

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

**Inside this issue:**

Board of Directors	2
Message from the Editors	3
NERA at AERA	4
Call for Nominations for NERA Board	4
39th Annual Conference Announcement	5
Teacher-as-Researcher Award	9
2007 Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award	10
The Graduate Lounge	11
Notes from the January 26, 2008 Board Meeting	12
Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award	14
Book Review: The Personal Efficiency Program	15

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# The NERA Researcher

Volume 46, Issue 1

March 2008

## The President's Message



**David Moss**

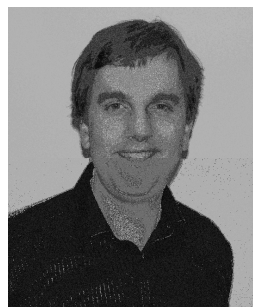
Since our annual meeting last fall, much has been happening behind the scenes, and I am pleased to report to you progress on many fronts. Perhaps most important to the longevity of our organization, with unanimous support from the Board we initiated the process of ensuring our status as a not for profit entity. Working under the guidance of a law firm in Connecticut the Board has recently signed the Articles of Incorporation which firmly establishes NERA as a non-profit corporation. Attending to our tax status is next on the agenda along these lines. Although the volume of paperwork was extensive, you will not at all be surprised to learn that Barbara Helms (NERA Treasurer), serving as the liaison between the Board and the law firm we retained to guide us through this process, has worked with her usual efficiency, good nature, and attention to detail. For that we all owe her a debt of gratitude. I look forward to reporting to you in an upcoming issue that we have completed this work and that NERA will be well positioned to endure as a registered and compliant entity for years to come.

These Articles of Incorporation and associated documents were signed at our winter Board meeting which took place on Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup>. I put forth a full agenda to the Board which convened at the Rocky Hill, CT conference site. At this meeting Helen Marx and Tom Levine, our program co-chairs, outlined what is sure to be a fantastic conference. I am very excited about the prospects for our annual meeting next fall as it promises to build upon our traditions of excellence and mentorship while attempting a few bold steps in terms of sponsorship and programming. Look for the call for proposals along with committee reports from our Board meeting in this issue.

Looking ahead to AERA this spring, although there will be no Board meeting, NERA will most certainly have a significant presence in New York City. Please look for the presentation of the 2007 Distinguished NERA paper by Drs. Mark Fenster and Diane Judd, titled "Relating Teacher Candidate Performance to their Students' Subject Specific Academic Achievement using TWS Methodology." Additionally, NERA will be co-sponsoring a reception on Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> with the University of Connecticut. Details regarding the reception are included in this issue (see page 4). If you are attending AERA, please look for these and other opportunities to support our NERA colleagues and friends.

Turning an eye toward politics, it has been nearly impossible to escape the early and boisterous Presidential primary season these past few months (much longer if you read this from New Hampshire). By the time you receive this *Researcher* (I am writing this prior to Super Tuesday) I suspect the nomination process will have narrowed the field of candidates considerably. Sadly, up until this point the challenges underpinning education seem to once again reside on the back burner of our national agenda. Perhaps given the issues of national security and the economy, it is not surprising that in a politically charged arena candidates are seeking to push

*(Continued on page 3)*



Thomas Levine  
Program Co-Chair

**Save the Date:**

**October 22-24**

**2008**

**NERA 39th**

**Annual**

**Conference**

**Hartford**

**Marriott Rocky**

**Hill in Rocky**

**Hill,**

**Connecticut**



Helen Marx  
Program Co-Chair

## NERA 2008 Board of Directors

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[david.moss@uconn.edu](mailto:david.moss@uconn.edu)

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## NERA 2008 Chairpersons and Editors

**Committee Chairs:**

**Lorne H. Woollott Distinguished Paper Committee**  
Craig S. Wells  
University of Massachusetts Amherst  
[cswells@educ.umass.edu](mailto:cswells@educ.umass.edu)

**Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award**

Diane E. Liebert  
DLE Associates  
[diane444@comcast.net](mailto:diane444@comcast.net)

**Thomas Donlon Mentoring Award**

Samantha Feinman  
Pace University  
[sfeinman@pace.edu](mailto:sfeinman@pace.edu)

**Teacher-as-Researcher Award**

Dolores Burton  
New York Institute of Technology  
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**The President's Message**  
Continued from page 1

those two hot buttons early and often.

At these times I am reminded that an organization like NERA can potentially play a critical role in our democratic process. Without endorsing a particular candidate, groups like NERA should work to articulate the *issues* which we believe are most critical to the preservation of a free and open society. Certainly the economy and security are obvious ones, but I would encourage voters to consider the underlying mechanisms which ultimately dictate policy decisions. To twist a famous quote<sup>1</sup> by President Clinton in the 1992 run for the White House, "It's *education* stupid." The back burner is no place for the single issue which has the greatest potential to promote peace and prosperity for humankind. Thus I encourage you consider ways in which educational research can directly inform policy this election year, and I look forward to talking politics at our annual meeting which is mere weeks prior to our general election.

Sincerely,

David M. Moss  
NERA President

<sup>1</sup> From Wikipedia ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/It's\\_the\\_economy,\\_stupid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/It's_the_economy,_stupid)) "The economy, stupid," was a phrase in American politics widely used during Bill Clinton's successful 1992 presidential campaign against George H.W. Bush. For a time, Bush was considered unbeatable because of foreign policy developments such as the end of the Cold War and the Persian Gulf War. The phrase, coined by Clinton campaign strategist James Carville, refers to the notion that Clinton was a better choice because Bush had not adequately addressed the economy, which had recently undergone a recession.

**“groups like  
NERA should  
work to  
articulate the  
issues which we  
believe are most  
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preservation of  
a free and open  
society”**

## Message from the Editors

**The conference  
theme this year  
is  
“Strengthening  
Educational  
Research” and  
our keynote  
speaker is Dr.  
Marilyn  
Cochran-Smith.**

Hello NERA Members and Happy New Year! We hope that you enjoy this issue of *The NERA Researcher*, our first issue as the new co-editors. We are excited to take on this challenge and thank Gerri Mongillo and Heejung An for their service as outgoing co-editors.

This issue contains important information concerning our 39<sup>th</sup> annual conference. Our conference co-chairs, Tom Levine and Helen Marx, have put together an outstanding program. The conference theme this year is “Strengthening Educational Research” and our keynote speaker is Dr. Marilyn Cochran-Smith.

NERA President David Moss gives an update on our progress in becoming a non-profit corporation and provides a

thought provoking message regarding the upcoming national Presidential election and our role both as citizens and educational researchers.

Many great ideas on ways to improve *The NERA Researcher* came out of the January Board meeting and we are looking forward to implementing these changes over time. These ideas included invited book reviews, and an “Ask a Mentor” section with questions and answers. We have included a book review in this issue that we hope you find interesting and informative. We welcome additional input from readers of *The NERA Researcher*. Please, don’t hesitate to send us your constructive thoughts and suggestions on ways to improve this newsletter.

Jennifer and Kevin

## NERA at AERA

Congratulations to Drs. Mark Fenster of the University of Massachusetts Lowell and Diane Judd of Valdosta State University on receiving the 2007 Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award. Dr. Fenster will be presenting their paper, **Relating Teacher Candidate Performance to their Students' Subject Specific Academic Achievement using TWS Methodology**, at the AERA conference in New York on Wednesday, March 26th from 2:15 - 3:45. The abstract of their paper follows:

### Abstract

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***Please come  
and support  
our NERA  
Distinguished  
Paper winner  
at AERA!***

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Teacher education preparation programs are under pressure from the public to provide evidence that their programs and teacher candidates are improving student achievement. However, the connections between teacher education preparation programs, teacher candidates' evaluation, and student achievement are often hard to disentangle from other educationally relevant effects. Teacher candidates were formally assessed by their university supervisor during their student teaching semester. Using Western Oregon University's teacher work sample methodology, we were able to assess the achievement of the teacher candidate's students. Results showed that students of teacher candidates' showed 52% gains in knowledge of learning goals. Additionally, improvement in teacher candidate's teaching ability as measured on an observation instrument was associated with higher gains by their students on the learning goals. Lastly, teacher candidates assessing their students' learning in the disciplines of science and math showed lower gains on the learning goals when compared to English/ language arts, health or social studies.

Please come and support our NERA Distinguished Paper winner! Also, please join us at the reception for NERA/University of Connecticut Neag School of Education on Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> from 7-9 p.m. in the Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers/Riverside Ballroom, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. We look forward to seeing you in New York!

## Call for Nominations

The future of NERA is in your hands. We are seeking nominations for NERA President and NERA Board members. We have many great members who would keep NERA going strong, but we need you to nominate them. Please send your nominations for Board member and President to me at [sireci@acad.umass.edu](mailto:sireci@acad.umass.edu) by April 1. All nominees must be current members of NERA. The member elected President will join the Board as President-elect during our 2008 annual meeting in October and assume the Presidency in October 2009. Two newly-elected Board members will begin 3-year terms in October 2008. Please consider nominating yourself or a colleague for these important positions.



## Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA) 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, October 22-24, 2008

### Conference Theme: Strengthening Educational Research

The Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA) invites you to enjoy outstanding colleagues, pre-session leaders, conference workshops, and our keynote speaker, Marilyn Cochran-Smith, as we use our 39th Annual Conference to talk about strengthening educational research.

At a time when many question the relevance and rigor of educational research, identifying the challenges and barriers to conducting high quality research is more pressing than ever. With an eye toward impacting policy and practice, how can we strengthen educational research?

Professor Marilyn Cochran-Smith will address our theme in her keynote address. We also have top authorities ready to offer pre-session workshops that will help you with elements of your craft. Tom Schram will lead a pre-session on qualitative data analysis. Hariharan Swaminathan will provide a follow-up to his much-loved workshop on measurement and

assessment this past year; details will follow. Stan Shaw will also offer a session during the conference on grant-writing. Each of these professors has a well-deserved reputation for their own scholarship and their ability to help others learn to produce high quality research.

Finally, we plan to pilot some mentoring roundtables, allowing mid-level and senior scholars to work with a small number of doctoral students and junior faculty, again in the spirit of strengthening educational research. Our meeting should provide access to resources, ideas, and contacts that will support and inspire you in your work. We are very excited for the time we'll spend together next fall; we hope you'll be able to join us for another vibrant conference!

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***Please post the 39th  
Annual Conference flyer  
where colleagues  
will see it!***

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

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. Generations of scholars at Educational Testing Service, at Thomas Edison State College, in NERA and in myriad professions are devoted to Tom for the guidance he provided them. The award is presented at annual NERA conferences to recognize a member of NERA who has shown distinction as a mentor.

Nominations are sought for the annual award and 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 Thursday luncheon at the annual conference.

Please send your nominations to:  
Samantha Feinman  
Pace University  
[sfeinman@pace.edu](mailto:sfeinman@pace.edu).

# Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA) 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, October 22-24, 2008

## Paper and Session Proposal F.A.Q.

### Conference Theme:

### *Strengthening Educational Research*

At a time when many question the relevance and rigor of educational research, identifying the challenges and barriers to conducting high quality research is more pressing than ever. With an eye toward impacting policy and practice, how can we strengthen educational research?

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

### Please follow all instructions as outlined below:

- All submissions must be submitted electronically.
- Proposals are due to the co-chairs by Monday, **June 15, 2008**.
- For each proposal you make, attach three electronic Microsoft Word attachments as described below to a single email titled "completed proposal," and email to [neramembers@gmail.com](mailto:neramembers@gmail.com)
  - For each *Individual Paper* and *Poster* proposal, submit 3 separate files via one email:
    - The NERA 2008 Proposal Cover Sheet, available at <http://www.nera-education.org> ; choose annual conference and then choose proposals
    - A 100-word Abstract
    - A 1000-word Paper Summary w/ Title only (i.e., no authors listed)
  - For each *Theme-based Session* and *Working Group Discussion* proposal, submit 3 separate files via one email:
    - The NERA 2008 Proposal Cover Sheet, available at <http://www.nera-education.org> ; choose annual conference and then choose proposals
    - A 100-word Abstract file (one abstract for the entire session)
    - A 1000-word Session Proposal Summary w/ Title only (i.e., no authors listed)
- Do not submit complete papers as proposals.
  - Proposals are limited to 1000 words.
  - Abstracts are limited to 100 words. Include the paper title and the names and affiliations of all authors in the abstract. This information is not part of the 100-word limit for the Abstract.
  - Titles are limited to 15 words.
- Do not complete the shaded areas of the Proposal Cover Sheet.
- Please contact us via email should you have any questions! Helen Marx, Tom Levine, and Meg Monaghan at [neramembers@gmail.com](mailto:neramembers@gmail.com)

(Continued on page 7)

Paper and Session Proposal F.A.Q.  
(Continued from page 6)

## **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 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.)

**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.

**Theme-Based Paper Sessions/Symposium Sessions** features multiple paper presentations within 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 dialogue after the conference.

## **What information will be required when I submit my proposal?**

Each submission will be comprised of *three* electronic files attached to a single email titled “completed proposal” and sent to [neramembers@gmail.com](mailto:neramembers@gmail.com)

**NERA 2008 Proposal Cover Sheet:** Complete this form in full. The cover sheet is available on the NERA website (<http://www.nera-education.org>).

**Abstract:** Indicate the full title of presentation or session, full name and affiliation of each author and/or presenter. Each abstract should include the statement of 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 100 words. Abstracts of accepted proposals are printed unedited in the NERA Program.

**Proposal Summary:** The proposal summary file 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, etc.). The proposal summary should not exceed 1000 words. NOTE: Proposals that cite other

(Continued on page 8)

**Paper and Session Proposal F.A.Q.**  
(Continued from page 7)

papers, publications, manuscripts, etc. but do not include a reference list will not be accepted. In addition:

- Summaries for proposed *Theme-Based Sessions/Symposia* should include a description of the unifying topic;
- Summaries of proposed *Posters* should include a description of the planned display;
- Summaries of proposed *Working Group Sessions* should include expected contribution of each participant, expected outcomes of the working group (e.g., further research, publication, etc.), and a bibliography of readings in preparation for discussion.

### **What are “subject descriptors”?**

The program co-chairs aim to have a diverse program overall, and to minimize conflicts of interest in scheduling simultaneous sessions. To aid in our decisions and in considering groupings of papers, please select three descriptors from the common list of descriptors below to describe your proposal. Put descriptors on the Proposal Cover Sheet.

- Action research
- Curriculum studies
- Early childhood education
- Education in the professions
- Educational measurement & psychometrics
- Educational policy
- Higher education
- History & philosophy
- Human development & counseling
- International education
- Learning & instruction
- Legal issues in education
- Literature & language arts education
- Mathematics & science education
- Multicultural education
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Professional development
- Qualitative research methods
- Quantitative research methods & statistical theory
- School evaluation & program development
- School accountability, improvement, & reform
- School organization & leadership
- Second language acquisition
- Social context of education
- Social studies education
- Special education & rehabilitation
- Speech & language
- Student populations research

### **How will proposals be submitted?**

All proposals must be submitted electronically via email to the co-chairs: [neramembers@gmail.com](mailto:neramembers@gmail.com).

### **When are proposals due and when will I hear about acceptance?**

Proposals may be sent beginning immediately through **June 15, 2008**. The program co-chairs expect to notify submitters of acceptance by August 1, 2008.

### **Questions about submitting proposals?**

Contact the 2008 NERA Conference team, Helen Marx, Tom Levine, and Meg Monaghan, via email at [neramembers@gmail.com](mailto:neramembers@gmail.com).



## Teacher-as-Researcher Award 2008—Call for Proposals

Many teachers implement innovations in their classes and reflect on outcomes. The systematic collection of evidence on the success or lack of success of instructional innovations can assist educators to refine their practice and inform the field. Each year NERA awards the Teacher-as-Researcher Award to a primary or secondary school teacher who is spontaneously using current research findings to modify or supplement his or her teaching efforts. The purpose of the award is to encourage teachers to conduct research and/or to use research findings of others to inform their own teaching. The Teacher-as-Researcher Award recognizes teachers who have engaged in research in their classrooms and documented their activities in written form. The award winning projects have been grounded in the literature and have created a change in practice supported by evidence for the fourteen teachers that have been honored with the award since it was created in 1993.

The winner of the 2007 award was Beth Mowry. This teacher/researcher began her study by conducting an extensive review of the literature, focusing on articles about both science education and special education to identify best practices related to teaching science to students with special needs. This review identified significant holes in the science education literature regarding teaching students with special needs.

The teacher/researcher studied herself and the science class

with which she was working - a self-contained special education class of students who are in grades six and seven at an urban middle school. The class members were of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and were from middle to working socioeconomic class families. There were three girls and six boys in the sample. Two students were classified on their Individualized Education Plans as mentally retarded. The other seven were classified as emotionally disturbed and had accompanying learning disabilities. Beth's study used multiple data points including a detailed field journal, communications with other teachers, interactions with students and their families and copies of student work.

This study illuminated deep differences between the culture of science education and the culture of special education. Training, expectations and classroom practices of these two specialists in education differ vastly, one not being familiar with the practices of the other.

This study has implications for university faculty, school administrators and teachers. Primarily, university faculty must be aware that the cultures that are formulated in teacher training programs may be in conflict with other educational cultures. Teachers can learn from the successes, insights and failures of this teacher while administrators can learn about the implications that arise when teachers are placed in positions out of their expertise. Beth's talk, given at

the Teacher-as Researcher session at the 2007 annual conference was well documented and very moving for all present.

Classroom teachers are invited to apply directly for this award or be nominated by NERA members, school administrators, faculty mentors, or others familiar with the teacher's work. All applications/nominations should follow the format of the Teacher-as-Researcher Award application form and be postmarked or emailed as an attachment in Word no later than June 1, 2008. Information regarding the award is available on the NERA website at <http://www.nera-education.org>.

It is important for NERA members and experienced and junior faculty to encourage their teacher colleagues to submit a proposal for the award. We encourage all members of the educational community to support and facilitate applications for this important award.

The 2008 awardee will be invited to speak about the research project at a special session at the annual NERA meeting in October and be presented with the award at that time. The award includes a plaque, NERA membership, \$150 toward travel, and two full-days of meals and lodging at NERA's conference site, the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill Hotel in Hartford Connecticut.

We hope you will take up the challenge by seeking out and recommending a teacher whose

*(Continued on page 10)*

## Diane E. Liebert 2007 Recipient of the Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service to NERA

The Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award is given to a NERA member who exemplifies the qualities which Leo Doherty brought to NERA, as well as to his colleagues, friends and students. He encouraged others to commit themselves to goals that were personally meaningful, he personally demonstrated how staff should work honestly, and he dealt fairly and equitably and credited those who implemented activities. He supported professional associations, served in several capacities, and encouraged colleagues and staff to participate in professional association activities.

The 2007 Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award recipient is Diane E. Liebert. For over 30 years Diane Liebert of DLE Associates has been involved with federally funded grant programs designed to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and people from minority backgrounds including research projects, parent training projects, and model demonstration projects. Diane

earned her doctoral degree with Honors from Hofstra University in 1978 and has provided research, program evaluation, project management, grant writing and consulting services to universities, states and non-profit organizations. Diane has been the evaluator of Resources for Children with Special Needs' Parent Training and Information Center in New York City and the evaluator of Nassau BOCES' Project with Industry for over 20 years. She was the evaluator and project director of the Connecticut State Transition Project (Collaborative Employment Opportunities for Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance or Mental Illness).

Diane has worked at the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York, Yale University and the State University of New York at Stony Brook. As the recipient of three Mary Switzer Distinguished Research Fellowships from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) Diane studied people

with disabilities and minority backgrounds with respect to housing and employment. Diane currently is the Research Consultant and Project Evaluator of a five-year research project, "Building Research Capacity Through Collaboration," a research study of health and disability issues of four Native American Tribes in Connecticut and Rhode Island, a grant from NIDRR to the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (2003-09).

Diane has served on the NERA board as well as being a program co-chair, reviewer and chaired several committees, most recently co-chairing the Distinguished Paper Committee with Doug Penfield. Diane has served NERA as a presenter nearly every year since 1982. Diane has presented alone as well as bringing many colleagues over the years. She has provided outstanding leadership and service to NERA over the years and, in particular, during her tenure as President in 1993-94. Congratulations Diane.

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### Teacher-as-Researcher Award 2008—Call for Proposals (Continued from page 9)

work is familiar to you and whom you believe is worthy of recognition to receive the NERA 2008 Teacher-as-Researcher Award. If you do not know of anyone personally, please disseminate the announcement and application found in this newsletter to your education networks as you plan your own attendance at the October 2008 annual conference.

We look forward to your recommendation for the award and seeing you at the conference. For additional information about the award please email questions to [dburton@nyit.edu](mailto:dburton@nyit.edu).

**Dolores Burton, Chairperson  
The Teacher-as-Researcher Award Committee**

## The Graduate Lounge

The Graduate Student Issues Council (GSIC) of the Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA) is currently engaged in the activities planned for the 2007-2008 year.

Our primary concern this month is to identify the recipient of the 2007 Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award. GSIC has organized the Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award Competition, for the first time this year. This award is different from the Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award (Woollatt) and the Teacher-as-Researcher Award (TAR). Whereas, the Woollatt award can be awarded to any faculty, teacher, or graduate student NERA member and the TAR can only be awarded to full-time teachers who may or may not be enrolled in a masters program, the Best Paper by a Graduate Student award can only be awarded to individuals enrolled in a doctoral program who presented their papers or posters at a NERA Conference.

By early January 2008, GSIC had received eight submissions (from six graduate students,

representing five institutions) for the 2007 Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award Competition. Each of the submitted papers is currently being reviewed by two independent graduate student raters and one board-appointed faculty expert. Reviews of submitted papers are based on 18 guidelines designed to assess the scholarship and rigor of each manuscript. The awarded graduate student will be announced in the next Graduate Lounge of *The NERA Researcher* and the NERA Web site's GSIC page. The winner will receive a voucher in the value of \$250 towards expenses to next year's NERA conference.

Meanwhile, we are working on establishing relationships with the graduate student committees of other organizations, especially that of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). Remember that the GSIC represents graduate students at all NERA Board meetings. Please contact us with ideas, contributions, concerns, or anything else you want to discuss. We will consider your input.

**Andri Ioannou, Chairperson  
Graduate Student Issues Committee**

### GSIC Members 2007-2008

**Carol Barry,**  
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(Photo taken on vacation in Maine, 2006)

## January Board Meeting Highlights

### Summary of the Minutes

**Submitted by:** Darlene Perner, NERA Secretary (2006-2009)

**Date:** January 26, 2008 NERA Board Meeting

**Location:** Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill, Rocky Hill, Connecticut

**Present:** Dolores Burton, Barbara Helms, Andri Iaonnou, Thomas Levine, Helen Marx, Meg Monaghan, David Moss (President), Thanos Pateilis, Darlene Perner, Brian Preston, Lynn Shelley-Sireci.

**Call-In:** Kristen Huff (full meeting), Liz Stone (1:19-3:02 pm), Maureen Ewing (1:21-3:02 pm);  
**Regrets:** Jennifer Kobrin, Kevin Meara, Kathryn Nottis, Steve Sireci, Barbara Wert

The meeting began at 9:00 a.m.

1. Introductions: Dave began the meeting with welcome and introductions.

2. Approval of Minutes: Tom moved, Barbara seconded the acceptance of the minutes from the 10/17/07 meeting and 10/19/07 meeting. Motion carried.

3. Teacher-as-Researcher Committee: Dolores and her committee reviewed the NERA Handbook section on the Teacher-as-Researcher. Dolores distributed the suggestions made by the committee. The criteria of the Teacher-as-Researcher Award have been revised and are clearly identified in this section. The Board made recommendations. Dolores will finalize this section of the Handbook and distribute it to the Board for approval. Thanos moved, Helen seconded, to provide support to the recipient of the Teacher-as-Researcher Award for the actual reimbursement costs of a substitute teacher for one day if requested. Motion carried.

4. Graduate Student Issues Committee: Andri reported submissions for Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award are being reviewed. The committee has established a rating procedure and the winner will be announced in late February. The guidelines for this Award as approved by the

Board will be inserted in the Handbook. The recipient of the Award will be announced at the 2008 NERA conference. The Committee organization and updates for the Handbook were reviewed. Kristen expressed her gratefulness for Andri's collaboration and productivity and extended our thank you to Andri.

5. Award Committee Status Reports: David invited discussion regarding how committee chairs are selected/appointed. Barbara reviewed the NERA committees and David will appoint chairs based on the needs of each individual committee.

6. Technology Committee Report: Brian will serve as the Chair of the Technology Committee. Dave acknowledged Barbara and Brian for their work on the Web site. Brian indicated that the Technology Committee will coordinate with the Program Chairs to help provide LCDs for the six conference rooms. He requested that the Board and members should send Web site information/updates to Barbara.

Helen reported that proposal submissions will be by email ([NERAmembers@gmail.com](mailto:NERAmembers@gmail.com)). She will start conversations with Liz and Maureen about submissions of proposals on-line for the next conference.

7. Nominations Committee: Dave reported that the *Call for Nominations* will be in the February Issue of *The NERA Researcher*. It was noted that nominations will be sought for a President Elect and for two director positions.

8. The NERA Researcher: Jennifer Kobrin and Kevin Meara will be our new editors. We are grateful to Kristen for recruiting Jennifer and Kevin and to our new co-editors. David stated that *The NERA Researcher* is still our main form of communication. A number of ideas for changes to *The NERA Researcher* were generated; Dave will share these with the co-editors.

9. Incorporation and Tax Status of NERA: The Reid and Reige Law Firm is assisting NERA in becoming incorporated and in ensuring its tax status. Barbara explained the Certificate of Incorporation and the NERA By-Laws. We will be incorporated in Connecticut. There is a need for

(Continued on page 13)

**January Board Meeting Highlights**

*(Continued from page 12)*

insurance for the NERA Board. Barbara will follow through on this. The President will serve as the compliance officer. The Treasurer has significant responsibilities including filing to IRS. For now, the NERA Post Office Box will be our address. Barbara and Helen were thanked for their work on this.

**10. Treasurer's Report and Membership Report:** Barbara H. distributed a Treasurer's Report on Membership and Finance. She reported that 262 members (167 professional, 6 retirees, 89 graduate students) have joined or renewed their membership for 2007-08 year and 245 members (155 professional, 5 retirees and 85 graduate students—69 of these students had waivers) registered for the conference. This is an increase in membership and conference registrations. We had some additional expenses this year with upgrading our Web site but our conference income helped offset these costs. Brian moved, Darlene seconded the acceptance of the Treasurer's Report with our sincere thanks. Motion carried. Dave thanked Barbara for her great work over the years as Treasurer.

**11. 2008 Conference Report:** Dave acknowledged Dean Schwab for his support.

**a. Conference Survey Results:** Meg has been commendable in her position as Program Co-Chairs' Assistant. Meg distributed the results of the 2007 Conference Survey. Forty-six surveys were completed and a number of strengths and weaknesses were identified. Benefits of the new site were reported; other ratings were discussed.

**b. Role of Discussants:** Tom indicated that Helen and he are planning to re-work the role of chair and discussant based on the survey results. Tom distributed his report which clearly identified the role of the discussant. There was discussion on both the role of the chair and the discussant. The co-chairs will continue to revise these roles. It was suggested that there be evaluation forms at every session.

**c. Hotel Contract:** Dave reported that there were some difficulties with working out a conference package with the hotel. Dave indicated that it is definitely cheaper to go farther into the season and later in the week (weekend). A one year contract was signed. The Conference Details report was distributed and reviewed. With room, meals and taxes the total rates will be: a single room (one person), \$211.48; double room (two people), \$294.16 (\$147.08/per person) and quad for three or four graduate students, \$459.52 (\$114.88 per person for four people; \$153.17 per person for three people). Dave extended a big thank you to Helen.

**d. Conference Budget:** Helen presented the conference budget which she distributed. Kristen moved, Lynn seconded, to eliminate registration fees for all full time students. Motion carried.

**e. Sponsorship Plan:** Dave indicated that some monies have already been donated under Institutional Sponsorship. Corporate and Exhibitor Sponsorships will also be solicited. Helen presented her report on Exhibitor Prospectus. She requested that members email her with names or ideas for exhibitors or affiliations.

**f. Conference Proceedings:** Helen distributed a proposal to publish conference papers (Conference Proceedings) on-line through Digital Commons, a permanent institutional repository. This publication would be considered as a paper provided at the proceedings. This does not preclude publications in other journals. David,

*(Continued on page 14)*

**Membership Data Report 2007-08**

A total of 262 members joined or renewed their membership for the 2007-08 year and 245 members attended the 2007 conference.

	Membership Dues	Conference Registration
Professional	167	155
Retirees	6	5
Graduate Students	89	85
<b>Totals</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>245</b>

\*incl. Graduate Students w/ waivers (69)

**January Board Meeting Highlights**  
(Continued from page 13)

Helen and Tom will be the editors this first year.

g. **Planning Progress:** The *Call for Proposals* was distributed by Tom; Marilyn Cochran-Smith will be the keynote speaker. Conference pre-sessions will feature Tom Schram, and Hariharan Swaminathan. The featured sessions will include a grant writing workshop with Stan Shaw, the Teacher-as-Researcher Award recipient presentation, and the Graduate Student Issues Committee session. The conference plan includes having mentors meet in small groups with junior faculty and doctoral students to share common themes. We will attend to the diversity of our membership.

h. **Membership Drive:** Meg will serve as Membership Chair. Meg distributed a Membership

Committee report. She will send a *Call for Proposals* email reminder. Meg stated that our attendance goal for the 2008 conference is 300 attendees. Meg will make multiple contacts with universities as well as nonacademic institutions/agencies. Please contact Meg with suggestions/contacts. A multi-year membership with a discount was discussed. A proposal will be developed to address multi-year memberships.

12. **New Business:** Amy has a new baby boy named Benjamin. Congratulations were expressed. Barbara will send flowers to Amy from NERA.

Dave expressed his sincere thanks to the Board and will follow up on action items.

The meeting adjourned at 3:06 pm.

### **The Keymaker: Professor Dianne Zager 2007 Recipient of the Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring**

The 2007 Recipient of the Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring, Professor Dianne Zager, is a keymaker for her students and young colleagues. In the nomination letter from one of Dianne's students, Samantha Feinman, numerous statements about Dianne's teaching, mentoring, emotional support and encouragement are presented as testimony from a broad variety of current and former students, as well as colleagues. There are multiple statements about the positive impact that Dianne Zager has had on these young professionals' development, aspirations and experiences throughout the nomination letter. But the part of the nomination that best characterizes Dianne Zager as an outstanding mentor is the poem Samantha included in her letter (*see poem on right*).

Dianne Zager is a keymaker and a builder of keymakers through her outstanding mentoring. NERA is proud to have Dianne Zager as a NERA member and educational leader. She is an exceptional recipient of the 2007 of the Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring, because she is a model for us all.

#### **Keymakers**

*Some people see a closed door,  
And turn away.  
Others see a closed door,  
Try the knob  
And if it doesn't open . . .  
They turn away.  
Still others see a closed door,  
Try the knob,  
If it doesn't open,  
They find a key,  
If the key doesn't fit . . .  
They turn away.  
A rare few see a closed door,  
Try the knob,  
If it doesn't open,  
They find a key,  
If the key doesn't fit . . .  
They make one.  
—Author unknown*

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

## Book Review

Gleeson, Kerry, *The Personal Efficiency Program: How to Get Organized to Do More Work in Less Time*. (3rd ed.). Boca Raton, FL: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2004.

Before becoming a psychometrician at Educational Testing Service (ETS) I was a psychometrician at Measured Progress, another test publishing company. My manager at Measured Progress was a smart person and recommended that I buy a copy of a book called, "The Personal Efficiency Program: How to Get Organized to do More Work in Less Time" by Kerry Gleeson. I took my manager's advice, bought myself a copy, and read the first three chapters. It immediately made a difference. I began to work more efficiently. Unfortunately, life was hectic at the time and I was too busy to read the entire book. It sat on my bookshelf for five years before I went back to it again to see what else it had to offer. I'm very pleased that two years ago I ventured back into this book again.

As the name suggests, it isn't exactly an academic publication. It's a 'how to' book. It purports to teach lessons not normally taught in school, lessons often learned the hard way. The introduction asks a series of questions, including but not limited to the following:

- Do you feel that you are always short of time?
- Do you feel that you have too much to do?
- Do you feel overwhelmed by everything you face at the office?
- Do you often work overtime, into the evening, or on weekends to catch up on things you don't get done during regular working hours?

Of course, if you're like most working people, trying to balance work and life obligations, the answer to each of these questions is an unequivocal 'yes.' It also asks the following questions:

- Would you like more time to do what you want?
- Do you wonder if you really are accomplishing what you want in your work and in your life?
- Would you like better results for the time and effort you invest in your work?
- Would you like to relax or vacation more often?

The answer to all of these questions for most of us, again, is 'yes.' Does it help? Well, like most things in life, it only works if *you* are able to put the ideas into practice.

The book contains ten chapters. Each chapter focuses on a different theme. Chapter one, *Do It Now!*, discusses how to approach work and overcome procrastination. Chapter two, *Organize It Now*, suggests various systems in order to become and stay organized. Chapter three, *Do It Routinely*, provides strategies for working effectively, regularly. Each chapter in the book has a single theme that is intended to help working people become more efficient, more productive, and more satisfied with their work.

Why would I recommend this book to my fellow NERA members? The answer is simple. As pointed out in David Moss' *President's Message*, "an organization like NERA can potentially play a critical role in our democratic process." To do so, we, NERA members, must find time not only to think about important policy issues, but time to act on our beliefs. This book should be helpful not only for people working 9-5, but for graduate students, and professors as well. It can potentially help you make more time for volunteer work and family. As my manager once suggested to me, I recommended you buy a copy of this book. I'll go one step further and recommend you read all ten chapters.

### Author

Kevin Meara is a Senior Psychometrician in the Center for Statistical Analysis, Educational Testing Service, Rosedale Road, MS 14-P, Princeton, NJ 08541; [kmeara@ets.org](mailto:kmeara@ets.org). His primary interests include family and community. His job involves providing advice to state departments of education so that their K-12 assessments are as reliable, valid, and fair as possible.

We hope you found this issue of *The NERA Researcher* informative and enjoyable. If you have any thoughts or suggestions about how to improve future issues, please contact the co-editors:

Jennifer Kobrin at [jkobrin@collegeboard.org](mailto:jkobrin@collegeboard.org)  
Kevin Meara at [kmeara@ets.org](mailto:kmeara@ets.org).

Thank you

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# **The NERA Researcher**

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