

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	2
2009 Online Election Slate	3
NERA is Going Green	3
40th Annual Conference Highlights	4
Register for the NERA Conference	5
Membership Committee Report	5
About NERA Committees	8
Mentoring Program Expands	8
The Graduate Lounge	9
Woollatt Paper Competition	9
Member News	11
Postcard from Oviedo	11

Visit us on the web
at:
**www.nera-
education.org**

The NERA Researcher

Volume 47, Issue 3

September 2009

The President's Message



Kristen Huff

Using Educational Research to Improve Student Learning

Just as I was starting to get the hang of writing these, my time is up! There is so much I'm eager to share with the membership at this time that I'm not even sure where to start... At the same time, I've got to keep this short and to the point because there's an awful lot of really critical information about the conference that must be included in this issue, and I know that Jennifer and Kevin are already concerned about squeezing it all in. Let's see what I can do.

- Please be sure to check out the article in this issue about **NERA Committees**. Committees are one of the primary ways to get involved in our organization, and we are always seeking volunteers who are ready to serve.
- The **NERA Business Meeting** will be held **Friday, October 23rd at 8am** and is open to **all** members. Please attend! Two critical votes will be held:
 1. Making the GSIC Chair a full voting member of the Board.
 2. Making the Treasurer an appointed position rather than an elected position.
 Please refer to the March 2009 *NERA Researcher* for more information on these votes: (<http://www.nera-education.org/newsletter/NERAResearcherMarch09.pdf>).
- Starting with the December issue of *The NERA Researcher*, members will have the **choice** to receive their copy **online only**! Printing and mailing *The NERA Researcher* is the largest single budget line in our operating budget. In these economic times, it is fiscally responsible for us to consider ways to cut costs. Also, it is much kinder to the environment to reduce the use of paper when feasible.
- The NERA conference relies upon generous support of our Institutional Members. This issue of *The NERA Researcher*, as well as your 2009 Conference Program, will include a list of the institutions that sponsor NERA. Please be sure to give their representatives at the conference a warm note of thanks.

I hope you are looking forward to the conference as much as I am. The amount of work by our Program Committee – Maureen, Liz and Pete – has been and continues to be humbling and inspiring. They are really working hard, and have put so much care into every detail. I hope you will be sure to thank them in October.

The conference theme this year is one that is near and dear to my heart. As someone trained in educational measurement, I have seen too many researchers get caught up in the magic of numbers. I was just as captivated my first year at UMass, learning about polytomous item response theory, differential item functioning, equipercentile equating and simulation studies. During my first NERA conference, I remem-

(Continued on page 3)

Message from the Editors

Greetings NERA Members! We hope you all had a safe and enjoyable summer. Fall is upon us and that means the 40th annual NERA Conference is just around the corner.

As Kristen Huff wrote in her President's Message, our conference co-chairs, Maureen Ewing, Liz Stone, and Peter Swerdzewski, were extremely busy this summer dealing with a record number of proposal submissions. We thank them for their service and look forward to the exciting program they have put together. A list of program highlights can be found in this issue of *The NERA Researcher*.

The conference location is again the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill. Information about conference rates and how to register for the conference can be found on page 5, or go online to www.nera-education.org.

We hope you find this issue of *The NERA Researcher* informative. Please let us know if you have ideas on ways to improve this publication. We look forward to seeing you in October!

Jennifer and Kevin
The Editors

Jennifer Kobrin
The College Board
jkobrin@collegeboard.org

Kevin Meara
Educational Testing Service
kmeara@ets.org

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
finneysj@jmu.edu

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

Lynn Shelley-Sireci (2007-2010)
Westfield State College
lshelley@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 Committee:
Diane E. Liebert
DLE Associates
diane444@comcast.net

Thomas Donlon Mentoring Award Committee:
Samantha Feinman
Pace University
sfeinman@pace.edu

Teacher-as-Researcher Award Committee:
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

2009 NERA Election to be Conducted Online

At the 2008 Annual Meeting, the membership voted to no longer use paper ballots via the U.S. Mail and to conduct all elections for NERA Officers and the Board of Directors online. All NERA members in good standing will receive an email in September with directions regarding our new election process. If you do not have a current email on file with NERA, please contact Barbara Helms (NERA Treasurer) at bjhelms@gmail.com with your email address. Since our primary aim is to increase participation in the election process, please vote when requested to do so this fall.

Slate of Candidates for the 2009 Election

President

Thanos Patelis
Darlene Perner

Secretary

Barbara Yingling Wert

Board of Directors

Dolores Burton
Samantha Feinman
Jennifer Kobrin
Elizabeth Stone

The President's Message

Continued from page 1

ber sitting in the audience at the Teacher-as-Researcher award session, listening to a middle-school teacher share her experiences doing action research in the classroom. Listening to this teacher talk about seeing the spark of understanding in her students' eyes when they learned something new, I felt, for a moment, extremely disconnected from education. Although nothing could (or has since) diminished my passion about improving educational measurement, I made a commitment to myself right then to make sure that everything I do has a clear and transparent connection to teaching and learning in the classroom. And that's my litmus test for evaluating any research in which I engage, as well as any study that I review, whether for journals, for conferences, or for a colleague: What is the potential impact on student learning? If the answer is *I'm not sure*, then the research is most likely an intellectual exercise that holds little value. So, fellow researchers, I challenge you to ask yourself about the ultimate goal of your work. If it's not to improve student learning, then what is it? Think about it, and let's talk when we see each other in October.

Important Announcement Regarding *The NERA Researcher*

NERA is going green! In the past, a printed copy of the *Researcher* has been delivered to each member's preferred address. In accordance with NERA's commitment to sustainability, beginning with the December 2009 edition of the *Researcher*, members will now have the option of only receiving an electronic version of the newsletter. When members renew their NERA membership, they will be asked to indicate whether they would like to continue to receive a paper copy of the *Researcher* (these members will also receive an email with a link to the online newsletter), or whether they would like to only receive an email with the link to each newly-published issue of the *Researcher*.

By default, members will receive the paper version of the *Researcher*.

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

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

Greetings, NERA members! We hope that you have had an enjoyable summer and are looking forward to the fall (and with it, the 2009 conference!). Our goals this month are to update you on proposal submissions and to let you know when some of the program highlights will be occurring in order to get you ready for the conference.

The response to the call for proposals was fantastic. This year, we received a stunning **189** proposals, a good number of which were for full-session presentations such as symposia or working groups. We are so excited about the number and quality of submissions this year! We want to extend our deep gratitude and appreciation to the many folks who volunteered to review proposals and who submitted their reviews under a tight timeline. Despite the challenges involved in the process, the reviews are a critical part of setting the schedule and providing a NERA-worthy conference. We've had to make some tough decisions, but are, once again, thankful for the generosity, effort, and patience displayed by the NERA members throughout this process.

What follows is a preliminary outline of some key sessions that will take place at the conference.

Please note that, this year, the conference will start earlier (at 10 AM for pre-conference sessions; at 1:30 PM for the main conference) in order to prevent overlap between the pre-conference and concurrent sessions to make it easier for members to attend both. You may want to check out the discounted hotel rates available for Tuesday night (which do NOT include meals) and enjoy more at the conference or just in the Rocky Hill area: <http://cwp.marriott.com/bdlrh/nera/>. In addition to the program elements below, we will be enjoying receptions on both Wednesday and Thursday night.

Graduate students or those involved in the mentoring program: keep an eye out for information from Megan France and Tom Levine, respectively, about events that will be of specific interest to you!

As always, we welcome your questions and

feedback at neramembers@gmail.com. We are looking forward to the conference and hope to see you in October!

Maureen, Liz, and Pete

*Please note that the following represents a **tentative** outline of some highlights of the 2009 NERA program.*

Wednesday, 10/21

10AM - 12:45PM: Pre-conference session A (Mary Pitoniak, ETS; Susan Cooper Loomis, National Assessment Governing Board), *"Fundamentals of Standard Setting"*

10AM - 12:45PM: Pre-conference session B (Caroline Wylie, ETS), *"Supporting Professional Development through Teacher Learning Communities: Research support, practical lessons learned, and evaluating the impact"*

5:45PM - 6:45PM: Keynote address (Mary M. Kennedy, Michigan State University), *"Can Research Help Teachers? Why Are There Doubts?"*

Thursday, 10/22

10:15AM - 11:15AM: NERA Poster Session

11:30AM - 12:30PM: Keynote address (George A. Pruitt, Thomas Edison State College)

2PM - 3:30PM: In-conference training (Dena Pastor, James Madison University), *"Classifying Persons Into Groups: An Introduction to Mixture Modeling and Considerations for Applied Practice"*

Friday, 10/23

8AM - 9AM: NERA Business meeting (**all members are invited!**)

9AM - 10:30AM: In-conference training (Stan Shaw, University of Connecticut; Michael Coyne, University of Connecticut), *"Grant Writing"*

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

Friday, 10/23 (continued)

10:45AM - 12:15PM: In-conference training (Kelly Godfrey, College Board), *"Put Down the Highlighters! Qualitative Analysis Using NVivo 8"*

Registering for the 2009 NERA conference is quick and convenient

- Go to the NERA website, <http://www.nera-education.org/>.
- Choose **Annual Conference**. You'll find one link that will bring you directly to the membership and conference registration form (i.e., click on the conference registration link) and another link that will bring you to the Marriott Hotel's reservations page and the special conference rates (i.e., click on the hotel information link).
- Fill out the membership and registration form, and submit payment in one of the following two ways:
- Complete the online membership and registration form and pay for your conference registration and membership using PayPal, a very secure portal for online financial transactions.
- Downloading a registration and membership form, which you can print and mail along with a check if you prefer to register for the conference in this way.
- **Note** that the conference registration is free for graduate students, but graduate students must still register for the conference and must pay the \$15 annual membership dues.

Reserving Your Room and Meals at the Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill

To receive any of these special rates, reservations must be made by Wednesday, October 1, 2009 either through NERA's webpage or by calling 1-800-228-9290 and mentioning NERA.

Graduate students: NERA continues to be an affordable choice for students. The Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill is offering a special Graduate Student quad rate of \$432.76, which includes meals and accommodations for four students per night, and thus comes to about \$108 per student. This special rate is available for graduate students ONLY. The graduate students are responsible for finding their roommates. One student will have to use a credit card to reserve the room for the quad. Remember, each graduate student must also register for the conference individually.

All other conference attendees: Conference attendees may reserve a double or triple room and split the cost, or may reserve a single room. The Hartford Marriott Rocky Hill is offering us single occupancy rooms at \$200.44 per night plus tax, double occupancy rooms at \$277.88 per night plus tax, and triple occupancy rooms at \$355.32 per night plus tax. A room reserved for Wednesday night includes Wednesday dinner and Thursday breakfast and lunch; a room reserved for Thursday night includes Thursday dinner and Friday breakfast and lunch.

Report from the NERA Membership Committee

John W. Young (ETS), Chair

The committee's recruitment activities this year were partly responsible for generating an increase of 24% in the number of proposals submitted for this year's conference as compared to last year. This includes at least 22 proposals from colleges/universities that were targeted for recruitment as they had no attendees last year (this figure does not include institutions that were contacted by other NERA members). Between now and the conference, the committee will send out announcements about the conference to additional institutions, encouraging their faculty and students to attend this year's conference.

The College Board

Connecting Students to College Success

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

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



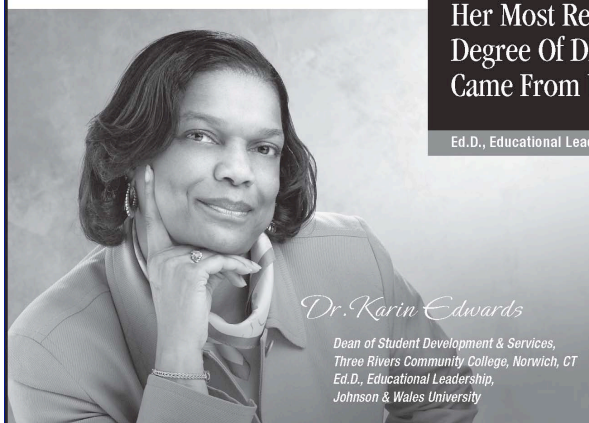
Not-for-profit, all for kids

Pioneers in rigorous, standards-based assessment for general and special populations;
leaders in multi-state collaboration; counsel to districts for
professional development and local assessment



It's all about student learning. Period.

800.431.8901
www.measuredprogress.org



Her Most Recent
Degree Of Distinction
Came From Us

Ed.D., Educational Leadership

Dr. Karin Edwards

Dean of Student Development & Services,
Three Rivers Community College, Norwich, CT
Ed.D., Educational Leadership,
Johnson & Wales University

Karin Edwards is an outstanding graduate of our Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership.

Her credentials are a testament to her work ethic, dedication, and creativity. The fact that she chose Johnson & Wales for her Ed.D., we think, is a testament to the quality of our program.

- Alternative Weekend Classes
- Flexible Schedule
- Integrated Learning
- Elementary/Secondary and Higher Education Cohorts
- Dissertation Support



JOHNSON & WALES
UNIVERSITY

For more information and a Doctoral catalog
call Jaime DiPaola at 401-598-1993

The School of Education

The Alan Shawn Feinstein Graduate School

Not yet a member of NERA?
Go here today to register:

[http://www.nera-education.org/
membership.php](http://www.nera-education.org/membership.php)

Buffalo State
State University of New York

**Center for Health &
Social Research**

Bucknell
UNIVERSITY

The education program at Bucknell combines a liberal arts education with professional preparation. The integration of liberal and professional studies provides students with a broad and deep education not found in traditional professional programs, and it develops within them the resourcefulness, imagination, and leadership they need to become effective teachers across a variety of contexts and environments.

Learn more at www.bucknell.edu/Education.xml

About NERA Committees

As you page through your *NERA Researcher*, you may notice references to various committees that carry out organizational functions. NERA has a number of committees that offer great opportunities for members to become involved. We'd like to take this opportunity to update you on a recent review of these committees that will help shape how these vital committees can continue to support NERA's membership and goals in the coming years.

In essence, NERA has two types of committees:

- First, there are several standing committees that attend to **governance and member services** (Membership, Technology, Nominations, and the Graduate Student Issues Council (GSIC)).
- Second, NERA has four committees that **award honors** on an annual basis (Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring, Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service to NERA, Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award, and the Teacher-as-Researcher Award).

Beginning just after the 2008 conference, at the request of NERA President Kristen Huff, Board of Directors members Sara Finney and April Zenisky carried out an initial review of NERA committees, focusing on the committees' purposes and participation structures (who is on them, for how long, and how do new volunteers come to take on committee roles). Our source materials were the member handbook and recent surveys of committee chairs. This early review suggested to us that the handbook offered limited guidance about committee structure, and was in need of considerable updating as to the current and future needs of NERA's committees. Our first review was discussed at length at the winter Board of Directors meeting, and led to a second, in-depth analysis culminating in formal recommendations for committee organization and format. This was completed in May 2009 by April, Sara, and NERA Past President Sharon Cramer. The recommendations we have provided to the Board are structural in nature and provide guidance regarding the number of members for each committee and how members are appointed, and define the terms of service for committee members, including the start and end dates for service terms. Look for information about these recommendations in the December edition of the *Researcher*!

NERA Mentoring Program Expands!

By Tom Levine, Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut

Throughout its existence, NERA has provided educational researchers with opportunities to support one another in ways formal and informal. Welcoming and supporting graduate students is also a longstanding tradition in our organization. Building on this history, NERA piloted a more formal arrangement for mentoring graduate students at our 2008 conference. This year, we are expanding the program. We received ten requests and matched nine graduate student mentees with four NERA Mentors. NERA thanks the following four mentors for their willingness to share their expertise related to mentees' research topics and/or methodologies at our 2009 conference:

- Dr. Scott Brown, University of Connecticut
- Dr. Sarah Finney, George Mason University
- Dr. Megan Staples, University of Connecticut
- Dr. Dianne Zager, Pace University

Are you a graduate student who might benefit from sharing up to 20 pages of work in progress with a more experienced scholar at next year's NERA conference? You already have advisors, classes, and other sources of support within your university; however, an additional perspective on your dissertation proposal, a draft thesis chapter, or other work in progress could affect your growth as a researcher as well as your current work. This coming spring, look in the *NERA Researcher* for announcements regarding how and when to request mentoring for the 2010 conference.

The Graduate Lounge

Megan France, GSIC Chair

Graduate Student Sessions and Events at NERA 2009

It's hard to believe the conference will take place next month! The GSIC is looking forward to the Graduate Student Social (Wed., Oct. 21st @ 4:45pm) and GSIC sponsored sessions. We will be sponsoring the in-conference session on grant writing as well as a panel tailored toward graduate students (Thurs., Oct. 22nd @ 5:30pm).

Thanks GSIC members: Asil, Andri, Carol, and Christine!

This October, the GSIC will be sad to see four of their members "retire" from the committee. Asil, Andri and Christine were some of the founding members of GSIC, working to start the committee in 2006. Asil served as the first GSIC chair and Andri served as chair last year. Carol joined the committee in 2007. We thank these members for all the time and hard work they put into the GSIC. We also wish them the best as they finish their dissertations and move on in their careers.

The GSIC is looking for new members...

Although we're sad to see Asil, Andri, Carol, and Christine complete their service to the GSIC, we look forward to selecting four new members. Serving on the GSIC is a great way to get involved with NERA and build relationships outside of your university. If you are interested in being a member of the GSIC, you'll need to submit a short statement of intent (150 words) and your CV to neragraduatestudents@gmail.com by Oct. 30th. Members serve for 2 to 3 years. Please feel free to contact Megan France (francemk@jmu.edu) or any of the committee members if you have any questions.

Best Paper by a Graduate Student Award

If you are first author on the paper you present at NERA, we hope you will consider submitting your paper for the "Best Paper by a Graduate Student" Award. The recipient of the award will be given \$250 for travel to NERA the following year. If you want to be considered for the award, papers will be due a week after the conference. More information about the award and submission process will be available at the conference.

2009 Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Competition

In 1990, NERA renamed its distinguished paper award to honor Lorne H. Woollatt, a distinguished New York State educator and an active member of NERA. The award, now known as the Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award, is presented annually to a NERA member whose paper is deemed exemplary by the Award Committee.

Any paper reviewed and accepted by the Program Committee and presented at the 2009 NERA Annual Conference may be submitted for competition. Only one paper can be selected so the Committee is looking for an outstanding paper. We encourage submissions from those who received high marks or positive feedback from the Program Committee reviewers, your session's discussant or others. The winning paper will automatically be accepted for the 2010 AERA Annual Meeting as part of a session sponsored by the AERA/SIG: Consortium of State and Regional Educational Research Associations (SRERA). The award also in-

cludes a monetary stipend to help defray the recipient's travel expenses to AERA.

If you wish to enter your paper into the competition, please email two copies of your paper to the 2009 Committee Chair, Craig Wells no later than October 30, 2009 at cswells@educ.umass.edu. Please send one BLIND copy of your paper and one copy with your name and the following information: affiliation, address, email address and phone number.

Please note that the paper is to be based on your NERA presentation and should not include information that differs substantially from that which you actually presented at the NERA conference. Papers in the Research-in-Progress sessions are not appropriate for submission. In addition, papers should be limited to no more than a total of 20 double-spaced pages (not including Tables/Figures or References).



University of Connecticut
Neag School of Education

Learning, Leading, Lighting the Way



Conducting and Applying Research that Speaks to the Critical Issues in Education

Proud to be the top-ranked public school of education in the Northeast and on the East Coast.

A Carnegie Research University—Intensive,
an honor shared by just 4% of U.S. higher education institutions.

www.education.uconn.edu



UMASS
AMHERST

School of Education

BUROS
Center for Testing

THE CENTER FOR ASSESSMENT & RESEARCH STUDIES

- **Ph.D. Program in Assessment & Measurement**

<http://www.jmu.edu/assessment/graduate/PhdOverview.htm>

- **M.A. in Psychological Sciences**

(Quantitative Concentration)

<http://www.psyc.jmu.edu/psycsciences/quantitative.html>

- **Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Assessment**

<http://www.jmu.edu/outreach/assessment.shtml>

- **Center for Assessment & Research Studies**

<http://www.jmu.edu/assessment>

MSC 6806
24 Anthony-Seeger Hall
Harrisonburg, VA 22807
ph: 540.568.6706
fax: 540.568.7878



Postal Número Cuatro: The End of Sabbatical

Lynn Shelley-Sireci

We had a fantastic experience spending Steve's sabbatical in Oviedo Spain, where our three children attended the public schools, Steve worked (occasionally) at the University of Oviedo, and I took Spanish classes. The lessons we learned were countless, and the friends we made will undoubtedly be life-long.

A sabbatical abroad was similar to camping –relaxing, as well as a lot of work! With only 6 dishes we hand washed dishes constantly, and with only a few articles of clothing, no clothes dryer, and a tiny drying rack, laundry took on a life of its own. I obsessively watched the sky and flipped clothes to get everything crispy and dry on both sides. Our apartment had no hot water, so dish washing, laundry, and showering was extra fun. The hot water situation, paired with constant walks in the wind, and an inability to read the labels on hair products resulted in a hair crisis so severe even Steve noticed. It began with the kids saying my hair looked like a bird's nest, and moved on to hair advice from Steve; "Can't you tie it up to make it less wild?" Steve's hair did not fare much better since he went 5 months without a haircut. We looked like a couple of wild frizzy haired professors wearing sneakers and backpacks (about as opposite the typical Spanish look as you can get). In general, reading labels in Spanish was tricky. At one point we noticed our boys had flaky yellowish-brown spots on their legs and arms. We worried about strange Spanish skin diseases, but after a few days we realized the *Dove hand cream* we were rubbing into their dry skin was actually Dove tanning cream! We stopped using the cream and the strange Spanish skin disease disappeared.

But now we are back and have settled into our hectic American lifestyle. Our boys returned to their old schools, to reverse culture shock. Before he could even say hello to his friends, our eldest son was put in a room where he took 2 days of MCAS tests. And when our middle son generously shared his knowledge of Spanish curses with his classmates, he quickly learned his teacher can speak Spanish – so his first day back was spent in the principal's office.

We miss a lot about Oviedo. At the top of our list is free time! We also miss walking everywhere, having all 3 kids at the same school, and constantly learning. Uniquely Spanish things Steve and I miss are: the Spanish pace of life, sharing one long pillow, tapas, fresh fruit, after-hours meat vending machines (since the Asturian diet is 90% meat, there are occasional evening meat emergencies) and of course the people.

Before we began our Spanish adventure, I worried about leaving our house, our dog, and my job. I also worried about putting my English-speaking children into a Spanish public school. But, despite the difficulties, it was worth it. If you ever have the opportunity to spend a sabbatical abroad, take it!

Member News and Announcements

Dr. Melda N. Yildiz, a William Paterson University professor of educational media, has been named a Fulbright Scholar and will spend the fall 2009 semester conducting research and teaching in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. A specialist in media literacy education, Dr. Yildiz will be a Fulbright lecturer at Ashgabat, where she will teach courses in educational media and technology, and will provide professional development seminars and workshops to K12 teachers. She will also conduct research on integrating Asia into the K12 curriculum and educational technology in Turkmenistan.

Dr. Dianne Zager, Director of the Center for Teaching and Research in Autism and Michael C. Koffler Professor in Autism, has developed a new college support program for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) at Pace University's New York City campus. The groundbreaking program, which provides intensive ongoing support to students with ASD has a full cohort of students for September. Students will reside in dormitories and will be fully included in all aspects of academic and campus life.

Dr. John Young, Chair of the NERA Membership Committee, was recently promoted to Research Director at Educational Testing Service.

NERA RESEARCHER
Dr. Barbara J. Helms, Treasurer
P. O. Box 66114
Auburndale, MA 02466-1903



NERA 2009 is starting *early*!

Pre-conference sessions will begin at **10 AM** on Wednesday, October 21. The main conference sessions will begin at **1:30 PM** that afternoon.

