



In Sunny California, the New Teacher Resource Program Shines!

Teachers Network's Ellen Dempsey, President and CEO, and Peter Paul, Vice President, visited a host of California school districts during the last week of February for workshops and conferences related to one of Teachers Network's major professional development programs—the New Teacher Resource Program (NTRP). Ellen and Peter met with the liaison coordinators of the program, Dr. Lynnette M. Cavazos and Matt Zuchowicz, the new Santa Barbara County Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Induction Director. They also put their heads together with a group of NTRP/BTSA directors at the Urban Education Partnership in Los Angeles. California's New Teacher Resource Program—currently operating in 11 school districts throughout the state—is supported through the generosity of both the Citi Foundation and the Annenberg Foundation.



NTRP California conference participants included, back row, l-r, Cancy McArn, Sacramento Unified School District; Peter A. Paul, Teachers Network Vice President; Jamie-Beth Munro, Pasadena Unified School District; Linda Margulies, Wm. S. Hart Union High School District; Irene Collins, Norwalk-LaMirada Unified School District; Lynnette M. Cavazos, Santa Barbara County Education Office; and Jon Crotty, Los Angeles County Office of Education. In the front row, l-r, are Ellen Dempsey, Teachers Network President and CEO; Cathy Fong, Bellflower Unified School District; Jodi McMillen, El Rancho Unified School District; and Matt Zuchowicz, Santa Barbara County Education Office.

actively network with each other, share challenges and successes, and plan the program as we move ahead into the future.

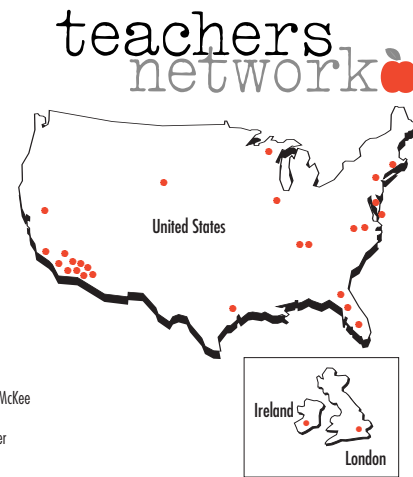
Ellen and Peter were also delighted to hear strong praise for NTRP—including direct feedback from teachers who find the program transformational in their early years of teaching. This feedback was buttressed by the remarkable data we continue to gather through surveys supported with funding from the Annenberg Foundation, making it possible for us to document the powerful impact that this program is effecting. NTRP directors shared commentary from the participating teachers from their districts, and it was gratifying for Ellen and Peter to hear how excited these educators are about taking part in the program. One teacher had related, for example, that the behavior contract featured as part of this multimedia program completely changed the climate in her classroom, making it possible for her to teach much more effectively.

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I am delighted to share with you the news of the tremendous growth of our flourishing professional development programs, offered both through school districts and colleges and universities throughout the nation. These Teachers Network multimedia packages offer targeted courses designed to improve practice and allow teachers to obtain salary credit upon completion. We embarked on the professional development initiative when we recognized the need for busy teachers to be able to access well-designed multimedia materials easily.



Teachers Network's professional development programs consist of integrated and aligned print, CD-ROM, and online materials. To date, we offer the *New Teacher Resource Program*, *How to Use the Internet in Your Classroom*, *Balanced Literacy*, and *Introduction to Action Research*. Descriptions of these can be found in the pages of this newsletter.

Testament to the value of Teachers Network's professional development programs is our growing list of college and university partners, which includes the University of San Diego, Columbia University Teachers College, seven colleges that are part of the Appalachian College Association (ACA), and Nova Southeastern University.

These institutions of higher learning use the Teachers Network programs in a myriad of ways that fit their particular needs, from continuing education credits to full graduate course work. And it's not difficult to see why these partnerships work so well. Teachers Network's professional development programs offer proven content in an online format that can easily be turn-keyed into accredited courses. What's more, the program content focuses on tried-and-true practices and skills used by successful, dynamic classroom teachers.

Have we piqued your interest? Thought so! Why not skip over to your computer and cruise some Teachers Network course samples right now at www.teachersnetwork.org/courses.htm.

Ellen Dempsey
President & CEO

Teachers Network is a non-profit organization—*by teachers, for teachers*—with over a 27-year track record of success, dedicated to improving student learning in public schools nationally and internationally. Teachers Network is unique in its focus on professional development as the key to improving student achievement. Using the power of an award-winning website, videos, and print resources, Teachers Network leverages the creativity and expertise of a national and international community of outstanding educators. Through our leadership, Teachers Network empowers teachers to transform public schools into creative learning communities.

For more information about Teachers Network, see www.teachersnetwork.org.

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New By Teachers, For Teachers CD Released

Empowering English Language Learners is the latest CD to be released by Teachers Network in its *by teachers, for teachers* interactive series. The CD features 20 curriculum projects organized by subject area and three how-to videos filmed in real high school classrooms. All of the projects and videos demonstrate specific strategies and methods for meeting the needs of English language learners in the classroom.



Thanks to a generous gift from Wachovia, all the teachers who attended the 7th Annual Curriculum, Collaboration & Celebration Conference (see p. 4) in New York City last month received a free copy of *Empowering English Language Learners*.

Most likely, the CD is impacting classrooms all over the city already. Thanks, Wachovia!

Two New Teachers Network Professional Development Programs to Crow About!

Continually pruning, enhancing, and adding to our varied “garden” of online courses, Teachers Network gets a thumbs up from busy educators looking for a convenient way to improve their practice, develop their knowledge, and complete accredited course-work. Our online courses are available through the University of San Diego, Columbia University Teachers College, and throughout the colleges that make up the Appalachian College Association (ACA).

Two new professional development programs—*Balanced Literacy* and *An Introduction to Action Research*—have joined a rich selection that already includes the *New Teacher Resource Program* and *How to Use the Internet in Your Classroom*.

The goal of *Balanced Literacy* is to nurture lifelong readers and thinkers with the use of an approach to reading instruction that incorporates both whole language and phonics. The course is broken down into four sections—The Reader's Workshop, Assessing Readers, The Writer's Workshop, and Building a Community of Writers. Participants will learn about creating successful mini-lessons, grouping students appropriately, and planning effective guided reading lessons. Both formal and informal assessment instruments will be examined, including running records and the use of

miscue analysis to interpret students' use of the cueing system. The importance of devoting time in the classroom every day to writing is also emphasized. The Writer's Workshop model structures lessons by providing numerous opportunities for students to explore modeled writing, be guided with structured writing, and to apply their skills through independent writing.

Using a number of texts and readings, including *Taking Action with Teacher Research* by Ellen Meyers and Frances Rust, teachers in *An Introduction to Action Research* will explore and acquire the tools needed to carry out action research as a method of studying their instruction and discerning interventions to help children achieve. The course employs the case study method, i.e., participants will explore completed action research studies in order to learn how to conduct their own. They will also look at the implications of the studies for their own teaching practice. The next step will be the contemplation of questions about which the course participants might want to conduct action research. Students will learn how to formulate a viable action research question and what data collection tools will be needed to carry out the research. ●

In Sunny California, the New Teacher Resource Program Shines!

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Ellen and Peter culminated their visit to California by meeting with the community relations representatives of Citi, since the Citi Foundation is one of the major sponsors for NTRP in the state. They were able to meet directly with Cheryl Evans, who serves as Western Regional Director of Community Relations for Citi's Global Consumer Group, along with her whole team. Cheryl shared that she and her team were “thrilled and proud that the foundation is supporting these communities, public schools, and their teachers and students in such an exemplary and successful way.”

In addition to functioning in districts throughout the State of California, Teachers Network's *New Teacher Resource Program* is also sponsored by the Citi Foundation in a number of other locations throughout the nation, including New York City, Newark (NJ), and Broward County (FL). This year alone, the program involved nearly 5,000 teachers nationwide. Since its inception four years ago, NTRP has impacted more than 16,000 new teacher participants. ●

College Partnerships Are Thriving

You've heard the news—the Appalachian College Association (ACA), a non-profit consortium of 36 private liberal arts colleges and universities that serve approximately 42,000 students across the states of Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia—has joined the University of San Diego and Columbia University Teachers College in offering Teachers Network's professional development programs. The new partnership was cemented this fall when Senior Vice President Ellen Meyers and Vice President Peter A. Paul were invited to lead three presentations at ACA's Summit X conference in Abington, Virginia.

At the conference Ellen and Peter introduced our professional development packages, *New Teacher Resource Program* and *How to Use the Internet in Your Classroom*. Day two featured a session on action research, presented at the request of several consortium members. Participants learned how Teachers Network has created the nationwide Teachers Network Leadership Institute and how TNLI's work has benefited colleges and universities. Ellen and Peter's visit, following a round of very informative conference calls, was a wonderful way to “cut the ribbon” for this important initiative.

7th Annual Curriculum, Community, Collaboration & Celebration Conference Was All Sold Out!

It's been popular in the past but, apparently, word has spread about the rich experience afforded by the annual day-long conference, Curriculum, Community, Collaboration & Celebration, held in New York City. Over 500 people registered for the 2008 conference, sponsored by Teachers Network and the New York City Department of Education and held this year at Brooklyn's P.S. 38. The Teachers Network staff was busy until the eleventh hour, adding workshops and finding larger classrooms in the school to accommodate the capacity crowd.

The exciting day of inspirational speakers, targeted workshops, lunch with renowned children's authors, and networking opportunities was focused on educating the global community. And the success of this year's symposium was greatly aided by the assistance of Wachovia and Scholastic, Inc.

After a breakfast contributed by Whole Foods, teachers, administrators, parents, and other concerned citizens entered the auditorium to listen to presentations that preceded the keynote address. The group heard from, among others, Ellen Dempsey and Ellen Meyers, the President and Senior Vice President of Teachers Network; and Elizabeth Citino, who spoke about why giving back is such an important part of Wachovia's mission. Alluding to herself as a "Walter Dean Myers groupie," Carmen Fariña, a former Brooklyn teacher and Department of Education Deputy Chancellor, and a current Teachers Network board member, introduced the keynote speaker.

Walter Dean Myers is a *New York Times* bestselling author. He has written more than 85 books for children and young adults, including *Fallen Angels*, *Monster*, *Somewhere in the Darkness*, *Slam!*, *Jazz*, and *Harlem*. Walter began writing as a young boy when a teacher suggested that because of a speech impediment, he might find it easier to express himself through writing. When he decided to drop out of school to join the Army at age 17, another teacher implored him not to put down his pen. He never did. After the service, he



worked at a variety of day jobs and wrote at night, and he started publishing—everything from pieces for the *National Enquirer* to advertising copy for cemeteries! A winning contest entry for the Council on Interracial Books for Children later became his first published book, *Where Does the Day Go?*

Walter told the group that in order to interest children in reading, the world that they live in must be reflected in what they are asked to read. That world must also be respected; their neighborhood may be rundown and dangerous, but it is their community—it is where they live and where their grandparents live and where their church is located. "I don't need to sell out anybody," the author stressed. "I must wonder if I'm respecting the life of the child I'm writing about."

He added that children's authors are



Above right: Speaker, Marcia Lyles, NYC Schools Deputy Chancellor. Behind her: Claveazul 2.0 Band (led by Sergio Larios, not pictured here)

Bottom left: The audience

Bottom right: From left to right: David Kirkland, Walter Dean Myers, Ellen Meyers, and Carmen Fariña.

doomed to failure if they sit in an ivory tower believing "You have to come to me because I write well." Writers must study children's interests: "Give a boy a book about basketball and you can take him anywhere." Once you secure that interest, he concluded, the effective children's author should "address the larger issues that affect all of us as human beings." Twenty years ago, Walter Dean Myers wrote a book about the Vietnam War, during which his brother lost his life. Themes from *Autobiography of My Dead Brother* are repeated in his latest book, *Sunrise Over Fallujah*, just published

by Scholastic, Inc. The novelist said he is weary of our capacity to "reinvent the idea that disagreements can be settled with guns and bombs."

After the author's remarks, which received a standing ovation, participants met in smaller groups to take part in workshops such as "How to Set Up an Effective Classroom," "No Child Left Behind... Here I Stand," "Classroom Management for New Teachers," "Educating English Language Learners for a Global Community," and "History as Story."

The workshops were followed by the opportunity to break bread with 10 different children's authors. Pooja Makhijani was one of these. Pooja is an educational content specialist for Sesame Workshop and an adviser for "Galli Galli Sim Sim," the Indian version of "Sesame Street." She is also the editor of the anthology *Under Her Skin: How Girls Experience Race in America* (Seal Press, 2004), and the author of a picture book, *Mama's Saris* (Little Brown, 2007). Growing up in suburban New Jersey, Pooja attended a school where she was the only person of color. Her work is inspired by her own life experiences.

Afternoon workshops included "Local Advocacy 101," "Making the Most of Web 2.0 in the Classroom," and "Exploring Picture Books with Universal Themes." A publishers' reception, jazzed up with music provided by a band composed of New York City student-musicians, rounded out a very worthwhile day at P.S. 38. 🍎

You can hear noted author Walter Dean Myers's keynote address given at Teachers Network's recent spring conference as a podcast at <http://teachersnetwork.wordpress.com/>.



TNLI Presents at Two National Conferences

There was a bit of "March Madness" going on at Teachers Network's headquarters in New York City last month, as participants readied themselves for speaking honors bestowed on the Teachers Network Leadership Institute. TNLI was chosen to participate in two sessions of the 2008 American Education Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting held in the city the last week of March. TNLI's proposals, fashioned by the meeting's theme, *Research on Schools, Neighborhoods, and Communities: Toward Civic Responsibility*, were selected from a pool of more than 12,000. A few days after our selection by AERA had been announced, we were informed that we were also chosen to participate in the 2008 International Conference on Teacher Research (ICTR), held that same week in New York.

Our presenters at the AERA meeting were Ellen Meyers, TNLI's Director; TNLI MetLife Fellows Dan Abramowski and Anokhi Saraiya; TNLI National Advisor David E. Kirkland, Assistant Professor of English Education at NYU; Frances Rust, Dean of Faculty, Erikson Institute; and case advisor Kay Merseth, Director of the Teacher Education Program at Harvard Graduate School of Education.

TNLI's first AERA presentation, "Teacher Research as Border Crossing in the Arena of Policy," highlighted two action research studies taken from the 175

completed thus far and available online at <http://teachersnetwork.org/tnli/research>. The studies are representative of the work being done around the country by teachers intent on bringing their voices into the education policy arena and encouraging policy makers to see the impact of policy on student learning.

For the second presentation, "How Teachers Perceive the Impact of the No Child Left Behind Legislation on Their Practice and Their Profession," Ellen and Frances reviewed the findings of a Teachers Network online survey of over 5,600 public school teachers conducted last year. The survey was designed to collect data regarding how the federal No Child Left Behind act has affected schools and learning. (See results and highlights at http://teachersnetwork.org/tnli/survey_highlights.htm.)

The highly polished "Teacher Research as Border Crossing in the Arena of Policy" was presented for the second time at the ICTR conference. Ellen Meyers, TNLI Director, said Teachers Network's participation in the AERA and ICTR conferences was very rewarding for the presenters and that she is satisfied that those who attended the sessions came away with much to think about: "Action research supports the missions of both AERA and ICTR.

TNLI provided forums for our practitioner-researchers to share data and discovery about teaching and learning with other professionals." 🍎

Teachers Network Leadership Institute had the honor of presenting at two national education conferences this spring. Pictured at the International Conference on Teacher Research are, l-r, Frances Rust, Dean of Faculty, Erikson Institute; TNLI National Advisor David E. Kirkland; TNLI Director Ellen Meyers; and MetLife Fellows Dan Abramowski and Anokhi Saraiya.



Homework—Does It Help or Hinder Today's Student?

Major MetLife Survey Is Released; TNLI Fellow Amber Pabon Joins Distinguished Panel

Teachers Network Leadership Institute (TNLI) MetLife Fellow Amber Pabon was a member of a panel discussion group held at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, on February 14. The discussion was organized by the Committee for Economic Development, an independent non-partisan think tank, to coincide with the release of an important document, the *MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: The Homework Experience*. The survey, conducted online by Harris Interactive, polled 1,000 K-12 teachers, 501 parents, and 2,101 students in grades 3 through 12. It is the



latest in the *MetLife American Teacher* series, which the company has sponsored since 1984 to give voice to those closest to the classroom.

The Homework Experience revealed that a surprising majority of teachers, parents, and even students believe strongly that homework is an important learning tool and paves the way for future success. And compared with a similar 2002 survey, more students value homework today, with only 30 percent of secondary school students describing homework as busywork, compared with 74 percent five years before. A significant number of parents and students, however, identified problems with the quality of homework.

Amber Pabon is a teacher leader at Juan Morel Campos Secondary School in Brooklyn, New York, who has taught English language arts and social studies to



MetLife Fellow Amber Pabon

middle and high school students. In addition to being a MetLife Fellow, Amber wears several other hats; she supports new teachers as a mentor with the New Teacher Mentoring Induction Program and is an instructor in both the Teach for America and New York City Teaching Fellows alternative certification programs. Since becoming an educator, Amber has been interested in the role that homework plays in students' lives. In fact, her Master's thesis was entitled "When Kids Say 'No' to Homework."

Amber was "very impressed" by the DC homework forum, relaying that even if one had been unfamiliar with the Harris Poll findings, "the overview of the study was so well-organized that it was like taking a crash course." The panel was made up of educators, parents, and students, Amber explained, and was "an opportunity to hear a range of different perspectives on the study, and how the findings connected with the panel members' personal experience."

Amber works primarily with teachers whose students are "impoverished and at risk," and the homework study bore out one

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Hello, Chicago, This Is Sacramento

TNLI National Videoconference Covers a lot of Territory Without the Mileage

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of her long-held beliefs—that homework is regarded as important by parents across the socioeconomic spectrum. Poorer children are more likely not to complete homework assignments, but it's not because their parents think it's insignificant, she said; it's because the students' own responsibilities at home or the disorganized nature of their home life makes it impossible to focus on assignments. "The high stakes attached to basic survival are much different for impoverished students," Amber said. "Doing or not doing what they are supposed to be doing at home might mean dinner or no dinner for the family."

Another factor that affects school children across the board is stress, the study indicated. While underserved students may be caring for younger siblings and working after-school jobs, Amber observed, their wealthier counterparts might be stressed about getting straight As and building an academic résumé.

Other homework problems noted at the forum were a lack of connection between teacher and student, leading to the irrelevancy of homework; the need to cover subject material through homework, because of a lack of classroom time; and giving students meaningful feedback on homework. "When that doesn't happen—when there's no follow through—kids are just not going to do their homework," Amber stated. "But," she acknowledged, "that has to be built into the structure and the pacing of the school day, and teachers don't necessarily get enough support in that area."

In the end, the panel agreed, there is no substitute for a caring adult in a child's life. "It can be a parent at home, an older sibling, another relative, or a teacher reaching out," Amber observed. "There's got to be a responsible person there, making sure these students don't fall through the cracks." 🍎

They came from New York City, San Francisco, the State of Wyoming, Chicago, Miami, and Sacramento. They came to share their news, their progress, and impediments to progress in a virtual meet, greet, and get down to business. Teachers Network Leadership Institute's (TNLI) national videoconference, held on Saturday, February 8th, brought representatives from our affiliates and MetLife Fellows together to focus on action research and its policy impacts, including local advocacy initiatives centered on the federal No Child Left Behind act. The videoconference provided the opportunity for sharing how TNLI members are working to build a nationwide community.

TNLI Director Ellen Meyers set the stage for the videoconference with her opening remarks, before handing the virtual mike over to TNLI National Coordinator Peter Paul, who moderated the session. Peter's humor and ability to keep everyone on point were remarkable, while TNLI National Advisor David Kirkland eloquently reminded the participants how essential their research is to the practice of teaching. A showcase by MetLife Fellows Holly Link of San Francisco, Caron Rose of Miami, and Dan Abramowski of New York City highlighted how their action research has led to positive change in the classroom, impact on policy, and their own professional growth.

Responses to how TNLI participation has made a difference in their own practice and outreach came from all affiliate locations. Below are thoughts from Dan Abramowski about his involvement with TNLI: *Teachers Network Leadership Institute has provided me with an opportunity to share my research on increasing college success rates for high school graduates. Most important, the research has helped me create a stronger connection between our school and our alumni . . .*

The second major contribution TNLI has made is giving me a platform to share my work with my school community. I have been able to present my research to the teachers and administrators at my school and our community partner. These presentations have helped continue conversations on what our school needs to do to better prepare our graduates to succeed in college. In addition, our community partner has adopted one of my policy recommendations. In my research, I argue that a new guidance position should be created in high schools to focus on alumni support. We now have such a position at Mott Haven Village Preparatory High School.

Finally, TNLI has helped me create a research paper and policy recommendations that I can use in discussions with policy makers . . . [T]he organization's support places the research in a context that is respected by policy makers and opens the door to policy discussions.

Teachers Network's strength lays in its ability to validate the educator's role in creating education policy. While all teachers have an idea about what education policy should be, few teachers have an opportunity to actually influence it. This disconnect between the educators in their classrooms and the policy makers in their offices has a negative impact on the lives of students, teachers, and parents. Teachers Network begins to address this weakness by helping us develop research and policy recommendations and equipping us with the skills to advocate for the policies that we know will improve teaching and learning.

To hear more from Dan—a podcast about his action research, "What Happens Next: Mott Haven Village Preparatory High School's Class of 2006 in Their First Year After High School"—go to www.teachersnetwork.wordpress.com. 🍎

What's It All About, Alfie? TNLI Listserv Discusses Article by Alfie Kohn, and Mr. Kohn Responds!

Although some may doubt its worth (read on), TNLI MetLife Fellows are given homework. This comes in the form of monthly reading assignments that are discussed via the TNLI listserv. One of the discussion readings during the previous school year was "Abusing Research: The Study of Homework & Other Examples" by Alfie Kohn. Kohn is a lecturer and author in the fields of education, psychology, and parenting. His article was published in the magazine *Phi Delta Kappan* and excerpted from his book, *The Homework Myth*.

Alfie Kohn's article is written from a point of view imbued with a strong skepticism of the efficacy of research in the field of education. Kohn uses findings related to homework as examples of education research's flaws. As one would expect with such a controversial topic, the fellows' discussion of the piece was informed and lively.

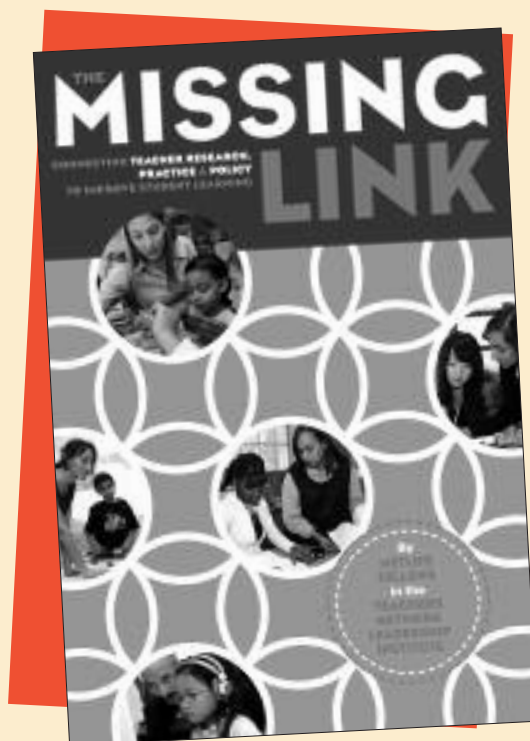
After the fellows' discussion about Kohn's article on homework was published on www.teachersnetwork.org, the author posted a response in which he fine-tuned his arguments, taking them several steps further. But who was in agreement with him or not in agreement, the author suggested, was not the point here. What was crucial was the TNLI debate and the open-mindedness it indicated: "I was delighted to read one comment in this colloquy to the effect that my own homework policy is thus-and-so, but I could be convinced to do otherwise. It's that openness to critical reevaluation that I find so rare and refreshing."

To read the TNLI listserv discussion of Alfie Kohn's article, go to http://teachersnetwork.org/tnli/listarchive/kohn_abus.htm. For the author's response, go to http://teachersnetwork.org/tnli/listarchive/kohn_res_abus.htm. To see all our archived TNLI MetLife Fellow conversations, visit http://teachersnetwork.org/tnli/tnli_fellows_conversations.htm.

Reading Matters—One Book Hot Off the Presses, Another in the Works

What I hope my students come to understand is that teacher research is a tool for improving professional practice, that learning the processes of systematically addressing classroom issues is the goal, and that writing it is a way to help internalize the process and share insights with others.

J. Amos Hatch, Professor, Department of Theory and Practice in Teacher Education, University of Tennessee



Thanks to a grant from the Spencer Foundation, Teachers Network has just published a compilation of six Teachers Network Leadership Institute (TNLI) Fellows' action research studies, with an introduction by J. Amos Hatch, a professor in the Department of Theory and Practice in Teacher Education at the University of Tennessee. *The Missing Link, Connecting Teacher Research, Practice & Policy to Improve Student Learning* was edited by TNLI Director Ellen Meyers; Frances Rust, Dean of Faculty, Erickson Institute; and TNLI National Coordinator Peter A. Paul. The book was distributed at the annual AERA conference in March (see p. 5).

The six recent action research studies were authored by TNLI MetLife Fellows Dan Abramowski, New York City; Meg Burns, Chicago; Peter Hippard, San Francisco; Christine Lancaster, Chicago; Anokhi Saraiya, New York City; and Cara Shuckett, New York City.

With research studies ranging from "Teacher Collaboration and the Science Rotation" to "The Art of Reading: A Look at Student Motivation, Self-Esteem, and Self-Perception When the Arts Are Integrated with Reading Curriculum," *The Missing Link* focuses on a number of disciplines and grade levels. The book offers a detailed look at how devoted teachers work to improve student learning and change policies that impinge on progress in the classroom.

We know—and can document—that teachers' networks work, and we would like everyone else

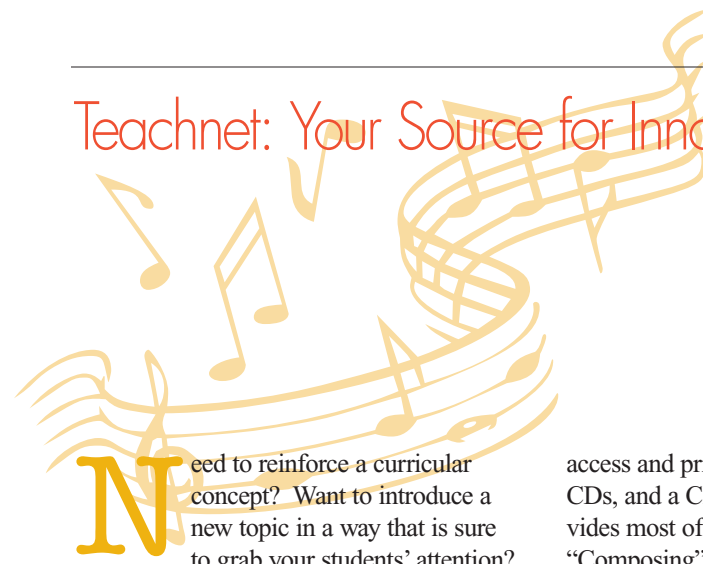
concerned about education to know it, too. To that end, Teachers Network has signed an agreement with Corwin Press to publish a book with the working title of "The Power of Networks—How to Keep Good Teachers Teaching and Growing." The book will target teachers, administrators, professors, and education policy makers, and will underscore networking strategies and techniques for teacher retention. "The Power of Networks" is to be co-authored by Director of TNLI Ellen Meyers with TNLI National Advisor David E. Kirkland and TNLI National Coordinator Peter A. Paul.

Highlights of the book will include promoting professional and leadership development, connecting schools and universities, and bridging schoolhouses and statehouses. As a practical how-to guide representing the collective voice of teachers and university partners working together as a network, the book will also feature material from our nationwide community of educators, sharing specific experiences and narratives related to their participation in networks.

Corwin Press is an affiliate of SAGE Publications. It was established in 1990 to address the needs of those serving the field of K-12 education, and grew to include PreK as well. Corwin's practice-oriented publications range from practical, experiential-based manuals to more reflective or research-based books. Its mission, the publisher says, "is to offer practical, hands-on resources to help education professionals do their work better—and, in the process, help advance the field and improve education for all learners."

Speaking of partnerships, this one—Teachers Network and Corwin Press—seems a perfect match. 🍎

Teachnet: Your Source for Innovative Teacher-Tested Curriculum



Need to reinforce a curricular concept? Want to introduce a new topic in a way that is sure to grab your students' attention? There's no denying that youngsters are turned on by technology. By going to www.teachersnetwork.org/teachnet, classroom teachers can find just the unit they need to complement any course of study while perking up their pupils via the new media. Express your needs on our website, and enjoy perusing the lively instructional ideas that pop right up. Below we explore just two of these: a music program from Teachnet Ireland designed for primary school students that focuses on listening and responding, performing, and composing; and a high school program from Chicago that helps students understand themselves so that they can make better continued education and career choices.

Aileen Donagher McGowan has combined her two passions, music and education, to create *Music for Fun*, a rich music program for primary school students. Aileen is the principal of Owenbeg N.S. School in Ireland and a talented musician who plays flute, uilleann pipes, piano, guitar, bodhran, and spoons!

All a teacher needs to implement *Music for Fun* is a computer with Internet



access and printer, some basic instruments, CDs, and a CD player. Aileen's unit provides most of the other materials. In the "Composing" section, for example, she explains how music can be modeled on stories and poetry. Using an interactive version of a children's favorite, *The Brentown Musicians*, the class becomes familiar with the classic tale. Then the children are asked to retell the story using only sound to represent each animal, after which they are challenged to seek percussion instruments to represent the animal sounds and reenact the story. More advanced students can compose a musical motif, *Peter and the Wolf*-style, to help tell the story.

No need for a classroom piano for this unit, because simple tunes can be found right on the Internet in Aileen's "Performing" section. Just click on a song such as "The Birch Tree." Play the whole song with notes and chords, and then break it down so the children can hear the isolated melody and chord accompaniment.

To see and hear more, go to www.teachnet.ie/adonaghermcgowan.

Jeanne Walker Ehrich is an art specialist at the Simpson Academy for Young Women, a public high school in Chicago. **WHO (am I) WHAT (do I want to do) HOW (do I get there from here)** is a program designed to encourage self-awareness among students that will enhance their ability to make college and career choices that coincide with their skills and passions. By the end of the program, students will have determined several resources and home/community/school connections that will assist them in making informed choices about their future.



Who What How focuses on 23 log assignments that students keep track of in a log checklist in their portfolios. During stops along the way, students analyze their findings either as written reflections or PowerPoint presentations. These are significant indicators of how much knowledge students have gathered, analyzed, and synthesized. Lessons on the path to self-discovery focus on Internet research skills such as how to cite sources and how to recognize plagiarism. Students also learn about finding mentors and filling out college applications. By the end of the unit, students are equipped for mapping out plans for the future and have identified strategies for achieving their goals.

Learn how it's done at www.teachersnetwork.org/everywhere/ehrich.htm.

Teachnet and www.teachersnetwork.org are made possible by support from J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation, Citizens Union Foundation, Con Edison, and The Dickler Family Foundation. Teachnet Ireland and Teachnet UK are funded by Citi Foundation. 🍎

New York, New York—A Melting Pot for Best Practice Ideas When Affiliate Directors Gather Together

Springtime in New York means rainstorms; they tell us April showers bring May flowers. But springtime in New York also means brainstorms, because that's when and where affiliate directors come together to share ideas about education. (And also to have a wonderful time in the Big Apple!)

As this newsletter goes to press, final touches are being made to both the agenda and the entertainment schedule for the annual Affiliate Directors Meeting in New York City beginning this year on Wednesday, April 30th, and ending on Saturday, May 3rd. By the end of the conference it is hoped that participants will have learned best practices with and from each other; identified ways of measuring the impact of Teachers Network programs on student learning; discussed how particular programs can continue to lead the way in the effective use and impact of new and emerging technologies; and developed a base for networking and building relationships among affiliate members and education leaders.

Thursday morning will be devoted to program overviews, affiliate introductions, and affiliate material exchange. Carmen Fariña, a Teachers Network board member and former Deputy Chancellor of Teaching and Learning for New York City's Department of Education, will also be on hand to sign copies of her new book, *A School Leader's Guide to Excellence: Collaborating Our Way to Better Schools*. Thursday afternoon brings the keynote address, "Teacher 2.0," to be delivered by Jonathan Harber, SchoolNet President and CEO, and Luyen Chou, SchoolNet Chief Product Officer and Teachers Network board advisor. Their talk will focus on how emerging technologies may redefine the role of the teacher in the 21st century.

Friday morning Debbie Meier visits for a conversation. Debbie, a MacArthur Fellow, Senior Scholar at NYU, and the author of *The Power of Their Ideas*, has had 42 years of teaching experience in public schools. A skillshop focusing on fundraising will follow. Later, program group members will sit together to share ideas and problem solve. A buffet dinner at Canal Room that evening will feature *Successful Teaching Practices in Action*, a television education special starring (Ta-dah!) Teachers Network.

Affiliate directors will return home on Saturday with many things to ponder. The final workshop, Framing a Story, should prove particularly thought provoking. It will offer the opportunity for participants to pull together the different threads of idea and concept generated at the conference in order to "frame" the story of Teachers Network as an evolving organization dedicated to learning.

We feel confident that the 2008 Affiliate Directors Meeting will be both memorable and motivational, in no small part thanks to the efforts of this year's planning committee. So please offer your congratulations to the folks who worked so diligently to make it happen: Christine Anderson, Glynis Barritt, John Hurley, Jeff Issenberg, Petti Pfau, Michael Rasmussen, Sarah Rossi, and Jenifer Van Deusen, our facilitator.



Teachers Network on the Telly; Brooklyn Independent Television Airs Successful Teaching Practices in Action

It is a rich and informative hour of television viewing produced by Teachers Network and Brooklyn Independent Television to spread the word about how excellent teachers work their magic in New York City classrooms. The education special, *Successful Teaching Practices in Action*, was first aired on March 13, and continues to be encored on the station. You can watch it on our website, www.teachersnetwork.org.

Developed for educators, parents, and other concerned citizens, the program has three components—mini-documentaries featuring teachers who have successfully integrated web-based tools into classroom teaching, a roundtable discussion with New York City teachers who have directly benefited from these resources, and taped interviews with new teachers.

Former Department of Education Deputy Chancellor Carmen Fariña moderates the roundtable discussion. (Carmen, now a Teachers Network board member, has just authored a book with Laura Kotch, *A School Leader's Guide to Excellence: Collaborating Our Way to Better Schools*, published by Heinemann Press.) The roundtable discussion explores further the useful and adaptable teaching techniques presented in the mini-documentaries. Of course, the program also features easily accessed information about the multimedia resources employed by the teachers as well as grants available from Teachers Network.

The dual mission of *Successful Teaching Practices in Action*, the television show, is to provide educators with the know-how and the access to resources for successful implementation of interactive media in the classroom, and to generate much-needed support for upgrading public schools. We believe the show does remarkably well on both counts.

The television special *Successful Teaching Practices in Action* was made possible by a generous grant from the Independence Community Foundation. 🍎

2 + 2 = 4 Terrific Additions to the Teachers Network Team!

We are delighted to announce the addition of two new members to our board of trustees—Reginald Chambers and Michael Zelkind—and two new Teachers Network Affiliate Directors—Petti M. Pfau from Santa Barbara County Schools (CA), and Jeff Issenberg from the San Francisco Education Fund (CA).

Reginald Chambers

works in the New York City office of the 3i Group, a private equity firm based in the United Kingdom. He serves the 3i Group as Vice President. Before assuming his current position, he was V.P. in the Global Energy Investment Banking Group of Citigroup Global Markets Inc. At Citi, Reggie worked on a variety of domestic and international mergers and acquisitions within the energy sector. Before joining Citi, he was a corporate attorney with Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP.

Teachers Network is not Reggie's first venture with not-for-profits devoted to education; he served as a board member and treasurer for Stages of Learning, an organization focused on improved learning for New York City students through innovative use of theater instruction.

"I am elated to have the opportunity to join an organization that is as dynamic and important as Teachers Network," Reggie Chambers remarked. "In a society that is becoming increasingly global, I believe that an organization such as Teachers Network will continue to grow in relevance as it is able to make available valuable information from both domestic and international resources. I am looking forward to helping Teachers Network continue to grow and expand in order to provide teachers with the best possible resources to help educate the next generation of leaders."

Michael Zelkind has worked with a broad array of corporations and institutions ranging from global multi-nationals to medium-sized entities. He has served as Managing Director with Standard & Poor's; Senior Vice President with Fleet Bank; Director with GiroCredit Bank of Vienna, Austria; and Vice President with the Bankers Trust Co. As a teacher in the New York City public school system—while earning an MBA from NYU's Stern School of Business—Michael experienced firsthand how education shapes future leaders.



"It is important to me to fill my time with opportunities that allow me to give back," Michael Zelkind observed. "So I was fortunate to be given the opportunity to assist an organization whose mission I strongly believe in and whose values I respect. As a teacher, I interacted with students who wanted to learn and who were anxious to develop, but in many cases their teachers were not afforded enough support or the appropriate tools needed to help their students. Teachers Network strives to provide the tools needed to help develop an environment where both teacher and student potential can be realized. Teachers Network is involved in one of the most basic, yet complex, challenges—assuring that our children are taught well and learn to their capabilities."

Teachers Network Affiliate Director Petti Pfau is the new Director of Teacher Programs at the Santa Barbara County Education Office. Petti has 37 years of experience under her belt, which includes teaching every grade level from kindergarten through college. Embracing the new media as tools for enhancing student achievement, Petti has taught teacher technology classes through CTAP (California Technology Assistance Project) and BTSA (Beginning Teachers Support and Assessment) for the past 12 years.

Petti Pfau said that her guiding principle is *Teaching touches the future forever*: "In 1987, I began writing yearly Teachers Network grant applications through our local Santa Barbara County Education Office, one of the first Teachers Network/IMPACT II affiliates," Petti recalled. "Grant money awarded was used in my classroom to buy computers and software for my early primary students. As Director of Teacher Programs at Santa Barbara County Education Office and a new TN Affiliate Director, I am committed to exposing as many teachers as possible to the rich resources that Teachers Network provides."

Jeff Issenberg is the Program Manager of the San Francisco Education Fund's Teachers Leadership Institute, the San Francisco affiliate of TNLI. Jeff came to teaching after a decade in the youth development field. He is deeply committed to working for social justice through educational change. Before joining the Ed Fund, he taught at MetWest High School, a small, innovative public high school in Oakland, California. MetWest espouses a pedagogy centered upon students pursuing their interests and passions through internships two full days a week, small learning communities, intense teacher collaboration, and a social justice-based curriculum.

"I joined Teachers Network because I believe very strongly that teachers belong at the center of education policymaking," stated Jeff. "My goal is to provide TNLI fellows with the skills and experience they need to develop leadership and have a significant voice in education policy. In addition to focusing on issues of equity in general, we are particularly concerned about the high teacher turnover rate in low-performing schools in the San Francisco Unified School District." 🍎

Come Join Us!

Teachers Network has been working for over 27 years to support and connect innovative teachers through grants and networking opportunities. Teachers Network's community of educators is linked by 25 affiliated organizations including education foundations, public school systems, and state education departments.

We invite you to join us in helping great teachers do great work. Please clip and mail this coupon to: Teachers Network, 285 West Broadway, Suite 200, New York, NY 10013.

Amount enclosed \$ _____ All contributions are tax deductible.

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