

The NERA Researcher

The President's Message



Rochelle Michel

Happy New Year, NERA! As I was writing this message, it gave me an opportunity to think about my NERA journey. My first introduction to NERA was as a graduate student in the Psychometric Program at Fordham University (Rose Hill campus). I was also a graduate student intern at the College Board and one of my mentors (and co-author), Jennifer Kobrin, suggested that we submit a paper based on SAT validity research that we conducted. While the original plan was for me to present the paper, the birth of my son altered those plans. It was not until a few years later,

as an early career professional that I attended my first NERA and presented a paper related to my dissertation, served as a discussant on a session, and served as a discussant during the graduate student poster session. I was all in! From then onward I knew that NERA would continue to be a professional home for me. David Moss from the University of Connecticut was the discussant for my paper session, and I will always remember the feedback and words of encouragement that he provided. I soon realized that my first experience attending NERA was the embodiment of NERA; a warm, collegial and supportive environment. As we make plans to commemorate NERA's 50th Annual Conference, we will continue in this spirit and support our new and long-standing members.

This year's conference theme is "Transformation by Design." The impetus for selecting this theme is the belief that in order to enact meaningful change, we need to be intentional in our actions. Over the course of this year, we will host a lunchtime webinar series that will cover a variety of topics that will be of interest to our membership, both graduate students and professional members. The webinars will cover topics such as social emotional learning, interviewing skills, starting a business as an independent consultant, getting the most out of the NERA Annual Conference, among others. The schedule will be coming out in the coming weeks, so watch for information via email and the NERA website.

Three amazing conference program co-chairs will support the 2019 Conference: Alejandra Garcia (University of Massachusetts Amherst), Paola

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The NERA Researcher

The NERA Researcher is the official newsletter for members of the Northeastern Educational Research Association.

Message from the Editors

Happy New Year NERA Members!

We hope everyone had a restful holiday season! First off, we would like to welcome Olcay Yavuz from Southern CT State University as the new Production Editor for the *NERA Researcher*. Thank you to Katherine Reynolds for serving in this role for the past three years!

As you will see in this issue, the 49th annual NERA Conference was a great success. Please join us in thanking our past president, Javarro Russell, and our 2018 conference co-chairs, Jade Caines Lee and Tabitha McKinley. We look forward to seeing the exciting events in the upcoming year leading up to the 50th annual conference under the new leadership of President Rochelle Michel, and 2019 conference co-chairs, Alejandra Garcia, Paola Heincke, and Bridget Thomas.

This issue contains highlights from the 2018 conference including information about our award winners. You will also find updates from the October Board Meeting and information about where to find the articles submitted to the conference proceedings. There are updates from the various committees and news from our current NERA members. Lastly, we encourage you to take a look at the article submitted by Ross Markle on "Five Ways to Make NERA Better."

As always, a special thank you to Barbara J. Helms for her continued assistance in editing the *NERA Researcher*!

Katrina Roohr and Olcay Yavuz

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Appointed Positions

2019 Conference Co-Chairs:

Alejandra Garcia
*University of Massachusetts
Amherst*

Paola Heincke
Educational Testing Service

Bridget Thomas
Quality Information Partners (QiP)

**The NERA Researcher
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Educational Testing Service

Olcay Yavuz
Southern CT State University

NERA Webmaster:

Chi Au
James Madison University

**NERA Conference
Proceedings Co-Editor for
Digital Commons:**

Jade Caines Lee
University of New Hampshire

**Mentoring Program
Co-Chairs:**

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Award Chair:**

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Western CT State University

Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award Chair:

April Zenisky
*University of Massachusetts
Amherst*

Lorne H. Woollatt
Distinguished Paper Chair:

Abby (Lau) Cahill
James Madison University

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Rowan University

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Ross Markle
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Collaborators*

Strategic Planning Chair:

April Zenisky
*University of Massachusetts
Amherst*

Heincke (Educational Testing Service), and Bridget Thomas (Quality Information Partners). In addition to Alejandra, Paola, and Bridget, a team of individuals who have volunteered to help with planning the conference (Fred Cline, Educational Testing Service; Daniel Fishtein, Educational Testing Service; Barbara Helms, Independent Consultant; Catherine Manly, University of Massachusetts Amherst; Francis Rick O'Donnell, University of Massachusetts Amherst; and Olcay Yavuz, Southern Connecticut State University). NERA is fortunate to have these dedicated individuals ready to commemorate this milestone for NERA. Aligned with our conference theme, we are excited to have three keynote speakers who are conducting transformational work within educational research and will have lots to share with our membership during the Annual Conference.

NERA's leadership has started the year on a strong note with our Winter Board of Directors meeting on January 11th and 12th. We welcomed three new board of members: Jason Kopp (American Board of Surgery), Juliette Lyons-Thomas (Educational Testing Service), and Joshua Marland (Education Analytics). In addition, Ross Markle ended his term on the Board of Directors and is now serving in his new role as President-elect, and Javarro Russell moved into the illustrious role of Past-President. I look forward to working with the NERA leadership and the various committees' chairs and their committee members.

If someone told me that I would eventually serve as President of NERA and have the opportunity to preside over the 50th Anniversary Annual Conference, I would have laughed and thought that it was impossible. For those of you reading this who can envision saying the same thing to yourself, think again. I invite you to embark upon a journey through NERA, a Transformation by Design, where you progress through your professional career and engage in all that NERA has to offer so that the natural progression is to NERA President. I also encourage you to consider volunteering and serving NERA as a conference proposal reviewer, session chair, discussant, or joining one of NERA's many committees, and when someone approaches you about running for one of NERA's elected positions, respond, "I'm in!"

I invite you to share with me your thoughts and ideas about improving NERA. You can email me at rmichel@erblearn.org. See you in Trumbull, CT— October 16-18, 2019.

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Member News

Dr. Olcay Yavuz's grant proposal has been approved. Starting from Fall 2019, Dr. Yavuz will implement an Evidence-Based Elementary Career Development Program in selected Connecticut Public Schools.

Please consider submitting your professional accomplishments to *The NERA Researcher* for recognition!

Submissions may be sent to theneraresearcher@nera-education.org.

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49th Annual Conference Highlights

We want to thank everyone who contributed to the success of the 2018 NERA Annual Conference. Participants attended from all over the country to share their research, chair and discuss sessions, participate in roundtables, collaborate on new projects, and volunteer to help the conference run smoothly. This year's program included 5 pre-conference workshops, 7 symposia, 4 invited sessions, a robust poster session, 2 roundtable sessions, and 21 individual paper sessions. We were fortunate to have thought-provoking and engaging speakers during this year's conference. Thank you to Terry Mazany, Deborah Bandalos, and Kyndra Middleton for delivering stimulating talks and sharing their expertise so generously. We would also like to thank all of the pre-conference workshop facilitators for volunteering their expertise in service of NERA and our members. Thank you to Jason Kopp, Sarah Ferguson, Brent Elder, Nikole Gregg, Brian Leventhal, Ellen Forte, Elizabeth Summers, Lauren Deters, and Rod Lasster. We would also like to thank Kisong Kim and the GSIC for organizing two very important sessions for graduate students during the conference: one on managing the dissertation stage of graduate school, and another on navigating the job market.

In addition to acknowledging contributors to the program, we would like to thank the many volunteers who shared their valuable time and insight into making this year's conference a success. From reviewing proposals, to discussing and chairing sessions, to those that helped register new and existing members and participants at the registration desk, we appreciated your help. We would like to offer a special thanks to Monica Erbacher and the NERA Communications Committee for their tremendous support leading up to the conference, Steven Holtzman for his consistent availability in troubleshooting roadblocks, and Jason Kopp for being available to answer all types of questions, day or night! We would also like to thank all of the institutional and personal conference sponsors, as the annual meeting would not have been possible without their contributions. Finally, we would like to thank each and every one of you for helping to make this year's meeting an engaging and enriching experience. At each conference the members all help to make the conference special for educational researchers from all settings and at all stages in their career. We look forward to the exciting program that the 2019 conference co-chairs, Alejandra Garcia, Paola Heincke, and Bridget Thomas are planning with Rochelle Michel, the 2019 NERA president.

Jade Caines Lee
Tabitha McKinley
2018 Conference Co-Chairs



Network with NERA members using our
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<https://www.facebook.com/NERAconference>

Advanced Announcement of the 2019 NERA Conference

October 16 – 18, 2019

Trumbull, CT

Alejandra Garcia, Paola Heincke, and Bridget Thomas

2019 Conference Co-Chairs



This is a banner year for NERA – our 50th Anniversary Conference! The conference theme is “Transformation by Design,” and we are planning as purposefully as the theme would indicate. We have three great keynote speakers confirmed for Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday: Dr. Monika Williams Shealey – Dean of the College of Education at Rowan University, Dr. Ezekiel Dixon-Román – Associate Professor in UPenn’s Social Policy and Practice program, and Dr. Alina von Davier – Senior Vice President at ACTNext. In addition to these compelling speakers, we will have a panel discussion where members such as Alina von Davier and Kristen Huff (and more) will discuss how they have transformed both themselves and the innovative programs they’ve worked on *by design*.

Prior to the conference, we will be hosting three webinars tied directly to the conference. There will be a 3-Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition we will be running during the conference. The 3MT is an academic competition in which participants have three minutes to explain the breadth and significance of their research project to a panel of judges and the audience. We will have two competition categories: one for graduate students and one for professionals. The pre-conference webinar associated with the competition is aimed at working with members to better visualize and communicate their core research to a broader audience. The other two webinars in the conference series are: “Key Advice for Different NERA Research Formats” and “Getting the Most Out of the NERA Annual Meeting.” The first webinar in the conference series will be held in March – Be on the look-out for more details!

Aside from the conference series, we will be announcing additional webinars throughout the year aimed at providing our NERA members with opportunities to add or improve professional skills. These will include research topics of interest such as social-emotional learning (SEL), as well as broader skills such as interviewing skills and starting a business as an independent consultant.

Everything we do is geared towards *transformation by design* – being intentional in our growth as an organization and as individuals. We would love to hear back from you on what you think of our plans and anything else you would like to know. Please contact us at NERA.CoChairs@gmail.com



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SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday, October 16 – Friday, October 18, 2019

NERA's 50th Annual Conference



Conference Theme: Transformation by Design

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

Opening Dinner: Keynote Address

Dr. Monika Williams Shealey, Professor and Dean of the College of Education, Rowan University

Thursday, October 17, 2019

Luncheon Presentation: Keynote Address

Dr. Alina von Davier, Senior Vice President, ACTNext

Dinner Presentation: Presidential Address

Dr. Rochelle Michel, Executive Director, Independent School Entrance Exam (ISEE), Educational Records Bureau (ERB)

Friday, October 18, 2019

Closing Luncheon: Keynote Address

Dr. Ezekiel Dixon-Roman, Associate Professor and Chair, Data Analytics for Social Policy Certificate Program,
University of Pennsylvania

The Conference will be held at the Trumbull Marriott Shelton in Trumbull, CT.

We look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

2018 Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring



The Thomas F. Donlon Memorial Award for Distinguished Mentoring is presented to a NERA member who is recognized as being an exceptional mentor to her/his students, colleagues, as well as other members in the field of education. In 2018, the recipient of the Donlon Mentoring Award is **Dr. Jody Piro** from Western Connecticut State University. There are many aspects of being a great mentor such as demonstrating effective and supportive teaching strategies and providing the necessary support for someone to finish a demanding project such as a dissertation. From her nomination letter and three recommendation letters, it was clear that Dr. Piro supported and guided her students in multiple areas of their educational career. The best way of fully understanding the depth of Dr. Piro's mentoring skills are seen in the quotes from her supporting letters. For example, "she models the various educational constructs through her teaching, displaying concrete examples which strengthen her pupils own instructional knowledge." She also had the expertise to be an effective teacher and researcher: "One of my favorite things about Dr. Piro is that no matter what topic or area of concern you bring her, she is always able to bring forth an article or researcher to guide you along in your journey."

As an advisor and friend, Dr. Piro demonstrates the mentorship skills to support her students' educational goals. "Her mentorship pushed and guided me into the best version of myself, and I could not have accomplished this massive undertaking without her steadfast devotion. More than anything though, I am so appreciative of the friendship that has grown through our working relationship and I will be forever grateful she was my advisor." Another student stated that "she uses her own practical knowledge to help her students and peers avoid potential pitfalls before they occur." Dr. Piro not only directly mentored her own students, she fostered an environment where her students could build their own healthy relationships with one another: Dr. Piro "wisely created a collegial relationship between her three dissertation advisees so that we could help and support one another throughout our own individual processes. She provided the perfect balance of soft oversight within a structure of guided autonomy." NERA is very fortunate and happy to have Dr. Jody Piro as a member of our community. She has selflessly dedicated and sacrificed her time and energy to support her students and colleagues and is well-deserving of the NERA Donlon Mentoring Award.



GOODWIN COLLEGE

2018 Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award Recipient

Congratulations to **Katie Filling**, the 2018 recipient of NERA's Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award for the paper entitled, *Ensuring Equity: Local School System's Policies and Practices Related to Supporting Homeless Students and Families*, which was co-authored by Maria Finger-Elam, also from Baltimore County Public Schools. The paper describes a mixed methods study using interviews and focus groups along with analysis of data to systematically identify current practices related to homeless students and propose improvements. The paper obtained high scores on all criteria evaluated by the award committee. The committee rates papers on relevance, theoretical backing, clarity, design, analytical procedures, and presentation of results and conclusion.

The Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award is named in honor of Lorne Woollatt, a distinguished New York State educator and NERA member. It is awarded annually, and a plaque is given to the recipient at the subsequent year's conference. Research papers from the 2018 NERA conference were submitted by their authors to the award committee for this competitive award. the recipient also receives a stipend of \$500 to present their paper at the one of the Distinguished Paper sessions at the AERA conference the following spring. Any questions about the award can be directed to the committee chair, **Abby Cahill** at lau.abigail@gmail.com



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The Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award Recipient for Outstanding Leadership and Service



The Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award is presented to a longstanding NERA member who “has generously given of self to NERA, to advance its mission and to enable it to thrive.” The award, instituted by the NERA Board of Directors in 1981, honors the memory of Leo D. Doherty who was instrumental in the development and growth of NERA as a professional association for educational research. His leadership qualities, both ethical and compassionate, encouraged others to pursue and achieve their goals. Thus, this award, now given annually, is presented to a NERA member who has shown outstanding leadership and service to our organization. The recipient of the 2018 NERA Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award for Outstanding Leadership and Service is **Steven Holtzman**. In reflecting on the spirit of the Doherty Award, I am particularly moved by the following statement: “...a nominee must be a member of long standing who has generously given of self to NERA, to advance its mission and

to enable it to thrive.” With that in mind, Steven Holtzman is NERA. For those of us who have had the extraordinary good fortune to have worked with Steven as he has progressed through various leadership positions within NERA, the extent to which he has committed himself to improving NERA operations and functions in every aspect of his service is far-reaching and has served to strengthen NERA as an organization and as a community.

Steven has been attending NERA for almost 10 years, and today’s NERA would not be nearly the organization it is without his contributions to our member services and functionality. My first real opportunity to work with Steven came when I was on the Board and he was the chair of the Communications Committee, and he was integral in collaborating with other committee members to professionalize our communications activities (email, web, and social media). His Communications Committee work led to his eventual role as the chair of the Infrastructure Committee, and it was there that I came to fully rely on Steven during my term as President, for his careful nature and eagerness to research new initiatives. He was very active in proposing infrastructure-related activities and identifying the pros and cons of different courses of action, to fully explore the benefits and potential consequences for members. To this day, I still appreciate the extent to which Steven put member needs and considerations first in laying out a path forward for NERA with respect to a wide range of issues such as defining the membership year for purposes of membership renewals.

Steven has also spent a year as Webmaster and was Presidential Advisor for Special Projects in 2014. In that Advisory capacity, among many other tasks as right-hand person to the then-NERA President, Steven was instrumental in bringing a vision of a NERA Webinar Series to fruition, to add year-round value to membership in NERA. He has further served as NERA Program CoChair for the 2013 conference, and most recently has been Treasurer. Steven is diligent, detail-oriented, and thoughtful, and NERA is better for his service and leadership. He is an exceptional volunteer and undoubtedly most deserving of the Leo D. Doherty Memorial Award for service to NERA.

--Submitted by April Zenisky, on behalf of the 2018 Doherty Award Committee (Elizabeth Stone, Barbara Helms, David Moss, Stephen G. Sireci, and April Zenisky)

Teacher-as-Researcher Award Recipient



The Teacher-as-Researcher Award is presented annually to a PK-12 teacher who has conducted a self-initiated classroom research project or applied research findings to inform his or her own teaching. The project must be conceptualized, developed, and implemented as part of the nominee's own teaching practices, and have had at least one cycle of trial and evaluation. The project should also be related to a clearly defined theoretical focus and represent an innovation that has led to concrete change in practice.

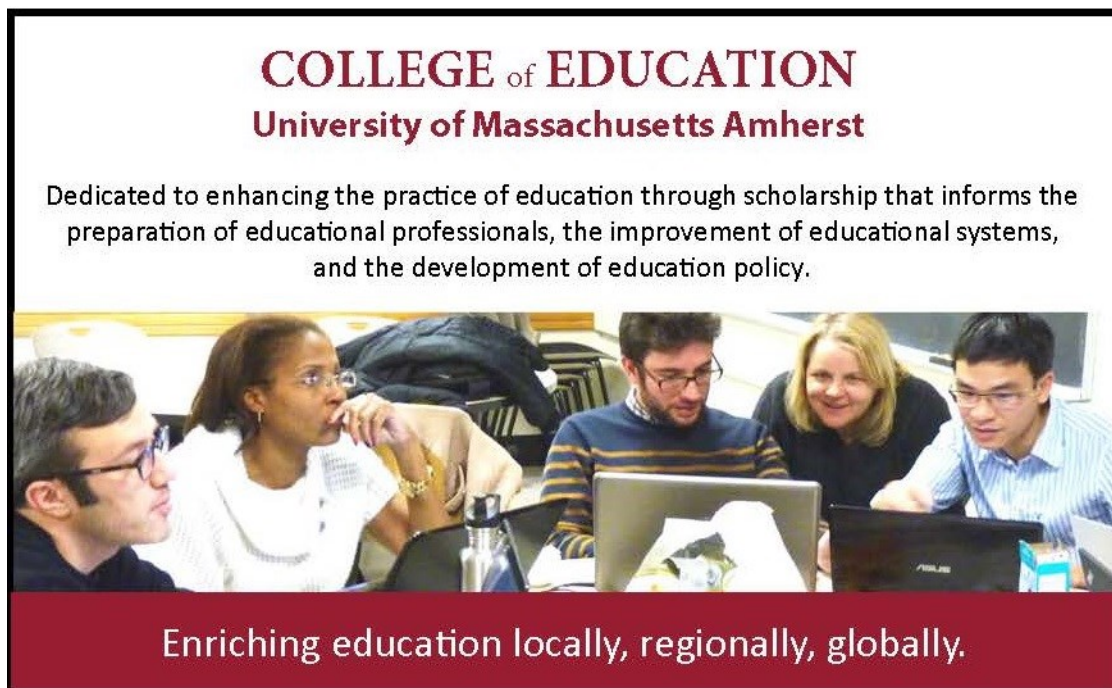
Eric Gundel was selected to be the recipient of the 2018 NERA Teacher-As-Researcher (TAR) Award. Dr. Gundel, who recently earned his doctorate from Western Connecticut State University, is a math teacher at Greenwich High School in Greenwich, Connecticut.

NERA 2018

Annual Conference Proceedings

Thank you to all of those who contributed their papers to the 2018 NERA annual conference proceedings. The link to conference papers included in this year's proceedings is <https://opencommons.uconn.edu/nera-2018/>. I encourage everyone to support our members and download their papers!

Best,
Jade Caines Lee



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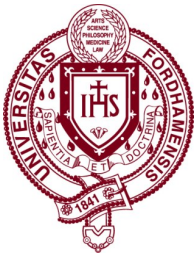
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Update from the NERA Mentoring Program (Co-Chairs Tanesia Beverly and Jerusha Henderek)

The Mentoring Program's focus over the past several years has been on the broad development of new and early career NERA members, including work on the research, academic, and professional development fronts. This year, the program matched a record-setting 26 mentor/mentee pairs, continuing the tradition of providing direct networking connections at the conference to a large number of attendees. The Mentoring Program is focused on improving not just the quantity, but the quality of mentoring that occurs during and outside of the annual conference.

The Co-Chairs would like to thank the mentors for their willingness to share their time, energy, and experiences with fellow NERA members. We know that this work is time consuming, and hope that you benefitted from sharing your experience with others.

Perhaps more importantly, we thank the mentees for their willingness to reach out and ask for mentorship. "Reaching out" is not something any of us are taught to do: asking for mentoring requires the courage to ask for help and the humility to admit there are things you do not know. We applaud mentees for their openness to ask for help, and are grateful to be part of a professional community that is safe and supportive enough for individuals to ask for, and receive, mentoring from fellow members.



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Membership Matters

Hello, NERA! The Membership Committee looks forward to preparing for NERA 2019. This year, we intend to focus heavily on strategic plans for the Membership Committee. To serve you all as best we can, we believe now is a perfect time to re-evaluate our goals and develop a strategic plan for living our committee's mission. We're excited to collaborate and build upon the excellent work of the past several years. We hope you'll stay tuned as we orient the Membership Committee over the next several months.

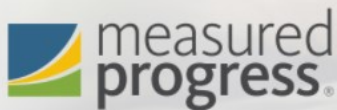


Of course, we will continue to recruit new NERA members and strive to retain existing members. As part of this effort, we will continue to update the database of existing NERA members, as well as reach out to individuals whose membership has lapsed. Following in the same rhythm as last year, we continue to work with the Conference Ambassadors to maintain and build membership. Sarah Ferguson continues to chair the Ambassadors, and we look forward to working with her and the Ambassadors to plan for NERA 2019. In particular, we're working to identify member appreciation prizes, as well as a meet and greet to welcome our new NERA members to the family!

Finally, the 2019 Membership Committee chair is Madison Holzman, a recent graduate of James Madison University. Madison works with Curriculum Associates as a Research Scientist. Her interests include research related to K-12 education, student growth, policy and accountability systems, and barriers and methodological advancements related to performance assessments. Though she has attended several NERA conferences, she is excited to spend the next several months learning more about NERA and its members.

NERA Membership Committee

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Communications Committee Update

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a great holiday season and is feeling refreshed at the start of 2019. I have much news to share, so let me get down to business.

Committee Member Transitions

First, I would like to thank Monica K. Erbacher for completing her three-year term as NERA Communications Committee Chair. Monica assumed the role of chair after the 2015 conference and has been a tremendous asset to the organization in this role. Under her leadership, we began observing website activity more closely and reported important milestones to the Board. We also established the distinct role of Social Media Coordinator, which was formerly under the purview of the Webmaster. Additionally, we increased our online presence and worked closely with NERA leadership to ensure smooth dissemination of NERA news and business to the membership, while vetting and filtering external requests before they reached everyone's mailboxes. Monica's role in all of these efforts was instrumental, and I am sincerely grateful for her remarkable leadership. I am also pleased to report that Monica will remain on the Committee for another year as a Former Chair/ Advisor.

Second, I would like to thank Duy Pham (Former Email Coordinator), Jonathan Steinberg (Former Chair/Advisor), and Ali Söken (Former Social Media Coordinator) for their service to the Committee and the organization at large. Their dedication to NERA and our members are much appreciated.

Third, I would like to welcome our new members. Mina Lee of the University of Massachusetts Amherst is our new Email Coordinator, and Chi Hang Au of James Madison University is our new Webmaster.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Frank Pedallaro (Social Media Coordinator) and S. Jeanne Horst (Former Chair/Advisor) for their continued service on the committee through October 2019.

Future Involvement Opportunities

The Communications Committee currently consists of six members, three of whom will be rotating off after the conference in October 2019. This means that in the coming months, the Committee will be accepting inquiries and applications to fill two regular member positions and one Social Media Coordinator position. If you feel passionate about serving on a committee to support NERA, feel free to reach out to me at bo.bashkov@gmail.com. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Continued on page 18

NERA's First Photo Contest

Thanks for Monica's ingenuity, the Committee's decisiveness, and Frank's fabulous work on such short notice, we were able to pull through our first social media contest. ICY-MI, we asked NERA attendees to post a photo from the conference by Friday, October 26, 2018 with the hashtag #NERA18PhotoContest. The post with the most likes/shares/retweets would win a \$50 Amazon gift card. With one share and 15 likes, the winner was Haifa Matos of Rutgers University. Although we were hoping to create a little more hype on our social media channels after the conference, given how swiftly we managed to do this, I do declare this gambit a success!

Communication Request Procedures



As a reminder, all official NERA business that needs to be disseminated to the membership needs to follow NERA's Communication Committee Guidelines as documented in the [NERA Handbook](#). That is, a [Communications Request Form](#) must be submitted to bo.bashkov@gmail.com at least a few days prior to the requestor's target date for dissemination to ensure sufficient time for the request to be reviewed/approved and information to be sent out to members or posted on social media. We hope all members, including NERA leader-

ship, will follow these procedures.

Thank you and best wishes in 2019!

Bo Bashkov,
Chair, Communications Committee

Call for Articles

The Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (JELPS)

ISSN#: 2473-2826

www.southernct.edu/jelps/

The Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (JELPS) ISSN#: 2473-2826, sponsored by Southern Connecticut State University is a peer-reviewed electronic journal dedicated to establishing a global network that will serve as a platform for researchers, policymakers, educators, and school leaders who are concerned with moving educational issues forward. More importantly, the journal will provide readers with an enhanced awareness of strategies and policies for improving educational outcomes and methods for improving school success for all students.

JELPS seeks manuscripts that address best practices and school policies in the four leadership domains: Instructional Leadership, Talent Management, Organizational Systems, School Culture and School Climate.

The journal welcomes articles based on practice and research with an explicit educational leadership focus, or components that examine the function of school leadership from a variety of well-balanced perspectives. All theoretical and methodological approaches are welcome (e.g., qualitative vs. quantitative; empirical vs. conceptual; discipline-based vs. interdisciplinary). Authors will receive initial review decision notifications within 3 to 4 weeks.

See the General Call for Manuscripts at <https://go.southernct.edu/jelps/#call-for-articles>. General issue manuscripts should be sent to Dr. Olcay Yavuz, Editor-in Chief, Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies for initial review at yavuzo1@southernct.edu.


Highlights from the NERA 2018 October Board Meeting Trumbull Marriott Merritt Parkway October 17, 2018

- The meeting began with a formal welcome by President Javarro Russell. He thanked everyone for all of their support over the past year, especially the conference co-chairs, for all of the hard work they put into the conference.
- The Board reviewed and approved the meeting minutes from the January 2018 and the May 2018 Board meetings.
- Steven Holtzman presented the Treasurer's Report.
 - He reminded everyone that we will be moving to an April 15th deadline for next year's membership.
 - Conference registration and membership income was about \$30k and income from sponsorships was around \$25k. These are great numbers despite the loss of a few sponsor organizations.
 - Tia Fechter will be taking over for Steven once his term is over after the January Board meeting. Steven and Tia have been working closely on the transition.
 - There were concerns expressed over the drop in membership this year, particularly professionals. President-elect Rochelle Michel has some ideas to do some outreach to local schools of education in the area.
 - Continued discussions about NERA's long-term financial goals will occur at the January 2019 Board meeting.
 - The treasurer's report was approved.
- Conference updates were presented by Tabitha McKinley and Jade Caines Lee.
 - As of 10/15, there were 242 registered members and five workshops (with participation ranging between 6-27 participants). The voting process for the workshops seemed to be a good way to engage members.
 - Enhancements for this year included: new member meet and greet; mentor/mentee reception; and parent's break room. Additionally, Praxis (new sponsor) sponsored great raffle prizes.
 - The conference was down in submissions from last year 193 vs. 223 last year. However, we are seeing a lot more diversity in paper submissions.
 - The co-chairs expressed concerns over rising food costs for the conference.
 - Discussions were held regarding handoffs from co-chair to co-chair, committee members/chairs and Board Members. The Board and Committee members/chairs need to be more mindful, intentional about handoffs.
- Craig Wells presented the Nominations Committee Report.
 - Three new members were voted on to the Board: Jason Kopp, Juliette Lyons-Thomas, and Joshua Marland.
 - Three members are rotating off: Salika Lawrence, Steven Holtzman, and Craig Wells.
 - Ross Markle was elected president.

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Highlights from the NERA 2018 October Board Meeting Trumbull Marriott Merritt Parkway October 17, 2018


- Pamela Kaliski presented the Membership Committee Report on behalf of Chair, Mathew Madison.
 - The committee is hosting their first new members meet and greet social.
 - Conversations were held regarding the need to make sure the Ambassador's program gets incorporated into Membership Committee as a sub-committee.
 - Also, the need to have better tracking of committee member terms.
 - The Membership Committee Report was approved.
- Steven Holtzman provided a brief update on the Communications Committee.
 - There was no official report.
 - Monica Erbacher is rotating off of as Committee Chair.
 - There was confusion regarding whether the committee has its own budget. They would like more direction from the Board.
- Kisong Kim presented the GSIC Report.
 - GSIC is sponsoring two sessions and hosting a graduate student social event. They will be trying to recruit students there. Many GSIC members are finishing terms or graduating.
 - The GSIC report was approved.
- Teacher as Researcher Committee Report was presented by Salika Lawrence on behalf of Darlene Perner.
 - Applicants were down for the TAR award.
 - The committee has worked on diversifying participation in the conference.
- Andrew Jones presented the Awards Committee Report.
 - The Woollatt Committee needs a refresh. The chair and many of the members have been there for a long time. This led to a larger discussion of how to handle transition of committee members.
 - The awards committee report was approved.
- Steven Holtzman presented the Infrastructure Committee Report on behalf of the Committee.
 - Jonathan Steinberg has agreed to be incoming Chair.
 - Committee serves as liaison to Vieth. The changes/updates that Vieth incorporated this year were reviewed. The Infrastructure Committee Report was approved.
- President Elect, Rochelle Michel presented the 2019 NERA Conference preview.
 - Rochelle will be working with a conference planning committee.
 - The theme is "Transformation by Design".
 - The conference will be held 10/15-10/18 at Marriott Trumbull.
 - Would like to incorporate member spotlights (grad and professional) in an article in *The NERA Researcher* that highlights our board members and what they do.
 - Would also like to connect with local grad school institutions and continue our relationship with SRE-RA and AERA.
- The NERA Researcher Committee is looking to push back the timelines for the winter and spring issues to ensure that they receive articles. The report was approved.
- Craig Wells presented an update from the Donlon Award Committee. Jody Piro was selected as the winner.
- Lastly, the Board discussed the movement of the Business Meeting from breakfast on Friday to a lunch meeting. Conference Co-Chairs will solicit feedback via the post conference survey.



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NERA Infrastructure Committee Report

Educational Testing Service

Hello NERA Members! By way of introduction, many of you probably have previously associated me with being involved with the Communications Committee as a past chair and advisor. Around the time of the recent conference, I was offered the opportunity to chair the Infrastructure Committee, which I have gladly accepted, and thus have stepped down from the Communications Committee. Many thanks to Jeanne Horst and Monica Erbacher for carrying on many of the initiatives I helped put in place. I extend my best wishes to Bo Bashkov, who is taking over as the new chair.

Thanks are also extended to Jason Kopp and Steven Holtzman as previous chairs of the Infrastructure Committee, and who will continue to help out. Kelly Foelber is a returning committee member. Joining them as new members are Alejandra Garcia, one of the 2019 Conference Co-Chairs, Chi Hang Au, who is the new NERA Webmaster, and Tia Fechter, who is the incoming NERA Treasurer. I look forward to working with all of you.

We will be engaging in two primary initiatives moving forward around technological infrastructure. One is to have point people serve to ensure that the technological needs of other NERA committees are being met throughout the year. Kelly will be helping with this task, but given the number of committees NERA has, if you are interested in assisting in this capacity, please let me know. The second is concentrated around logistics related to the annual conference and the interface with the membership database. This will also include updating our documentation to better understand the functionality implemented by our vendor, Vieth Consulting. This is a very tedious, but critical effort to prepare for the conference proposal submission process, so if you are interested in lending assistance with this as well, please reach out to me.

In closing, I echo Jason's sentiments from his last committee report for the *Researcher*, that members are always welcome to offer suggestions regarding potential improvements or changes. Best wishes for a good, prosperous, and hopefully warm remainder of the winter season.

Jonathan Steinberg,
Chair, Infrastructure Committee (jsteinberg@ets.org)

The NERA Conference Ambassadors Update

Since 2014, the NERA Conference Ambassadors Committee has been working behind the scenes to support the annual NERA conference. The Conference Ambassadors are responsible for welcoming new and returning members to the annual NERA conference by encouraging networking between colleagues across the NERA membership, specifically those in attendance at the conference. As part of our role, we also share highlights from our own experiences as presenters, session chairs, discussants, elected officers, and meeting attendees.

At this last NERA conference we participated in the New Member Reception with the Membership Committee, reached out to new and continuing NERA members throughout the conference to support engagement and answer any questions, and generally made ourselves available to answer questions and support attendees.

If you are considering a way in which you can serve NERA and you have attended the annual conference for at least two years, consider being a Conference Ambassador! We support both the Membership Committee and the Conference Co-Chairs, as they are integral in making each annual conference a success. Members interested in joining the NERA Conference Ambassadors committee or contributing ideas about how the Conference Ambassadors can further support the open and collegial environment found at the annual NERA conference can contact me, Sarah Ferguson, at fergusons@rowan.edu.

Thank you for continuing to contribute to the NERA community!

Sarah Ferguson

Chair, Conference Ambassadors Committee

Five Ways to Make NERA Better

By Ross Markle

For the last several years, I've had the honor and pleasure to attend the NERA Board Meetings; first as a Conference Co-Chair, then as a Board Member, and most recently as President-Elect. Over that time, I've noticed several issues that continually come up, and it took me until our most recent meeting in January to formalize this thought: we, as Board members, could do better.

There are a few areas I identified that continually need support, and it made logical sense for us as Board members to step-in and contribute. As I thought about it more, however, it didn't seem like this should be limited to the Board alone. Any NERA member could support the organization in these ways!

Now, before I move any further, let me be clear: our members are amazing. The number of hours volunteered to this organization is beyond measure, and without it, NERA simply wouldn't be possible. Through committee members and chairs, reviewers, discussants, and many others, volunteer roles are the fuel that keeps NERA going. As Kristen Huff once said, "NERA is *you*." That being said, you might not be able to commit to a committee, or you may have served your time as Conference Co-Chair/Board Member/President. In those cases, if you ever ask yourself what you could do to make NERA better, here are a few simple answers.

Serve as a reviewer

One of the toughest parts of making the conference happen every year is putting together the program. Not only do you have to balance a robust docket of proposals, but wrangling reviewers to make sure that every paper is fairly considered is no simple task. What's more, several award committees, namely the Lorne H. Woollatt Distinguished Paper Award and the GSIC Best Paper award, also require reviewers to honor those worthy of distinction. By volunteering to review in any of these capacities, you can play a key role in NERA operations (and make the lives of committee chairs and Conference Co-Chairs MUCH easier).

Volunteer to be a mentor (or a mentee!)

In 2013, Pamela Kaliski and I were bestowed the honor of co-chairing the NERA Mentoring Committee. In 2012, there had been ZERO registrants as either mentor or mentee. Thus, we revamped the program in several ways, expanding the scope of the mentoring program as well as the range of possible participants. Since that time - even through several new co-chairs - the Mentoring Program has grown and thrived. At the 2018 conference, 26 mentees were matched with mentors. I've always been of the opinion that anyone could sign up to be a mentee, but we could also use more mentors. I can personally attest that it's a wonderful way to give back and make other NERA members feel welcomed.

Continued on page 26

Attend the Woollatt Award Winner's session at AERA.

Beyond the intrinsic honor of winning the Woollatt award, a notable benefit is the opportunity to present at a featured session during AERA's annual conference. Attending this session is not only an act of support for and acknowledgment of the award winner, but it also demonstrates NERA's excellence on the national stage.

Volunteer to be a Conference Ambassador.


The Conference Ambassadors have grown over the years to be a key component of NERA's growth. Beginning under the leadership of Rochelle Michel, the Ambassadors fill the gap between long-standing members and new members, who might find it difficult to navigate a conference where many people seem to already know each other. Much like mentors, there is always a need for Ambassadors and serving in this role can be rewarding, as well as an important service to NERA.

Work the registration desk.

No matter how well-planned a conference might be, issues inevitably arise to draw the Co-Chairs to various corners of the conference. At various times over the years, graduate students, registrars (full-time volunteers), and others have chipped in to make sure that registration runs smoothly. Even taking an hour out of your conference to help the conference run efficiently can be a huge help to the Co-Chairs (even if it means giving them time to grab a bite to eat!).


If you've ever volunteered to help NERA, I sincerely thank you. The reason I keep coming back to NERA year after year is because this is such a quality organization, enriched by the giving of its members. Yet, beyond their charitable spirit, I'm always impressed by the membership's yearning to do more. Hopefully these are a few helpful tips to channel that motivation.

For more information, please reach out to any member of the [NERA Board](https://www.nera-education.org/nera_leadership.php) (https://www.nera-education.org/nera_leadership.php), or complete the [NERA Volunteer Survey](https://www.viethconsulting.com/members/form.php?orgcode=NERA&fid=3097449) (<https://www.viethconsulting.com/members/form.php?orgcode=NERA&fid=3097449>) to sign up for specific opportunities.




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NERA Member News

Kelly Dunn, director of new student orientation & support programs at Johnson & Wales University, was named the recipient of the 2018 National Association of Higher Education Parent and Family Program Professionals (AHEPPP) Outstanding Contribution to Research and/or Literature Award. Kelly presented this paper (her dissertation) at the 2017 NERA conference. This award is presented to a professional who has had an impact on the body of knowledge about, and practices of, engaging parents and families in an institution of higher learning, and whose achievements have advanced the profession. Read Dunn's dissertation, [Investigating Parenting Style and College Student Grit at a Private Mid-Sized New England University](#).

Kurt F. Geisinger, Director of the Buros Center for Testing and W. C. Meierhenry Distinguished University Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, will serve in multiple leadership positions this year both nationally and internationally, in the field of educational assessment and evaluation.

Dr. Geisinger was invited to be as a keynote presenter at the annual meeting of the Portuguese Psychological Association and at Shue Yan University in Hong Kong.

Adrian D. Martin, New Jersey City University, recently had his chapter, "Affective Reverberations: The methodological excesses of a research assemblage" published in the Emerald Publishing volume, "Decentering the Researcher in Intimate Methodologies: Critical Posthuman Methodological Perspectives in Education," edited by Katie Strom, Tammy Mills, and Alan Ovens. The chapter employs a posthuman lens to reconceptualize the parameters of qualitative research in education and teacher education.

Galit Eizman is now a teaching professor (as of Spring 2019) at Brandeis University for Econometrics and Public Sector Economics. Galit issued a patent (No. 15/870,301) and a trademark: (TM) (No. GE201602TM) "Teach-Touch"-Three-Dimensional Dynamic Apparatus and Method of Use - 3D dynamic model to assist students understand a movement of graphs, curves and mathematical equations. She took part in NSF project for TBL (team based learning) in economics: <https://serc.carleton.edu/econ/tbl-econ/201318.html>.

Galit is also the head of a center for international young researchers: "EmpowerPirical." The center teaches young students (usually seniors in high school) the empirical methods course and gives them the opportunity to conduct empirical research, mostly about topics related to education. The research is published in academic journals and presented in academic conferences. Currently there are 15 active students.

The Graduate Lounge



GSIC Best Paper Award Winners

At the October 2019 Conference, the GSIC best paper honors were awarded to "Brief Research Report: A User Friendly Effect Size: When Normality Matters" by Glenn Thomas Waterbury, James Madison University, and "Similarity in TIMSS 2015 Participants' Science Curricula: A Cluster Analysis" by Katherine Reynolds, Boston College.

Congratulations to our winners!



What's New for 2019?

As a business professor, I constantly drill my students on the importance of organizational mission. In business parlance, a mission defines what an organization is, why it exists, and its reason for being. Without a compelling mission, organizations (especially small businesses) often struggle when faced with the dilemmas and challenges of surviving in a global dynamic marketplace.

Part of the mission of the Graduate Students' Issues Committee is to "support the involvement and professional development of NERA graduate student members." In the past, this support has come in the form of GSIC designated panels and our annual conference social. Having attend these panels for the last two years I have personally found them to be engaging, relevant, and encouraging.

As we begin our planning for the 2019 conference, the committee wants your input about what you'd like to see as part of the GSIC events. Is there a panel discussion on a specific topic? A change to the structure of the social? Increased networking time? Please feel free to e-mail your thoughts and suggestions to neragraduatestudents@gmail.com.

GSIC on Social Media

Additionally, please take a moment and 'like' us on Facebook. We will be revamping the page over the next few months to provide you with resources and materials as well as conference information and details. The web address is <https://www.facebook.com/neragsic>