

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

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The NERA Researcher

Volume 47, Issue 1

March 2009

The President's Message

NERA: A Community of Learners



Kristen Huff

"More than ever, the sheer magnitude of human knowledge renders its coverage by education an impossibility; rather, the goal of education is better conceived as helping students develop the intellectual tools and learning strategies needed to acquire the knowledge that allows people to think productively about history, science and technology, social phenomena, mathematics, and the arts." 2000, National Research Council.

I came across this statement just a few days ago as I was doing some research for a paper, and was struck by the phrase *sheer magnitude of human knowledge*. It seemed especially poignant at the time, because as I was knee-deep in stacks of papers, fishing through my bookshelves and journals, the thought kept going through my mind, *How on earth am I supposed to keep up with the literature? There's just too much!* I started day-dreaming about having time each day or each week to immerse myself in the latest research -- to read, reflect and learn -- and quickly found myself being grateful for my annual NERA sojourn. Unlike other larger conferences or conferences dedicated to a narrow slice of educational research, NERA has just the right mix of perspectives, and the undeniable atmosphere of a learning community, that I always find myself revived and intellectually charged after our conference. That's not unlike how I feel now just having returned from the NERA Winter Board meeting, held January 23 and 24 in Rocky Hill, Connecticut. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet with the Board and the 2009 Program Committee. There was lively discussion and excitement, and we worked hard, too. A lot was accomplished at the meeting, and I'd like to take this opportunity to bring a few things to your attention.

One of the ways to best serve our membership is to make sure that our Board is reflective of the membership. Currently, NERA has just over 300 members, and 42% of those members are graduate students! Graduate students are the lifeblood of NERA, and to ensure that their voice is adequately represented in NERA leadership, a vote will be held at the October 2009 Business Meeting to make the acting Chair of the NERA Graduate Student Issues Committee a full voting member of the Board. A graduate student member of the Board is timely and the appropriate way to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to our graduate student constituency.

Another way to ensure that the membership is best served is to adhere to industry standards for not-for-profit organizations of our size and function. To that end, last year we incorporated officially as an organization, and this year we started paying insurance to protect the volunteers who dedicate their time to serve on the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. Starting this year, because of our status as an incorporated organization, NERA needs to file paperwork with the IRS on an annual basis. In keeping with these kinds of changes to a more formally operated organization, a vote will be put to the membership at the October 2009 Business Meeting to make the position of Treasurer a position that is appointed by the Executive Committee rather than an elected position. As our organization has grown, the knowledge, skills and disposition required to timely and accurately manage our ac-

(Continued on page 3)



Maureen Ewing
Program Co-Chair



Elizabeth Stone
Program Co-Chair



Peter Swerdzewski
Program Co-Chair

NERA 2009 Board of Directors

President:

Kristen Huff
The College Board
KHuff@collegeboard.org

Past President:

David Moss
University of Connecticut
david.moss@uconn.edu

President-Elect:

Katharyn Nottis
Bucknell University
knottis@bucknell.edu

Secretary:

Darlene Perner (2006-2010)
Bloomsburg University
dperner@bloomu.edu

Treasurer:

Barbara J. Helms (2004-2009)
Education Development Center, Inc.
bjhelms@gmail.com

Directors:

Barbara Wert (2006-2009)
Bloomsburg University
bwert@bloomu.edu

Dolores Burton (2006-2009)
New York Institute of Technology
dtburton@optonline.net

Sara Finney (2008-2011)
James Madison University
finnevsj@jmu.edu

Thanos Patelis (2007-2010)
The College Board
TPatelis@collegeboard.org

Lynn Shelley-Sireci (2007-2010)
Westfield State College
ls Shelley@wsc.ma.edu

April Zenisky (2008-2011)
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Azenisky@educ.umass.edu

NERA 2009 Chairpersons

Committee Chairs:

Lorne H. Woollott Distinguished Paper Committee
Craig S. Wells
University of Massachusetts Amherst
cswells@educ.umass.edu

Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award

Diane E. Liebert
DLE Associates
diane444@comcast.net

Thomas Donlon Mentoring Award

Samantha Feinman
Pace University
sfeinman@pace.edu

Teacher-as-Researcher Award

Dolores Burton
New York Institute of Technology
dtburton@optonline.net

Graduate Student Issues

Committee Chair:
Megan France
James Madison University
francemk@jmu.edu

Membership Committee

John W. Young
Educational Testing Service
JWYoung@ets.org

Program Co-Chairs:

Maureen Ewing
The College Board
mewing@collegeboard.org

Elizabeth Stone
Educational Testing Service
estone@ets.org

Peter Swerdzewski
The College Board
pswerdzewski@collegeboard.org

Save the Date:

October 21-23, 2009

NERA 40th Annual Conference

Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill in Rocky Hill, Connecticut

The President's Message
Continued from page 1

counts, insurance and IRS filings are such that the Executive Committee and the Board feel that the position of Treasurer cannot be understated or left to what can sometimes be, despite our best efforts, an arbitrary election process.

Given that these two very important votes will occur at the October 2009 Business Meeting, please plan to attend so that you can participate in the discussion and the resulting votes. **The Business Meeting is open to all members, and all members are strongly encouraged to attend. All members are voting members – including graduate student members.** At the 2009 conference, we will ensure that the Business Meeting is scheduled at a time when there are no competing sessions and in a large enough room to accommodate all members should they choose to attend.

As we were reviewing our current financial statements and our estimated expenditures for the 2009 conference, we couldn't help but discuss our concerns about the state and district education budgets that allow so many of our members to attend NERA. We are going to do our best to ensure that the 2009 conference is not unduly affected by our nation's current economic situation. However, we are looking at ways that NERA can trim expenses that would not adversely affect membership. One expense that has continued to increase is the printing and shipping of the *NERA Researcher*. So, one way to trim expenses is to give each member the option of receiving the *NERA Researcher* in hardcopy, as it is currently delivered, or receiving the *NERA Researcher* online only. The choice would be for each individual member to make based on his or her personal preference. We will be communicating more details about this choice in the next *NERA Researcher*, as well as via email, but please give it some thought in the meantime. It's an easy way to trim our budget, and it's the "green" way to go. Either way, remember that the choice will be yours to make.

With that, I wish for you an early and long spring.

¹National Research Council. *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience and School*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Message from the Editors

Hello NERA Members and Happy New Year! Spring is right around the corner and we all know what that means... it's time for the NERA Call for Proposals! This issue of the *NERA Researcher* contains important information about the call for proposals and the 40th annual conference. Our conference co-chairs, Maureen Ewing, Elizabeth Stone, and Peter Swerdzewski have put together an outstanding program. The conference theme this year is "Using Educational Research to Improve Student Learning for 40 Years... And Still Going Strong." Read about the conference theme, conference venue, keynote speakers, and pre-conference sessions inside this issue.

Also inside are instructions and frequently asked questions about how to submit paper and session propos-

als. All submissions must be submitted electronically and are due by midnight on Friday June 5, 2009. Conference highlights are summarized on the lovely 11"x17" poster inserted in this issue of the *NERA Researcher*. We encourage you to display the 40th annual conference poster where colleagues will see it.

We have an announcement about the delivery mode of the *NERA Researcher*. As mentioned by President Kristen Huff in her address, beginning with the September 2009 edition of the *NERA Researcher*, members will have the **option** of receiving the newsletter online only, or both in print and online. NERA members will receive more information about this change and how to register their preference via email and in the June 2009 newsletter.

We are always looking for volunteers to write book reviews or education related commentary for future issues. And, as always, please don't hesitate to send us your thoughts and suggestions for improving the *NERA Researcher*.

Best wishes!

Jennifer and Kevin
The Editors

Jennifer Kobrin
The College Board
jkobrin@collegeboard.org

Kevin Meara
Educational Testing Service
kmeara@ets.org

Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA) 40th Annual Conference, October 21-23, 2009

Conference Theme: Using Educational Research to Improve Student Learning for 40 Years... *And Still Going Strong!*

First, we want to send out a heartfelt “thank you!” for the many helpful 2008 conference evaluation forms we received. The information provided through your ratings and insightful comments has helped us shape the 2009 conference, and we hope to be able to incorporate many of the excellent suggestions put forth. We take the time and effort that you put into your responses very seriously, and we greatly appreciate it. Your lofty praise for the conference demonstrates that the NERA 2008 conference Chairs, Tom Levine, Helen Marx, and Meg Monaghan, have set the bar high, and we look forward to the challenge of meeting and exceeding your expectations this year as well!

Conference Theme. As you may have heard at the 2008 conference and read in the December 2008 issue of the *NERA Researcher*, the 2009 NERA conference plans are well underway and are continuing to develop. The conference theme, “NERA ’09: Using Educational Research to Improve Student Learning for 40 Years...*And Still Going Strong!*”, should bring to mind some of the qualities NERA has that make it such a special organization. The ability to bring together professionals from various fields associated with educational research with the goal of learning from each other has helped NERA become a conference that many look forward to year after year. In a region with such active and respected members and affiliated institutions, NERA still manages to maintain that feeling of intimacy that encourages us to welcome new friends and colleagues while reconnecting with those we have cherished throughout the years. To honor this tradition, we will celebrate the 40th NERA conference with a birthday party in addition to the sessions and receptions that bring us together each year. We hope you’ll join us for the festivities!

Conference Venue. The conference will return to the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill for the third year, taking place Wednesday, October 21 through Friday, October 23, 2009. Membership and conference registration forms will become active on the NERA web site (<http://www.nera-education.org>) in June. Check out the hotel web site (<http://www.marriott.com/bdlrh>) for more information about the venue.

Keynote Speakers. We are so excited to have two excellent keynote speakers lined up to share with us their experiences and perspectives on education and educational research: Mary M. Kennedy, Professor of Education at Michigan State University; and George A. Pruitt, President of Thomas Edison State College since 1982.

Mary M. Kennedy. Mary M. Kennedy’s scholarship focuses on defining teacher quality and on identifying the things that most influence teacher quality. She has examined the influences of teacher education, research knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, credentials and school context. From 1986 to 1994 she directed the National Center for Research on Teacher Learning.

George A. Pruitt. In addition to being President of Thomas Edison State College, George A. Pruitt is Past Chairman of the Mercer County Chamber of Commerce, Trenton, New Jersey, and a member of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, United States Department of Education. He has served in an advisory capacity to four Secretaries of Education under three Presidents of both parties.

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Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA) 40th Annual Conference, October 21-23, 2009

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Pre-Conference Sessions & Professional Development. Susan Loomis of the National Assessment Governing Board, and Mary Pitoniak of Educational Testing Service, have graciously accepted our invitation to present a pre-session workshop on the psychometric topic of standard setting. We are currently planning to have at least one additional pre-conference session as well. Information about these sessions and others will be provided on the NERA web site as it becomes available.

We're also planning a few special professional development activities at the conference, and we hope you will consider participating. Even if you can't participate in these *formal* offerings this year, the conference is a wonderful setting for *informal* professional development, and for networking too!

Stay Tuned! We will continue to update you with additional details in the coming months. In the meantime, please check out the call for proposals and related information contained in this issue for more information on how and when to submit a proposal for a poster presentation, individual paper presentation, theme-based session/symposium, or working group. For more information, check the NERA web site at <http://www.nera-education.org>, or e-mail the NERA '09 conference planning team at neramembers@gmail.com. Be sure to get on the mailing list to receive updates as they become available!

Sincerely,

Maureen Ewing (The College Board), Elizabeth Stone (Educational Testing Service), and Peter Swerdzewski (The College Board), NERA 2009 Conference Co-Chairs

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 Secretary (3 year term)

NERA Board Member (3 year term)

NERA Board Member (3 year term)

Nominations should be sent by March 31st to: Dr. David M. Moss, NERA Past-President, david.moss@uconn.edu.

Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA) 40th Annual Conference, October 21-23, 2009

Paper and Session Proposal F.A.Q.

Conference Theme: Using Educational Research to Improve Student Learning for 40 Years... *And Still Going Strong!*



Come help us celebrate NERA's 40th birthday at the NERA '09 Conference! To be held at the beautiful Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill in October 2009, the conference will include all of the great elements that you have come to expect: pre-conference workshops; poster, individual paper presentation, and theme-based sessions; and keynote and presidential addresses. In addition, we are planning some new surprises to ensure that NERA's next 40 years do not disappoint.

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. below

- All submissions must be submitted electronically.
- Proposals are due to the conference Co-Chairs by midnight on Friday, **June 5, 2009**.
- For each proposal you submit, attach two electronic Microsoft Word 97-2003 attachments (".doc" documents, not ".docx" documents please) as described below to a single e-mail titled "completed proposal," and email to neramembers@gmail.com
- For each **Individual Paper** and **Poster** proposal, submit 2 separate files via one e-mail:
 - The NERA 2009 Proposal Cover Sheet, available at <http://www.nera-education.org>
 - A 1000-word Paper Summary w/ Title only (i.e., no authors listed)
- For each **Theme-based Session** and **Working Group Discussion** proposal, submit 2 separate files via one e-mail:
 - The NERA 2009 Proposal Cover Sheet, available at <http://www.nera-education.org>
 - A 1000-word Session Proposal Summary w/ Title only (i.e., no authors listed). For theme-based sessions, make sure the Session Proposal Summary addresses each paper featured in the session.
- Do not submit complete papers as proposals. NERA is going **green!** To help fulfill NERA's commitment to sustainability, the conference program will be substantially shortened for 2009. Abstracts will *not* appear in the NERA 2009 conference program; however, abstracts for all accepted sessions will be available online and will be available for review during the conference at the conference registration desk.
 - Please contact us via e-mail should you have any questions! Maureen, Liz, and Pete can be reached at neramembers@gmail.com

Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA) 40th Annual Conference, October 21-23, 2009

NERA 2009 Proposal F.A.Q.

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

Proposals may be submitted March 1st, 2009 through midnight, Friday **June 5, 2009**. The program Co-Chairs expect to notify submitters of acceptance by August 1, 2009.

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 information will be required when I submit my proposal?

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

Electronic files to attach:

1. NERA 2009 Proposal Cover Sheet: Complete this form in full. The cover sheet is available on the NERA web page (<http://www.nera-education.org>). Included in this cover sheet is the session abstract. 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.

2. 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). The proposal summary should not exceed 1000 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* should include a description of the unifying topic and brief summaries of the papers involved
- Summaries of proposed *Posters* should include a description of the planned display
- 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

(Continued on page 8)

Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA) 40th Annual Conference, October 21-23, 2009

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.)

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 '09 conference.

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. Chairs (i.e., moderators) are provided by the group proposing the session.

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 in the Conference Proposal Cover Sheet.

Questions about submitting proposals?

Contact the 2009 NERA Conference team, Maureen Ewing, Elizabeth Stone, and Peter Swerdzewski, via e-mail at neramembers@gmail.com

Recipient of the 2008 Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award

Congratulations to **Dr. Maria Martiniello** of the Educational Testing Service for winning the 2008 Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award for her paper entitled "Cognitive Laboratory Interviews in the Validation of Educational Assessments for English Language Learners." The Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award is presented annually in recognition of the paper deemed exemplary by the Award Committee. The distinguished paper award is named in honor of Lorne H. Woollatt, a distinguished New York State educator and active member of NERA.

Dr. Martiniello is a native of Venezuela where she taught at the Universidad Católica Andres Bello. She received her Ed.D. in 2007 from Harvard University. Her research interests pertain to the educational experiences of Latino English language

learners (ELLs). Dr. Martiniello is an Associate Research Scientist at the Center for Validity Research at Educational Testing Service where she examines the validity and fairness of K-12 content area assessments for ELLs. Her award winning paper is related to her dissertation research, funded by a Spencer Foundation Dissertation Fellowship, and illustrated how think-aloud protocols may be used to examine sources of differential item functioning for ELLs on math word problems. Dr. Martiniello will be presenting her paper at one of the SRERA Distinguished Paper Sessions for the 2009 AERA conference in San Diego, CA, April 13-17.

Please check the NERA web site in the coming months to find out the date, time, and place of Dr. Martiniello's presentation, as well as the schedule for other NERA activities at AERA.

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

It is time to begin thinking about nominations for The Thomas F. Donlon 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 and pointed you in the right direction and,

perhaps, brought you to NERA 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 to: Samantha Feinman, sfeinman@pace.edu. Please contact Ms. Feinman for any questions about the Donlon Award or the nomination process.

TEACHER-AS-RESEARCHER AWARD

Sponsored by
NORTHEASTERN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
40th Annual Conference, October 21-23, 2009
at the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill, Rocky Hill, CT

The Teacher-as-Researcher Award is presented annually by the Northeastern Educational Research Association (NERA). The award honors a teacher or a team that includes a teacher serving as a principle investigator, co-investigator, or collaborator who has conducted a classroom research project or applied research findings to inform his or her own teaching. The teacher should have primary responsibility for the research design that includes an application of a theory informing the study or the development of a theory from the results of a study, but not necessarily be the sole person in its development. The setting of the study should be part of the nominees' regular professional responsibilities (not as a student teacher or part of a dissertation) and the results should result in a change in practice. Evidence of the resulting change in practice should be documented by data presented by the nominee and should show that the teacher has applied theory to practice and that practice has changed.

The candidate can self nominate or be nominated by anyone who knows his or her work; 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 no later than June 15, 2009.

The 2009 awardee will be invited to speak about the research project at a special session at the annual NERA meeting in October 2009 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 for one person at NERA's conference at the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill.

Please send applications and address inquiries about the award to:

Dr. Dolores Burton, Chairperson
New York Institute of Technology
School of Education
Northern Blvd.

Old Westbury, New York 11568

Email: dburton@nyit.edu Phone: 516 686 7582 Fax: 516 686 7655

For more information, see NERA web site at: www.nera-education.org

NORTHEASTERN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (NERA)
TEACHER-AS-RESEARCHER AWARD APPLICATION
40th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, October 21-23, 2009
Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill, 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 15, 2009)

Phone: (work) _____ (home) _____

E-mail: _____ FAX: _____

Attach the following information using the guidelines provided:

1. **DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF STUDY;**
2. **STUDY ABSTRACT:** (Please summarize the research project in **no more than 250 words** including its purpose, procedure, and outcomes;
3. **DESCRIPTION OF STUDY:** (**maximum** of 1000 words)
 - a. Rationale for the study, innovation, and/or intervention from the literature;
 - b. Description of project participants, site and procedures;
 - c. Narrative description of the study outcomes including subsequent changes in practice that occurred or will occur as a result of the project;
4. **SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY TO EDUCATORS:** (Describe how the results contribute to improved educational practice or professional knowledge of educators - **maximum 100 words.**)
5. **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. Dolores Burton, New York Institute of Technology, School of Education, Wisser Library, Northern Blvd., Old Westbury, New York 11568 or by email in a Word document attachment to: dburton@nyit.edu. All proposals must be postmarked or emailed by 5:00 p.m. June 15, 2009.

Call for Nominations for the 2009 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. 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. It is interesting to note that when this award was developed and now, NERA is in the 300's in terms of membership (thanks to the great work of Past President David Moss and the 2008 conference committee!)

The 2009 NERA Doherty Committee members (and recipients of the Doherty Award) encourage creative thinking, and short nomination statements, to be addressed to Committee Chair Diane Liebert (diane444@comcast.net) or member Sharon Cramer (cramersf@buffalostate.edu) by September 1, 2009.

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.

*Leo D. Doherty Memorial Presentation Committee
Mary D. Horan, Chairman
Francis Archambault
James Fleming*

Important Announcement Regarding the *NERA Researcher*

Please be advised that beginning with the September 2009 edition of the *NERA Researcher*, members will have the **option** of receiving the newsletter online only, or both in print and online. NERA members will receive more information about this change and how to register their preference via email and in the June 2009 newsletter. Thank you!

Postcard *Número Dos* from Oviedo Lynn Shelley and Steve Sireci

We made it! Sabbatical has begun and we are living in Oviedo Spain! We found an apartment, enrolled our three sons in a “bilingual” school (i.e., 5% English), opened a bank account, and managed to get wireless in our apartment. In our first week we only encountered 2 instances of motion sickness, 2 fevers, 3 instances of vomiting, and 2 bloody noses – so it was a tremendous success by Sireci standards.

We learned several important lessons in our early days here that we would like to pass along. First, if you spend a sabbatical in a foreign country you must have an outstanding host. Our host, José Pepe from the University of Oviedo has worked tirelessly for us. For example, he had to find 2 European cars to pick up 5 Sirecis, 9 suitcases, 5 backpacks and 1 guitar from the airport. Then, in making arrangements for our boys to go to school, he introduced us to the State Commissioner of Education who took care of all arrangements. (It certainly helps being in the field of education!)

Our next important tidbit of advice is to select a location with outstanding cuisine, as well as a lifestyle you can enjoy. Asturian food is outstanding, as is the *vino y cava*. But what we love most is the Spanish pace of life. Nobody rushes. School does not begin until 9:00, and ends at 2:00. Businesses close between 2:00 and 5:00 and families share a large midday meal – which can last hours. In the evenings many children return to school for sports or other lessons, and dinner is not until 9:00. The coffee is outstanding, but no one takes it “*para llevar*” (to go). They actually sit in the coffee shop and drink it there. They don’t even have coffee cup lids! So, Steve has numerous burn marks on his hands resulting from his attempts to take his coffee *para llevar*. He is the only person in a rush, and still can’t believe people actually wait for the crosswalk light to turn green.

Our final, and possibly most important advice is to have a working knowledge of the language used at your destination. We have gotten into several predicaments due to our inability to communicate. For example, one day the school sent our 8-year old son home because they thought he was sick, but when I got there to pick him up, he said “what



ya doing here Mom?” He wasn’t sick at all. He was bored when class was in Spanish, fell asleep, and got rosy cheeks. When he awoke his teacher asked, in Spanish, if he was ill, and like a good student who doesn’t know what he is being asked he said “*si, si.*” On another occasion the ATM ate a bankcard because it took Lynn so long to look up every word on the screen in the Spanish-English dictionary. But, the most challenging situation has been where to put our trash. The landlady initially explained where to put the trash (in Spanish) accompanied by a lot of hand gestures – but we had no idea what she said. Her husband then said something about going downstairs and turning right. Downstairs and to the right is a door that says *Cuarto de basura*. *Basura* is trash, so we figured that is where the trash goes. But none of our keys worked in the door. So, Steve called the landlord and spoke Spanish to him explaining the situation. Here is an English translation of that conversation:

S: Hello. We have 3 keys, but no keys work in trash room.

L: You do not need a key for the trash, just bring the trash down to the street and put it in the containers there.

S: Yes, yes, yes, the 3 keys no work. Where is key works?

L: I think you misunderstand. There is no key. You need to bring your trash out to the bins that are on the street. Didn’t my wife explain this to you already? Take the trash to the street. Understand?

S: Yes, very good. You have key. I need key. Wife is key.

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(Postcard Numero Dos from Oviedo continued from page 13)

L: No, there is no key. Forget about keys. I think I will call your Spanish friend and he can explain this to you. Okay? I will call your Spanish friend.

S: Wonderful. Key is good. Your wife trash. I see your wife. Perfect.

L: I'm starting to lose my patience sir. Please stop talking about my wife, and forget about a key. There is no freaking key.

S: Yes, yes, your wife trash and give key. Good, good.

L: Enough about my wife! There is NO key. Forget about the key, and forget about my wife.

S: Thank you. I will have your wife soon. Your wife is key. Thank you for your wife. Good bye.

Of course we were not exactly sure of all that was said until our host called and told us that our land-

lord called him, and thought Steve was confused and to put the trash in the containers outside on the street.

Fortunately, we live in the era of Internet, so when our 5-year-old's teacher sent a note home, Google translator revealed that: *Recientemente se ha detectado algún caso de piojos en el curso del que es alumno su hijo*, actually means: *Recently cases of head lice have been detected in the class of the student who is your son*. Needless to say we are all working on our Spanish.

For now, that is all of our advice. These early days have certainly been an adventure. When the kids complain Steve reminds them that Bilbo Baggins complained about his adventure -- and look what that lead to. Hopefully our adventures will be tamer, although a magic ring certainly holds great appeal. *Hasta luego!*

Why should graduate students seek out formal mentoring at NERA? By Tom Levine

Recent issues of the *NERA Researcher* have let graduate students know that they can get mentored by a senior scholar at our annual conference. This mentor would read twenty-pages of your work in progress, such as a dissertation proposal, Master's thesis, journal manuscript, or other work, would meet with you one-on-one to talk about your work, and if time allows, would also have a group advising session with the three or four graduate students he or she mentored. In the last issue of the *Researcher*, Aja LaDuke wrote about how important and powerful a conversation with a NERA mentor was for her.

This coming fall, we expect to set up two or three mentors with up to four graduate student mentees at our NERA Conference. If you are in a graduate program, you will be eligible to request such mentoring this summer; we'll send details and a deadline for requesting mentoring in the next *Researcher*.

What if you're a graduate student engaged in research—our target audience—but you're satisfied with the level of support and advising you now get from your advisor and/or the courses you're in. Why should you still consider meeting with a mentor at NERA?

1. Get a perspective and expertise that compliment those already available to you. There are multiple ways to think about or conduct research, even within a specific field or broad approach. A mentor can bring the gift of fresh eyes, a new perspective, and much lived experience, helping open up practical possibilities, new questions, and new ways of thinking about your work. Our mentors are chosen for their skills, and are also likely to bring expertise above and beyond the talents of the faculty who are already available to you.

2. Be reminded of—or see more clearly—the import of your work. After wallowing in the hard work of pushing your first or second research project forward, it can be a huge help for some one else to step back with you, remind you of why your work is important, or help you more fully appreciate the potential impact your research could have. Your mentor's thinking with you in this area might also affect what you do in ways that will enhance your ability to collect and analyze data for more audiences than you now anticipate addressing.

3. Improve yourself as a researcher. It is not easy to master the discrete skills and larger habits

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of mind that allow for rigorous educational research. A mentor helps you identify ways of designing your study, reporting on your research, or thinking about your work. They are not just addressing a specific product you have shared; they are helping you become an educational researcher.

4. Make connections. Your well-read and well-connected NERA mentor may know of articles, scholars, or recent graduates whose work could inform your current thinking, or serve as a model for you. They might even put you in touch with someone else. The very fact of engaging in this session of mentoring adds at least one more contact to the network you are building. Completing a dissertation—or any other culminating project for a graduate program—can be a lonely path. Break the isolation, and enjoy some conversation and thoughtful input from someone else who has walked further on the path than you have.

5. Ask hard questions and flaunt what you don't know with someone who is only there to support you. Mentors are not on your dissertation committee, are not making decisions about

publication of your work, and have the luxury of focusing simply on what would help your specific project and/or you as a researcher. You don't need to "look smart" in front of them.

6. Look smart. Many researchers seek out critique and input at more than one point during their work. Doing so helps them look smart and become smarter. Add to the list of people you will acknowledge in your dissertation, thesis, or next journal article. And remember that you're not the only one who gets "smarter" through mentoring; you give your mentor the chance to get smarter by learning about your specific area and thinking through the unique issues in your research project.

We are excited to be developing a more formal arrangement for mentoring that compliments all of the informal mentoring that occurs at NERA. If you are in a graduate program and working on educational research, given the many hours you are likely to spend alone on your work, we encourage you to avail yourself of the wisdom and insight a NERA mentor could offer. Look for more details in the next *NERA Researcher*.

Report from the NERA Membership Committee

The committee has a new chair, John W. Young (ETS), and three new members, Thanos Patelis (College Board), Mary Pitoniak (ETS), and Javarro Russell (James Madison University.). Several recruitment activities are planned for 2009:

1. An announcement regarding NERA and the annual conference was submitted for the upcoming AERA Division D newsletter.
2. We have identified faculty and deans of schools of education from several institutions in the Northeast that have not actively participated in the NERA conference recently. They will receive a mailing, which will include a copy of last year's conference program, a letter from the NERA President and the Membership Committee chair, and a copy of the call for proposals for the 2009 conference.
3. In March, we will post the call for conference proposals on each of the AERA division listservs and the NCME listserv.
4. We plan to distribute widely at the AERA conference copies of the call for conference proposals.

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The Graduate Lounge

For this issue of the Graduate Lounge, the GSIC has compiled a list of resources that we have found to be helpful and/or informative as we work toward our degrees. We hope you find these resources helpful as well.

Suggestion from GSIC member Asil Özdoğru:

Among those rows of theoretical and technical articles and books, one might find it relaxing and enjoyable to have a comic book not about super heroes but about us, graduate students, some of whom might have extraordinary talents to be classified as superheroes. Jorge Cham's acclaimed series of cartoons *Piled Higher and Deeper (PHD)* are published in 3 volumes for a modest price not to hurt fragile graduate student budgets. Cham's web site <http://www.phdcomics.com> offers a rich archive of his cartoons as well as an online store to purchase the books or other souvenir items.

Suggestions from GSIC member Marisa Cohen:

Pintrich, P.R., & Schunk, D. H. (2002). *Motivation in education: Theory, research, and applications* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Person Education Incorporated.

This is a wonderful textbook that ties the theories of motivation to their use in the classroom. It examines how students' cognitions, affect, and values come into play in everyday classroom situations, as well as discusses how to improve upon students' motivation. The theories discussed are broken down into the influence of personal and environmental factors, developmental and group differences, as well as gender and ethnic differences, giving the reader complete coverage of the subject.

Zimmerman, B.J., Bonner, S., & Kovach, R. (2006). *Developing self-regulated learners: Beyond achievement to self-efficacy*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association Press.

This is a wonderful manual for educators. It explains self-regulatory principles, as well as ways to incorporate them in the classroom. Six goals are outlined for teachers, ranging from understanding the principles of self-regulated learning to developing skills such as classroom note-taking. At the end of each chapter is a group of self-directed questions to help the teacher think about his/her classroom and the way in which it is structured. Examples of students' work, as well as useful forms to enable teachers to implement the principles are provided.

Suggestion from GSIC member Megan France:

Bem, D. J. (2003). Writing the empirical journal article. In Darley, J. M., Zanna, M. P., & Roediger III, H. L. (Eds.). *The Compleat Academic: A Career Guide*. (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association Press.

Writing skills are crucial for success in any graduate program. One resource I have continually found to be helpful is Bem's chapter titled "Writing the empirical journal article". I have referred to it many times when preparing manuscripts. Bem provides clear advice for writing each section of a journal article (e.g., introduction, methods, results, discussion). I have found his section on *rewriting and polishing your article* to be especially helpful.

Suggestion from GSIC member Carol Barry:

Ree, M. J., & Carretta, T.H. (2006). The role of measurement error in familiar statistics. *Organizational Research Methods*, 9, 99-112.

Many of the statistics used in educational research make the assumption that our variables are measured without error. Given that nearly all variables in educational research are measured with less than perfect reliability, how are the statistics we use and the interpretations we make based on those statistics impacted by this? This easy-to-read article clearly outlines the impact of measurement error and helps reinforce the fact that good measurement is crucial to *all* areas of research.

Announcement

Two workshops on Hierarchical Linear Models will be held at the University of Connecticut as part of DATIC 2009. Both workshops cover the same material.

Dates are:

Session A: Monday, June 8 to Friday, June 12

Session B: Monday, June 15 to Friday, June 19

Each workshop covers basics and applications of multilevel modeling with extensions to more complex designs. Participants will learn how to analyze data via a multilevel model, and be able to interpret the results from their analyses. Participants are expected to have a working knowledge of multiple regression as well as SPSS (or SAS). Analyses will be demonstrated using the software HLMv6. Alternative software packages, including SPSS, will be discussed, and examples provided. Instruction will consist of lecture, computer workshops, and individualized consultations. The emphasis will be practical with minimal emphasis on statistical theory, but those seeking more statistical information can arrange an individualized session during instructor office hours. The cost of registration is \$900 prior to April 1st, and \$1000 after April 1st. Because the number of spaces is limited, please apply soon to reserve a space. To register, send an email to datiworkshops@gmail.com in order to save a place.

The workshop covers the following topics:

- Random and fixed effects
- Intraclass correlation and estimation of proportion of variance explained
- Methods of centering
- Two-level general linear models
- Three-level general linear models
- Applications of two- and three-level models to organizational data
- Applications of two- and three-level models to longitudinal data
- The flexible treatment of time within multilevel models
- Piecewise Growth Curves using HLM
- Two-level generalized (logistic) linear models
- Residual Analyses

More information about the workshops is available online at <http://davidakenny.net/datic/datic.hlm.htm>

Member News and Announcements

Dr. Lawrence R. Schultz received a position with the School of Education at Salem State College, and will be teaching Special Education Law in its graduate program.

Dr. Williams Emeka Obiozor, assistant professor of Exceptionality Programs, Bloomsburg University of PA, recently published the following journal articles:

"Language and Graffiti of Exceptional Individuals: Pedagogical Strategies in West Africa", *AJCJS*; 3 (2), 2008.

"Applying Focus Groups in Educational Research in Africa", *Institute of Education Journal*, UNN; 19 (1), 2008.

"Culture and Education: The Significance of Names in Igboland," *Institute of Education Journal*, UNN; 19 (1), 2008; and a book chapter;

"Globalization and Women's Education: Evidence from a Sub-Saharan Africa," in *Globalization of Business: Theories and Strategies for Tomorrow's Managers* by J.O. Okpara (ed.) 2008; Adonis and Abbey Publishers, United Kingdom.

Book Review

By Shannon Hilliker-VanStrander

Cone, J.D. & Foster, S.L. (2006). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish: Psychology and related fields*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Having just started serving on dissertation committees, I have found the book *Dissertation and Theses from Start to Finish* valuable to me and my students. The book is rooted in the field of psychology with a heavy quantitative focus, but can be used for other fields such as education. In the second edition of their book, the authors offer practical guidance for doing research along with tips on writing and presenting. Throughout graduate school, there is no substitute for university requirements, school and program regulations and dissertation advisor leadership, but this book can offer some insight for students transitioning from coursework to the dissertation.

The book offers students good tips such as looking at dissertations completed by others in the same field/department or by the same advisor, and looking in journals in their field to learn about manuscript requirements. The book also suggests software for conducting and analyzing research, as well as time management pointers. Several exhibits in the chapters provide self checks such as a hypothesis checklist that asks “yes or no” questions about hypotheses and to-do lists for the proposal stage. Further, the book provides information for those who are new to doing research with sections such as the cost of doing research. Additional resources are given at the end of each chapter in the form of books and web sites for further information on each topic and piece to the dissertation.

The book begins with information about the dissertation process with commentary on how to select a topic for the dissertation as well as considerations when choosing committee members and mentors. This seems particularly relevant to those who study part-time and are far from the politics of their school, or international students who may not be familiar with accepted ways to go about important aspects of edict such as how to approach a faculty member. This is followed by a solid introduction to proposals which sheds some light on this part of the process for those who are not familiar. At this point in the book the focus

turns to psychology work, but also has good tips and advice on literature searches, reading and critically thinking about articles, recording evaluations of literature, and organization strategies. This is followed by reminders about plagiarism and points out that students should be prepared to revise their work.

Next, the methodology section is presented with essential details that need to be included in this section of the proposal and dissertation. If a student is doing a mixed methods or qualitative study this section may need to be supplemented or may prove irrelevant. The chapter does not talk about qualitative methods and such topics as participant selection or variables. However, the talk of procedure in this chapter is applicable to all and the ethics discussion is a good reminder for researchers in general. The authors dedicate a small section of their book to the IRB. Stronger language could be used to show how important and necessary the IRB is to research and protecting participants as well as the researcher. The diligence of the IRB is very important for most universities and this is not conveyed in this short section of the book.

There is a portion of the book allotted to measurement which is necessary and useful for those doing quantitative studies. It should be pointed out that there is no substitute for course work and this section is not a series of lessons on doing and interpreting statistics. Further, there are excellent tips for those using statistics that goes beyond just understanding what the numbers mean and helps with the selection of statistics with concrete examples. This chapter also has a comprehensive resource section for researchers who will use quantitative methods. For those researchers using qualitative methods in their study, this section would not be beneficial.

Toward the end of the book the authors touch on topics such as the importance of pilot testing. They also take time to present information about

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Book Review

By Brian R. Evans, Ed.D.,

Assistant Professor of Mathematics Education, Pace University, New York

Leonard, J. (2008). *Culturally specific pedagogy in the mathematics classroom*. New York: Routledge.

Jacqueline Leonard, in her 2008 book, *Culturally Specific Pedagogy in the Mathematics Classroom*, says the purpose of writing this book is to advocate the use of culturally specific pedagogy to better instruct students from diverse backgrounds in mathematics. Culturally specific pedagogy is the teaching practice of taking one's students' culture and specific backgrounds into direct consideration when planning and implementing instruction. Leonard claims, and indeed does throughout the book, to make the link between research and practice, and to give teachers lesson templates that can be used with ethnically diverse students and females.

Considering that many teachers are often culturally and ethnically dissimilar from the students they teach, there is a real need for the guidance

this book offers teachers with students from diverse backgrounds. The "color-blind" approach to mathematics education simply does not work and therefore many scholars, such as Leonard, now promote taking diversity into consideration and embracing it rather than ignoring it. Any teacher, from any background, who teaches students from diverse backgrounds will find this book an invaluable resource in planning their lessons while taking their students' best interests into consideration. Anyone who values urban education and social justice will find this book an inspiring read.

Leonard concludes that while her book is no panacea, it is a beginning for changing societal perceptions, increasing student achievement, and embracing the culture of all students.

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research assistants, but do not mention that some universities do not allow the use of research assistants on the dissertation. The logistics of planning that may not have been considered, especially in terms of the sheer amount of time that some data collection, management and analysis may take is tackled. It also gives some insight into data collection software. There are also tips provided on writing the results clearly as well as how to present figures and tables. Again, the qualitative researcher would need some supplementation here.

Finally, a good portion at the end of the book covers questions for a researcher to think about and ask themselves when completing their results section. This section presents what a researcher should think about in terms of what their research found as well as what it did not find. There is a limitations section which covers mainly statistical limitations rather than those that would be

considered by the qualitative researcher. This is followed by a very clear description about what to expect and do during both the proposal and dissertation defense and ways to manage anxiety. The part about audiovisual equipment is a bit dated and could be updated with the equipment and software that is used today, although PowerPoint is mentioned. The book concludes with a section dedicated to presenting at conferences and moves to a short talk on finding a job and publishing.

**Please post the 40th Annual
Conference poster
where colleagues will see it!**

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