected had only the survey been used. The

(Continued on page 3)

Member News

Dr. Williams Emeka Obiozor from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania recently published a novel which chronicles a couple's relationship amidst the terrible civil war (due to the struggle for diamonds) that affected the people of Sierra Leone - West Africa. The book, *Back to Her Refuge*, is available at http://www.amazon.com/Back-Her-Refuge-author-WHITE/dp/1440144281/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1255900742&sr=8-1-spell

Katharyn Nottis, President of NERA, is one of three Bucknell University professors being recognized by the Institution of Chemical Engineers with the Hutchison Medal for research described in a paper published in *Education for Chemical Engineers* in July, 2009. Michael Prince and Margot Vigeant, chemical engineers, and Katharyn Nottis, an educational psychologist, collaborated on the research for, "A preliminary study on the effectiveness of inquiry-based activities for addressing misconceptions of undergraduate engineering students." This research was funded by a four-year, \$364,000 grant from the National Science Foundation in 2007. The medal will be presented in May, 2010, at the annual meeting of the Institution of Chemical Engineers in London.

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The President's Message*(Continued from page 1)*

letters to the principal revealed a more complex motivational structure. Researchers need to find out what is happening in addition to the final score and content proficiency labels when students take "high stakes" tests. Students' attitudes towards learning and testing also need to be examined. I am reminded here of my youngest son, who fortunately was part of the norming year of our state tests. He, I learned after I received the test report, put down "c" for every answer. "Why?" I asked him. "I wanted to go to lunch," he replied, in a nonchalant manner. "What's the big deal?"

Research partnerships with others who care about education may uncover issues related to and impacting learning and assessment, issues we might not have considered without their voices. Sharing the results of our research with others who care about education has the potential to influence educational policies. But, if our research is to make a difference then we have to be assertive. As Peterson warned, "We cannot sit quietly in our offices waiting for someone to call and ask our opinions" (p. 9).

The theme of the 2010 conference emphasizes the need for multiple perspectives to work collaboratively on research to try and answer the very difficult educational questions facing us today. Researchers from different content and research backgrounds, varied disciplines, and constituencies working together can give a fuller picture. "...No one can do it alone...It depends on all of us learning, talking, and working together" (Peterson, 1998, p. 10). Although over ten years has passed since these words were written, they are still relevant today and resonate with the theme of our next conference. There is a need for all of us to work together to really make a difference, to ask the right questions, and then to share our findings with the broader community. I challenge you to consider the following question: What collaborative opportunities, and what research partnerships, are waiting for you?

References

- Hoffman, L. M., & Nottis, K. E. K. (2008). Middle school students' perceptions of effective motivation and preparation factors for high-stakes tests. *NASSP Bulletin*, 92(3), 209-223.
- Peterson, P. L. (1998). Why do educational research? Rethinking our roles and identities, our texts and contexts. *Educational Researcher*, 27(3), 4-10.

Message from the Editors

Hello NERA Members! We hope that you enjoy this issue of the *NERA Researcher*. It is filled with a preview of our 41st annual conference. The program co-chairs are hard at work putting together a wonderful program with the theme *Building Research Partnerships*. We hope that you will submit one or more proposals and encourage your students and colleagues to do so as well.

This issue also includes a description of the NERA mentoring program, developed by member Tom Levine and now beginning its third year. The article highlights the experiences of one mentor and one mentee, both of

whom found great value in this new program. Also, make sure to read Ramona Santa Maria and Kristen Huff's article summarizing the very popular session from the 2009 conference, *Past Presidents Share Strategies for Writing and Dissemination: Publishing is not Rocket Science - You CAN do it!*

We would like to take this opportunity to inform you of an impending change in the editorship of the *Researcher* beginning with the September 2010 issue. Jennifer has recently been elected to the NERA Board of Directors, and in order to allow her to focus on her new role, a new co-editor has been appointed for the remainder of Jennifer's term. We are happy to announce that Christine Harmes will serve as co-editor of the *Researcher* along with Kevin. On a personal note,

I have enjoyed working with Kevin on the *Researcher* and greatly value the opportunity it provided to get more involved with NERA and its dedicated members.

As always, we are here to listen to your comments about the *Researcher* and we are open to all ideas and suggestions, so please keep them coming.

Best wishes,
Jennifer and Kevin

Jennifer Kobrin (2007-2010)
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Kevin Meara (2007-2010)
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Northeastern Educational Research Association 41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010

Conference Theme: Building Research Partnerships

Comments and ratings from the 2009 conference evaluation forms indicated that last year's conference was exceptionally well received. Attendees found both the substance and logistics to be outstanding. This is particularly impressive based on a record number of attendees since the '70s. Many commented on the exceptional work of our program co-chairs, Maureen Ewing, Liz Stone, and Pete Swerdzewski – particularly making everyone feel welcome and putting together such a wonderful program.

This year's conference theme is "Building Research Partnerships". This year's program committee (Dolores Burton, Yanhui Pang, Thanos Patelis and Barbara Wert) under the leadership of our president, Katharyn Nottis, is organizing a number of invited sessions and professional development opportunities to highlight the collaborations, partnerships, and inter-disciplinary nature of current educational research. NERA has developed a reputation for bringing exceptional scholarship together from across the region and beyond into an intimate, collegial setting for a vibrant exchange of research findings and ideas. To participate in the conference as a presenter, please see the proposal submission form and frequently asked questions (FAQ) in this issue and on the NERA website (<http://www.nera-education.org>).

Conference Venue. The conference will return to the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill for the fourth year, taking place Wednesday, October 20 through Friday, October 22, 2010. Membership and conference registration forms will become active on the NERA website in June. Check out the hotel web site (<http://www.marriott.com/bdlrh>) for more information about the venue.

Keynote Speaker. We are so excited to have Dr. Burke Johnson, Professor at the University of South Alabama, as Keynote Speaker. Dr. Johnson is the author with Larry Christensen of *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches*. The title of his keynote address will be: *Toward an Inclusive and Integrative Education Science: Insights from Mixed Methods Research*.

Invited Panels. Panels with invited experts will be offered on topics such as surviving tenure and the process of collaboration. These experts will share their successful experiences in each area.

Mentoring. Thanks to the continued leadership of Tom Levine, NERA will offer the formal mentoring experience to graduate students this year, as well.

Social Events. NERA has become an innovator in social interaction at professional conferences with lively, unique acts and socials. These events will continue to provide opportunities for attendees to meet, discuss and enjoy the social interaction and networking.

Workshops. There will be several workshops offered both immediately before the conference on Wednesday, October 20, 2010 and during the conference. These workshops are (a) Collaboration, (b) *NVivo 8* Fundamentals, (c) Mixed Methods Design, (d) Structural Equation Modeling, and (e) Survey Design. These are high quality workshops offered by experts in each area. The workshop on Mixed Methods Design will be given by our keynote speaker, Dr. Burke Johnson.

We look forward to seeing you at NERA 2010!

**Northeastern Educational Research Association
41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010**

Call for Proposals

Conference Theme: Building Research Partnerships

We invite your proposal for papers and posters reflecting a variety of topics and approaches related to the study of education. Papers and posters need not be about the conference theme.

Please follow all instructions as outlined here and in the F.A.Q. on the next pages

- All submissions must be submitted electronically.
- Proposals are due to the Program Co-Chairs by **June 1, 2010**.
- For all submissions e-mail three separate Word Document attachments as described below in a single e-mail with the subject line **2010 Proposal** to the 2010 Program Co-Chairs at **neramembers@gmail.com**.

Individual Paper and Poster proposals will submit 3 separate files:

- The NERA 2010 Proposal Cover Sheet, available at <http://www.nera-education.org>
- A 120-word abstract
- A 1000-word paper summary with title only (i.e., no authors listed)

Theme-based Session and Working Group Discussion proposals will submit 3 separate files:

- The NERA 2010 Proposal Cover Sheet, available at <http://www.nera-education.org>
- A 120-word abstract (one abstract for the entire session)
- A 1000-word session proposal summary with title only (i.e., no authors listed)

- Do not submit complete papers as proposals (full papers will not be accepted as proposals).
 - Please limit proposals to 1000 words.
 - Abstracts are limited to 120 words. Include the paper title and the names and affiliations of all authors in the abstract, but note that this information is not part of the 120-word limit for the abstract.
 - Titles are limited to 15 words.
- Do not complete the shaded areas of the Proposal Cover Sheet.

Contact the Co-Chairs via e-mail should you have any questions.

Dolores Burton (New York Institute of Technology)

Angela Pang (Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania)

Thanos Patelis (The College Board)

neramembers@gmail.com

Northeastern Educational Research Association 41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010

Paper and Session Proposal F.A.Q.

Conference Theme: Building Research Partnerships

When are completed proposals due, and when will I hear about acceptance?

Proposals may be submitted by e-mail from April 1st, 2010 to **June 1, 2010**. Peer review panels will review submissions between June 15, 2010 and July 1, 2010. Authors will be notified by August 1, 2010. Authors will need to confirm they will present at the conference by August 10, 2010 by emailing their confirmation to the e-mail address in their acceptance email.

The program acceptance notifications will be e-mailed in July, 2010. Please be sure your summer contact information is kept up to date by e-mailing any changes in your summer contact information to neramembers@gmail.com, or you will not receive notification. The first author is responsible for sharing all information with their co-author(s).

What kind of session works best for me?

There are four types of sessions at NERA:

Individual Paper Presentations provide author(s) the opportunity to present a condensed version of a completed study. The research presented may focus on a problem from an empirical or theoretical perspective. Qualitative and quantitative designs are both welcomed. Presentations typically last 10-12 minutes for each paper and typically 4 or 5 papers are grouped into a single session. A discussion will follow the presentation of all of the papers within a session. The Program Co-Chairs group individual papers into sessions; Program Co-Chairs also assign a paper session Chair to facilitate the session and a Discussant to offer brief comments and lead discussion after paper presentations. (Feel free to contact us separately if you are interested in serving as Chair or Discussant at a paper session.)

Theme-Based Paper Sessions/Symposia feature multiple paper presentations organized around a common theme. *Theme-Based Paper Sessions/Symposia* are similar to the paper sessions, but are organized by a single participant for a group of presenters. Sessions run for the same amount of time as multi-presenter individual paper sessions. Chair and Discussant are provided by the group proposing the session.

Working Group Sessions allow the same group of individuals to meet once or twice over the course of the conference for the purpose of discussing in-depth a common emerging research theme. Similar to the *Symposium* sessions, *Working Group* sessions are organized by a single individual or small group and require a proposal to be accepted for inclusion on the conference program. The goal of this session format is to establish or support collaborative ongoing research and/or publication efforts of participants. Often, *Working Groups* will continue to collaborate after the conference. Session Chairs (i.e., moderators) are provided by the group proposing the session.

**Northeastern Educational Research Association
41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010**

Paper and Session Proposal F.A.Q.

Conference Theme: Building Research Partnerships

Poster Sessions enable authors to present research in a visual format and allow for informal, individualized discussion and feedback about the research with colleagues. This is the preferred format to use for in-progress research. As with individual paper presentations, each poster will have a Discussant. All posters must be free-standing (no bulletin-boards are provided); further details on the poster session will be provided to presenters whose posters are accepted for the NERA 2010 conference.

What information will be required when I submit my proposal?

Each submission must include three electronic files attached to a **single e-mail** titled "2010 Proposal" and sent to neramembers@gmail.com

Electronic files to attach:

1. **NERA 2010 Proposal Cover Sheet:** Complete this form in full. The cover sheet is available on the NERA web page (<http://www.nera-education.org>).
2. **Abstract:** Each abstract should include the statement of the problem, the research questions addressed, the methods used, a brief summary of the results, and educational implications. Abstracts for *Theme-Based Sessions or Working Group* discussions should include the unifying theme of the session, and the names and affiliations of each of the participants. The abstract length is limited to 120 words.
3. **Proposal Summary:** The proposal summary should **not** include the name or affiliation of any presenter(s), author(s), or organizer(s), as the summary will be circulated for blind review. In general, the summary should include the purpose of the study, the theoretical framework that supports the rationale for the study, methodology, results, conclusions, educational implications, and any special features of the session (e.g., technology used, expected audience participation, teacher-researchers involved). The proposal summary should not exceed 1,000 words. **NOTE:** Proposals that cite other papers, publications, manuscripts, etc. but do **not** include a reference list will **not** be accepted. In addition:
 - Summaries for proposed *Theme-Based Sessions/Symposia and Working Group Sessions* must address: (1) Objectives of the session, (2) Overview of the presentations, (3) Scholarly or scientific significance, and (4) Structure of the session.
 - Summaries for proposed *Theme-Based Sessions/Symposia* should include a description of the unifying topic and brief summaries of the papers involved.
 - Summaries of proposed *Working Group Sessions* should include the expected contribution of each participant, expected outcomes of the working group (e.g., further research, publication), and a reference list to prepare participants for discussion

Northeastern Educational Research Association 41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010

Paper and Session Proposal F.A.Q.

Conference Theme: Building Research Partnerships

- For each paper/presentation submitted as part of a *Theme-Based Session/Symposium*, the summary will address the basic elements of a research or scholarly paper/presentation: (1) Objectives or purpose; (2) Perspective(s) or theoretical framework; (3) Methods, techniques, or modes of inquiry; (4) Data sources, evidence, objects or materials; (5) Results and/or substantiated conclusions or warrants for arguments/point of view, and (6) Scientific or scholarly significance of the study or work.
- *Theme-Based Sessions/Symposia* submissions need to include a chair and, if applicable, a discussant, with appropriate expertise. Chairs and discussants need to have substantive background and expertise appropriate to the session and the knowledge and skill to guide the session.
- Summaries of proposed *Posters* should include a description of the planned display.

How will proposals be submitted?

All proposals must be submitted electronically via e-mail (with the required attachments) to the Program Co-Chairs at: neramembers@gmail.com

What are “subject descriptors”?

The Program Co-Chairs aim to have a diverse program and to minimize scheduling conflicts. To aid in our decisions and grouping of papers, please select up to three descriptors that best describe your proposal from the list provided below.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Assessment of Students with Exceptionalities | 12. Educational Policy & Administration |
| 2. Assessment of English Language Learners | 13. Educational and Assessment Issues Related to Accountability (e.g., NCLB/Response to Intervention |
| 3. Classroom Research | 14. Educational Statistics |
| 4. Computers & Technology in Education | 15. History & Philosophy |
| 5. Curriculum Studies/Alignment | 16. Human Development & Counseling |
| 6. Diversity Issues | 17. Humanities, Social Sciences, & Fine Arts |
| 7. Early Childhood Education | 18. International Education/Comparative Studies |
| 8. Early Intervention | 19. Inclusion |
| 9. Economics of Education | 20. Learning & Instruction |
| 10. Education in the Professions | 21. Legal Issues in Education |
| 11. Educational Measurement & Psychometrics | |

**Northeastern Educational Research Association
41st Annual Conference, October 20-22, 2010**

Paper and Session Proposal F.A.Q.

Conference Theme: Building Research Partnerships

What are “subject descriptors” cont.?

- | | |
|---|--|
| 22. Literature & Language Arts | 29. School Evaluation & Program Development |
| 23. Mathematics & Science Education | 30. School Accountability, Improvement, & Reform |
| 24. Multicultural Issues | 31. School Organization & Leadership |
| 25. Post-Secondary Education | 32. Special Education |
| 26. Program Evaluation | 33. Student Populations Research |
| 27. Qualitative Research Methods | 34. Teaching & Teacher Education |
| 28. Quantitative Methods and Statistical Theory | |

What is the Audio Visual (AV) and Room Set Up?

All rooms are set up theater style and contain a projection screen. AV equipment is the responsibility of the presenter.

How do I submit to the NERA 2010 Conference Proceedings?

All papers presented at the NERA 2010 conference may be submitted for inclusion in the Proceedings. For information on how to submit your paper and further details about the Proceedings, please see the NERA website at <http://www.nera-education.org>.

What are the registration fees?

The conference registration fee is \$65.00. This registration fee is waived for graduate students — membership dues, however, are not waived. All presenters must also be members of NERA. The membership fee is \$40 for professional members, \$15 for retired members, and \$15 for full-time students. See the NERA website, <http://www.nera-education.org/membership.php> for membership forms.

What is the conference venue?

The conference hotel is the Marriott Rocky Hill, Rocky Hill Connecticut. Hotel information will be available on the NERA website <http://www.nera-education.org/>.

Questions about submitting proposals?

Contact the 2010 NERA Conference team, Dolores Burton, Angela Pang, and Thanos Patelis, via e-mail at neramembers@gmail.com

NERA's Award Committees

(by April L. Zenisky, Member of the Board of Directors and Board Liaison to the Awards Committees)

Among the activities that go on during NERA's annual conference in October are announcements regarding awards that are given to NERA members. These awards include the Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award, the Teacher-as-Researcher Award, the Thomas F. Donlon Award for Distinguished Mentoring, and the Leo D. Doherty Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service to NERA. The recipients of these awards are selected by committees of NERA members either in the months leading up to NERA's annual meeting (Donlon, Doherty, and Teacher-as-Researcher) or in the months just after the conference (Distinguished Paper). Below is a brief overview of NERA's four awards. For more information, see the NERA website (www.nera-education.org) and watch for information in the June issue of the *Researcher*.

The Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award Committee

The Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award is named for longtime NERA member Lorne H. Woollatt, and is given annually to honor the best paper presented at NERA's annual conference as decided by the members of the Woollatt Committee, who read the papers and determine the best paper based on the guidelines and selection criteria provided.

* Thanks to immediate past Chair Craig Wells and also former committee member Jennifer Randall, for their service to NERA as part of the Woollatt Committee.

The Teacher-as-Researcher Award Committee

The Teacher-as-Researcher (TAR) Award is presented by NERA and honors a teacher or a team that includes a teacher serving as a principal investigator, co-investigator, or collaborator who has conducted a classroom research project or applied research findings to inform his or her own teaching.

2010 Incoming Chair: Susan Eichenholtz

* Thanks to immediate past Chair Dolores Burton, for her considerable commitment to this award over the past several years.

Thomas F. Donlon Award for Distinguished Mentoring Committee

The Thomas F. Donlon Award for Distinguished Mentoring was established in recognition of Tom Donlon's long and valued contributions to NERA, particularly as a mentor to so many colleagues, and is presented to recognize a member of NERA who has shown distinction as a mentor.

2010 Incoming Chair: Rochelle Kaplan

* Thanks to immediate past Chair Samantha Feinman for her service on this committee.

Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award Committee

The Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award is given by NERA to someone who exemplifies characteristics of Leo Doherty including professional-managerial leadership, ethics, humanity, and professional associations.

* Thanks to immediate past Chair Diane Liebert for her work on the Doherty Award Committee.

NERA's award committees clearly fulfill an important role in what NERA does, and the members of these committees do a terrific job in reviewing submissions and carrying out deliberations each year to determine the recipients of these awards. For NERA members who are interested in getting involved in the organization, these award committees offer a great opportunity to work with other NERA members and be a part of honoring deserving colleagues.

Call for Nominations for the 2010 Recipient of the Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award

Annually, one of the NERA Board of Director's major delights is to award the Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service. This is given to a member of long standing who has generously given of self to NERA, to advance its mission and to enable it to thrive. As you will read below, the original statement which was a preface to the nomination statement about the Award's first recipient, Lorne Woollatt, highlights the intention of the award.

In 1981, just prior to our annual convocation, NERA lost a long-time member and supporter, Leo Doherty. He was one of the earlier members of ERANYS, was instrumental in its rejuvenation and growth, and was a guiding and steadying hand behind its expansion to NERA as the 300-member regional association it is today.

In addition to his association with NERA, Leo exhibited professional managerial leadership in his relationships with his staff and superiors. He was well-informed, provoked growth in his staff and associates, promoted qualified personnel, provided service to others needing his expertise, and translated the policy of his superiors into operations and products. Leo was an ethical person. He personally demonstrated how staff should work honestly; he dealt fairly and equitably with his contacts; and he credits those who implemented activities with the achievement results. He was also humane. He encouraged people to commit themselves to goals that were personally meaningful to them, and he defended the individual's right to form appropriate relationships.

In his memory, NERA's Board of Directors, in response to members' requests, voted unanimously to institute the Leo D. Doherty Memorial Presentation.

The 2010 NERA Board and the Awards Committee (and recipients of the Doherty Award) encourage creative thinking in seeking the 2010 Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award recipient. So start thinking about someone you know in NERA who exemplifies the qualities of Leo Doherty and watch for more information in the June *Researcher* and on the NERA website (www.nera-education.org). If you have any questions in the meantime, please send them to April L. Zenisky, Director and Board Liaison to the Awards Committees at azenisky@educ.umass.edu.

Call for Nominations

The NERA Executive Committee is seeking nominations for the following open elected positions:



NERA President (3-year term as President-elect, President, Past-president)

NERA Board Member (3-year term)

NERA Board Member (3-year term)

Nominations should be sent by March 31st, 2010 to: Dr. Kristen Huff, NERA Past-President (khuff@collegeboard.org).

The College Board

Connecting Students to College Success

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 5,200 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves seven million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,500 colleges through major programs and services in college admissions, guidance, assessment, financial aid, enrollment, and teaching and learning. Among its best-known programs are the SAT[®], the PSAT/NMSQT[®], and the Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP[®]). The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities, and concerns.

Explore information about our membership, history, governance, trustees, and the latest College Board news and reports at <http://www.collegeboard.com/about/index.html>.



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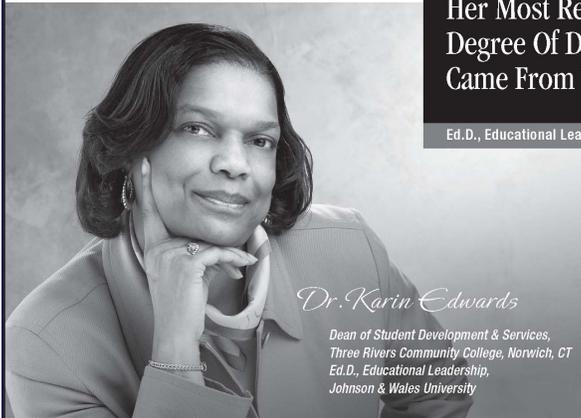
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Call for Nominations Teacher-as-Researcher Award for the 41st Annual NERA Conference

The Teacher-as-Researcher Award, established by NERA in 1993 to promote educational research and to encourage the development of research among junior researchers, focuses on recognizing teachers for outstanding efforts to conduct action research in their classrooms and to use the outcomes to improve teaching and learning. Action research can be defined as “a systematic and orderly way for teachers to observe their practice or to explore a problem and a possible course of action. Action research is also a type of inquiry that is preplanned, organized, and can be shared with others” (Johnson, 2009, p.1).

The Teacher-As-Researcher Award is one way NERA can help practicing teachers to become aware of and value the research elements of their daily work and to encourage teachers to assess the impact of teaching strategies and procedures, reflect on the outcomes, and change and reform practice based on the results of their study. Eleven practicing teachers have been recognized for their outstanding contributions and have received the award since its inception.

Any NERA member can contribute to the reform of professional practice by seeking out and recommending a teacher whose work is familiar to you and who you believe is worthy to receive the NERA 2010 Teacher-as-Researcher Award.

Please disseminate the informational flyer and application for the award to colleagues in your institutions and to relevant professional organizations. By disseminating the award information we hope to maximize the number of teachers we can reach and recognize for participating in the research process in their classroom. The runners up to the winner of the award will be invited to present their research at a regularly scheduled paper session or poster session.

If you have any questions about the award please contact:

Dr. Susan Eichenholtz, Chairperson
Adelphi University
Ruth S. Ammon School of Education
130 Harvey Hall South Street
Garden City, New York 11530
Email: eichenho@adelphi.edu
Phone: 516 877-4393 Fax: 516 877-4097

For additional application information please go to the NERA website at:

www.nera-education.org/conference/awardnominations.php

Call for NERA Programs

We are in need of NERA Programs from previous years. Once received, we will scan and either post on our website or keep an electronic archive. We need the following years: 2002, 2001, 1999, 1995, 1994, 1992, 1991, and 1983 through 1969. If you're willing to part with the programs, please send them to Thanos Patelis, The College Board, 45 Columbus Avenue, New York, NY 10023. Please put your name on them and we'll return them if you like. Thank you!!

**NORTHEASTERN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
TEACHER-AS-RESEARCHER AWARD APPLICATION
41st ANNUAL CONFERENCE, October 20-22, 2010
Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill in Rocky Hill, Connecticut**

Name of Applicant: _____
(Please list information on all individuals conducting study if nominee is part of a team)

Affiliation of Applicant: _____

Position of Applicant: _____

Mailing Address of Applicant: _____
(after June 14, 2010)

Phone: (work) _____ (home) _____

E-mail: _____ FAX: _____

Attach the following information using the guidelines provided:

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF STUDY

STUDY ABSTRACT: (Please summarize the research project in **no more than 250 words** including its purpose, procedure, and outcomes)

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY: (maximum of 1,000 words)

- Rationale for the study, innovation, and/or intervention from the literature.
- Description of project participants, site and procedures.
- Narrative description of the study outcomes including subsequent changes in practice that occurred or will occur as a result of the project.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY TO EDUCATORS: (Describe how the results contribute to improved educational practice or professional knowledge of educators — **maximum 100 words**).

ACCOMPANYING MATERIALS TO SUPPORT APPLICATION (may include samples of students' work, pertinent background material, and/or references).

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Nominating Person: _____ Date: _____

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Affiliation and Position of Nominating Person: (Please Print)

Send three copies of the application coversheet and submission manuscript to: Dr. Susan Eichenholtz, Adelphi University, Ruth S. Ammon School of Education, 130 Harvey Hall, South Street, Garden City, New York 11530 or by e-mail in a Word document attachment to: eichenho@adelphi.edu. All proposals must be postmarked or e-mailed by 5:00 p.m. on June 14, 2010.



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RECIPIENT OF THE 2009 LORNE H. WOOLLATT DISTINGUISHED PAPER AWARD

Congratulations to **Ms. Catherine Manly** and **Dr. Ryan Wells** of the University of Massachusetts Amherst for winning the 2009 Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award for their paper entitled "Financial Planning for College: What Parents Do To Prepare."

The Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award is presented annually in recognition of the paper deemed exemplary by the Award Committee. The award is named in honor of Lorne H. Woollatt, a distinguished New York State educator and active member of NERA.

Ms. Manly is currently pursuing her doctoral studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in higher education policy and leadership. Her research interests involve the transition from PK-12 to college, the increased relevance of postsecondary education to all citizens, and the role of online learning in reshaping the education landscape. Her professional experience has revolved around the intersection of technology, teaching, and learning in liberal arts, community college, and online settings. Most recently, she directed the Educational Technology and Distance Learning Department at Manchester Community College in Connecticut. She received her MBA in Technology Management from the University of Phoenix Online in 2000, and her BA from Amherst College in 1994, in addition to being a 2004 alumnae of the EDUCAUSE/CLIR Frye Leadership Institute. The award-winning paper evolved from research begun in a Finance of Higher Education class she took with Dr. Ryan Wells.

The Woollatt Distinguished Paper at AERA

For our members going to AERA this year, please note that Catherine will present her Woollatt Distinguished Paper at the following session:

State and Regional Educational Research Associations (SRERA)
Distinguished Paper Session III
Monday, May 3, 2010
8:15- 10:15 am

The paper is titled, *Financial Planning for College: What Parents Do to Prepare*, by Catherine A. Manly & Ryan S. Wells, University of Massachusetts.

The State and Regional Educational Research Associations (SRERA) Business Meeting will be on Saturday May 1, 2010 from 6:15-7:45 p.m.

Please check the AERA program for the location for these two sessions.

NERA Membership Report

Even though the conference is over, we are still getting new members! Since the conference we have received 5 new professional member and one new retired member.

| | Professional | Retired | Graduate Students |
|----------------------|--------------|---------|----------------------|
| Members | 228 | 7 | 133 |
| Conference Attendees | 215 | 6 | 131 |

Why Should Emerging and Senior Scholars Participate in the NERA Mentoring Program?

By Tom Levine, University of Connecticut

NERA supports educational researchers and has a history of being a particularly supportive place for graduate students. Continuing this tradition, our 2010 conference, for the third consecutive year, will feature formal arrangements for mentoring. We'll match graduate students with experienced researchers chosen on the basis of their relevant expertise and mentoring skill. Before the 2010 conference, mentees will send up to twenty pages of research-in-progress to their mentors; mentees will then have an individual 30-minute meeting with their mentor during the conference. We'll provide details regarding how you can request a mentor in the June issue of the *NERA Researcher*. Emerging and senior scholars who would consider participating—as mentees and mentors respectively—can learn about the experience of one mentee and one mentor shared below.

The NERA 2009 Mentoring Experience

By Darshanand Ramdass, Ph.D., The Graduate Center, CUNY

I have been very fortunate to have an outstanding mentor during my graduate studies. As a postdoctoral fellow, I am in the process of improving my research and writing skills as well as developing new interests in other areas. However, when NERA 2009 offered the opportunity to sit with a mentor, I was excited and applied. My efforts were rewarded with half an hour of quality time with a very affable and scholarly mentor. We discussed a manuscript in progress for a journal. Although unknown to each other, we were able to connect from the very moment of the meeting. Time went by quite fast. I learned another perspective on statistical analysis; moreover, I received copious written feedback on my paper, which I will use to improve the manuscript.

My follow-up experience was very fruitful as well. I was able to get notes on a subject area of interest. I saw this NERA opportunity as networking with established scholars in the field. As a newly minted Ph.D. I seek opportunities to expand my network and broaden my horizon. I feel that a researcher should have a broad base of knowledge and multiple interests in order to navigate the world of academia with some amount of success. I would encourage graduate students to seek the opportunity to sit with a mentor and discuss their work. The experience will be a rewarding one. To start this process, one has to banish fear from the mind. Do not be afraid of getting feedback on your work. If you cannot overcome this fear, the world of academia is not for you.

Investing in the Future: The NERA Mentoring Program

By Scott W. Brown, Ph.D., University of Connecticut

Last year, I was asked to serve as a mentor during the 2009 NERA conference. I enjoy working with students and early career professionals, so I said yes. I was told I had been matched with three young professionals and I looked forward to reading a draft by each and then meeting them at the conference.

As a veteran with 25+ years of experience in the field of educational psychology, I believe it is my responsibility to assist the next generation of professionals and leaders in our field. But I mentor for more reasons than responsibility; I have a selfish motive, in that I enjoy these types of interactions. I have found graduate students and early career professionals to be motivated, excited and very bright. Who wouldn't want to sit and talk with someone like that for a half an hour or so? I know I was looking forward to it, and I was not disappointed.

I had the opportunity to talk with people about their research, goals and aspirations. My first meeting was with someone who had conducted a very interesting study about high school students and the impact of a program on their grades and behaviors. My mentee had designed a great project and collected

data, and he only needed some support and encouragement that this was a very good project and that he should submit it for presentation and possible publication. You may be seeing his work at NERA next year, or read about it in a journal.

My second meeting was with another graduate student working on her dissertation proposal. The document I reviewed was well written and extremely well referenced. It was on a topic I was familiar with and therefore I enjoyed reading the proposal. We spent most of our meeting time discussing the research questions, their alignment with the methods and procedures, and their link to the research variables. We talked about possible analyses and plans to deal with potential challenges with the data. I believe this discussion was helpful for her, and it was interesting for me. I know her research will make an important impact on the field of learning technology.

My third mentee and I were not able to meet. He and I had been emailing before the conference and I suggested he should stay home and be with his wife who was expecting their first child the week of NERA. That may have been my most important advice for a mentee that week, or any week. As someone whose wife gave birth to twins while I was in graduate school, I know what an important and life changing event the birth of your child is. He made the right decision and stayed home. So he and I have emailed and I have sent him some suggestions on his work.

In summary, I was fortunate to be selected to serve as a mentor for three mentees. The two people I did meet with, I saw throughout the NERA conference, at sessions and informally. I cannot comment on what they got out of our meetings but I can say I enjoyed them immensely and strongly encourage senior members of NERA to accept the invitation if someone from NERA invites you to mentor an emerging scholar in your area. You will find it rewarding and enjoyable as you help to prepare the next generation of researchers, practitioners, and leaders: It is an investment in our future!

Call for Nominations for the Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring

This award was created to recognize Tom Donlon's long and valued contributions to NERA, particularly as a mentor to so many colleagues. Presented for the first time in 2000, the award is given to someone identified for distinguished mentoring. The practice of mentoring in education has been going on for centuries, and so many scholars at Educational Testing Service, at Thomas Edison State College, in NERA, and in countless professions are devoted to Tom for the guidance he provided them. Most of us can name a person who helped us along and was more than just a friend or a colleague. That person guided you, helped you find the right path, pointed you in the right direction and, perhaps, brought you to NERA for your first time after suggesting that you might be ready for your first conference presentation.

Nominees must be members of NERA and may be nominated by any member (or members) of NERA to whom they served as a mentor. If you would like to see a member of NERA who was your mentor be recognized for his/her contributions, nominations must be accompanied by documentation indicating the ways in which the nominee distinguished him/herself as a mentor. The award is presented at the annual NERA conference.

Nominations should be sent by August 1st, 2010 to Rochelle Kaplan: kaplanr@wpunj.edu.

The Graduate Lounge

Allie Brown, James Madison University

The Graduate Student Issues Committee (GSIC) would like to welcome two new members: Katrina Crofts from the University of Massachusetts and Daniel Jurich from James Madison University!



Katrina Crofts

(kcrofts@educ.umass.edu) is in her first year of the Research and Evaluation Methods Program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her research interests include test validity and statistics. She is also very interested in

assessment of students with learning disabilities and of students with English as a second language.



Daniel Jurich

(jurichdp@jmu.edu) is in his first year of the Quantitative Psychology Masters program at James Madison University. His research interests include practical applications of item response theory, test equating procedures specifically dealing with the effects of cheaters, and tech-

niques for handling missing data. He is also interested in statistical programming and comparing the effectiveness of currently available software programs.

Graduate Student Feedback about NERA '09 Conference Events Sponsored by GSIC

As you might remember, the GSIC sent out an online survey to graduate students asking about their experiences during the NERA conference, especially with regard to the graduate student events. We got responses from nine students. Here are some highlights of the responses:

- All of the respondents indicated that the graduate student social was helpful in meeting other graduate students, but some students said that the actual setup of the event could be improved. Instead of having a table for everyone to sit down at, they suggested that there just be an appetizer table (no chairs) and space for students to mingle.
- While most of the respondents reported being aware of the various GSIC events, less than half were aware of the reserved graduate student seating at Thursday's lunch. In addition, three of the nine respondents did not have meals at the Marriot.
- The panel presentation on "Professional Perspectives on the Future of Educational Research" and the in-conference session on Grant Writing were favorably rated in terms of how helpful, informative, and interesting they were.

Thank you to all who participated – we value your opinions!

Sneak Peak: Graduate Student Events at the October 2010 NERA Conference

The GSIC team is excited to start planning various events for graduate students at the NERA conference. On the forefront of our planning is organizing two in-conference special sessions on interesting issues pertinent to graduate students:

- Measurement Theory in Practice
- Advice and Strategies for Finishing School and Starting Your Career

Past Presidents Share Strategies for Writing and Dissemination: Publishing is not Rocket Science - You CAN do it

Ramona R. Santa Maria, Buffalo State College (SUNY)
Kristen Huff, College Board

Among the many activities of the 2009 NERA program was a special panel-based Q&A session that drew standing-room only attendance; the response to this topic exemplifies the degree of interest of NERA membership in writing and publishing. Moderated by 2009 NERA President Kristen Huff, the panel included four former NERA presidents: Sharon Cramer, Kurt Geisinger, David Moss, and Steve Sireci. These leaders were assembled to give expert advice on the research, writing, and publication process, and strategies for navigating what can prove to be a difficult landscape for “newbies.” From our copious notes on the session, we’d like to share some highlights of their expert advice.

Make it a habit. Make writing part of each day. Set the time aside and commit to it. You don’t necessarily need an entire afternoon - it can be just as productive to create small blocks of time to write. Small bursts of writing help keep the momentum. Remember, those who publish frequently write continually as it is important to always have something in the pipeline.

Start with an outline. A well-articulated outline facilitates working on each section in a linear fashion or skipping around to complete different sections as they come; this flexibility keeps the writing process flowing even as your day-to-day preferences change.

Get feedback. Once you have found time to write consistently and you are making progress, how do you know when you are ready to submit? First, find someone who is a tough critic to give you honest, constructive feedback. When you get harsh feedback, don’t take it personally — develop a thick skin. Rewrite with a purpose, and use the comments to keep focus on how you will make a contribution to your field.

Don’t let the “perfect” get in the way of the good. It is not uncommon for papers to linger indefinitely, enduring revision after revision until you think it is “perfect.” This is a mistake. It’s

just as important to submit “good” papers to journals so that you can gain more feedback from different reviewers. It is also extremely beneficial to review papers for conferences or journals, so you can gain insight into the other side of the process.

Make a smart match. Making the right choice for journal submission is key to the process. Submitting your work to a journal that is a poor match (in terms of the kinds of work they publish) or that has a long publication queue can throw a monkey wrench into your publication goals. The most revered journals aren’t always the most efficient route to publication; as even a good paper can be waiting in a journal’s queue for up to 2 years. A good solution is to look for smaller journals that represent your paper’s foci. When trying to obtain a particular number of publications for tenure, always make sure that you consult your tenure-track “memorandum of understanding,” and be sure that any journal to which you submit is in line with your department’s expectations.

Be prepared and be persistent. Once you decide where to submit, read the publication statement of the journal. Be mindful of the length of submissions, and never submit without understanding style guidelines. It is also helpful to read and cite authors from your target journal. This will give you an idea of what types of papers are accepted for publication, and will show the reviewer that you understand the focus of the journal. Of course, a mix of references is needed for your work to be part of the larger academic conversation. Be sure to include references from the body of literature you want to be part of, and be aware of significant scholars referenced by others. If you are rejected initially, revise and resubmit. Be tenacious. And always include a letter to the journal with your resubmission, explaining how you have changed or improved the paper. Some journals may appreciate your revised paper being submitted with

“track changes” visible; check with the editor.

Collaborate. Another way to get your work published is to write with other authors. Authorship roles should be discussed at the outset, as sometimes a second author contributes equally to the work, whereas sometimes this person is primarily an editor or data analyst. (For those on tenure-track, check with your institution, as they may not view a second author with the same weight as the primary author.) When working with others, look for someone who complements your skill set. Create a plan or hierarchy of the work that needs to be accomplished. Some criteria suggested by the panel for collaborative writing are:

1. Write out clear expectations for each member’s work, including order of authorship.
2. Have firm deadlines and meet often and on a routine schedule to discuss what you have written. Be accountable to others for your writing assignments.
3. If you are running out of steam on the project, consider putting the paper away for a few days, and/or consider getting new feedback from someone else, possibly from a cross-disciplinary field.
4. Finally, when collaborating with others, be civil in the process. Be patient and gracious, and make your collaboration a positive experience.

This summary represents just a few of the gems that our esteemed Past Presidents – all of whom are prolific writers and have sustained success in publishing – shared during the session.

We’ll conclude with a tip of our own: become more mobile with your writing. Sometimes a change of scenery (and a laptop) can spark the urge to write. Instead of moving files from home to office, try moving your writing to online shared applications, like *Google Docs*, that give you the mobility to access the same document on any computer, anywhere you have an Internet connection. No need to carry files or thumb drives with you!

Happy writing!

Institutional Memberships

Ten universities and organizations became institutional members this year:

| | | | |
|---|---------|---|--------------------|
| Bucknell University | \$1,000 | The College Board | \$1,000 |
| Measured Progress | 1,000 | University of Connecticut | 1,000 |
| James Madison University | 750 | Johnson & Wales University | 750 |
| Bloomsburg University | 500 | Buffalo State College | 500 |
| Buros Center for Testing/ University of Nebraska-Lincoln | 500 | University of Massachusetts at Amherst | 500 |
| William Paterson University | 500 | Westfield State College | 1,700 (in-kind) |

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