



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### Arlette Willis

University of Illinois

I am pleased to report on the 63rd annual Literacy Research Association's conference, held at the Omni Dallas Hotel, Dallas, TX. I want to thank all 1,322 attendees for their intellectual acumen, the KMG team for their hard work and support, and the Omni Dallas Hotel staff for attention to every detail during an historic ice storm.

LRA is the intellectual conference home for many seasoned attendees. It also has become a launching point for first time attendees and graduate students, as captured in the LRA Mission Statement:

The Literacy Research Association (LRA) is a community of scholars dedicated to promoting research that enriches the knowledge, understanding, and development of lifespan literacies in a multicultural and multilingual world. LRA is committed to ethical research that is rigorous, methodologically diverse, and socially responsible. LRA is dedicated to disseminating such research broadly so as to promote generative theories, informed practices and sound policies. Central to its mission, LRA mentors and supports future generations of literacy scholars.

### Conference Highlights

I have many fond memories of the conference — from the outstanding plenary sessions, to the conference chair symposium, to the The Newcomers' and Graduate Students' Breakfast, to the annual Town Hall meeting, and so many more! Respondents to the LRA survey seemed to agree. Of those responding, 92.2% agreed that the conference met or exceeded their expectations. Further, survey results suggest that LRA should retain Alternative Formats sessions, Paper Presentations, the Presidential Address, Study Groups, Symposia, and the Town Hall meeting. Site features that respondents requested include Internet access in meeting and sleeping rooms, lower sleep room rates, direct flights to conference cities, and updating the conference website. There always is room for improvement as well, particularly the Internet access in meeting rooms and sleeping room rates.

### Plenary Sessions

Richard Beach's Presidential address "Understanding and Creating Digital Texts Through Social Practices" reminded us all why LRA is a vitally important conference for literacy researchers. He artfully outlined and described how social practices, such as contextualizing/recontextualizing, interactivity, connectivity and intertextuality, critical engagement stance, and constructing identities through digital texts supports student/learner growth in the 21st century. Richard used a recurring motif, 'connect the dots,' to share with the audience in an integrative review of related research to help understand

social practices within classrooms and communities, literacy traditions, and legislative policies. In addition, his presentation included a host of websites where users draw on the social practices he described. Moreover, Richard offered suggestions for future research of the intersection of social practices and digital literacies. Finally, as if to demonstrate his thinking, the 63rd LRA Presidential Address was streamed live on GoogleHangout. Thank you, Richard, for an outstanding presentation that helped to anchor the intellectual atmosphere of the conference.

Jerome Harste, an award winning and talented artist, was kind enough to share photos of a few of his artistic works with the audience during his Oscar S. Causey presentation. Jerry's address, "Transmediation: What Art Affords Our Understanding of Literacy," commenced with a foreshadowing of three key ideas using powerful video examples to highlight art in popular culture. He shared a snippet of a conversation he had with Gunther Kress, where Kress mused, "I have stopped talking about various sign systems as languages; we should, I think be better off looking at sign systems on their own rather than through the lens of language." Jerry noted that there is both potential and limitation within sign systems during remediation and transmediation. Many of his key ideas are captured effectively in his statement, "the interplay between language and art affords learners, as well as teachers and researchers, a critical stance towards literacy."

Ametha Ball offered a motivational presentation entitled "Theorizing Generativity and Operationalizing Research on Transformative Literacies as the Foundation for Meaningful Reform when Preparing Teachers for Diversity in Transnational Contexts" that was consistent with the conference theme. In her presentation, Ametha shared her collaborative research projects in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and the United States examining model teacher education programs. She encouraged the audience to become proactive literacy teacher educators and researchers and embrace a global and transnational perspective. An early finding from her research suggests that teacher preparation of culturally and linguistically complex classrooms must be strategic. Paraphrasing her talk, she stated that teacher candidates "should be taught to honor and help preserve the linguistic and cultural practices that students bring to the classroom, build upon these resources during instruction, and adapt and link the curriculum in meaningful ways to the communities in which students live."

Theresa McCarty's inspirational presentation, "Making Our Literacy Research Matter – Lessons from Work with Indigenous Youth," described her ethnographic research projects in two sites. She made clear that social context matters because it "foregrounds the larger issues of racial, ethnic, and linguistic exclusion." In concert with the conference theme, Theresa noted that transformative literacy research requires that we engage local stakeholders not only as participants but also as partners. She posed a series of questions for the audience to consider:

- How can we make our literacy research really matter in the local, national, and global communities in which we work?

- Can we construct literacy projects through which linguistically based inequities are not only critically scrutinized but also transformed?
- How can we fashion literacy research that works in tandem with community efforts to turn ... social facts around?
- What would happen if we take these yearnings [for heritage language] seriously, and, if we kind of turned the lens to look at their heteroglossia, their hybridity, differently...not as evidence of hindrance, or limitations, or deficits, but as resources for language revitalization and resources for their own community's self empowerment?"

Her research revealed that indigenous youth hold very different views of their language access and usage than do educators, and, that their actions toward learning their heritage language has served to contest stereotypical images of themselves as learners.

The final plenary session, the Integrative Research Review, was chaired and moderated by Georgia E. Garcia. The distinguished panel of scholars included David Bloome, Kris D. Gutierrez, Carol D. Lee, and Robert Tierney. The panel's presentation "Redux: Transformative Literacy - Theory, Research, and Reform" was structured to draw together disparate notions of transformative literacy from varying methodological stances. Specifically, the panelists were asked to consider how literacy researchers might re-imagine literacy reform as transformative in national and international settings and in light of complex and contested histories of literacy frailties, in response to two queries: 'What can we learn from the past?' and 'What directions/guidelines do you suggest for the future of literacy research?'. Each panelist drew from his/her expertise: Lee from Learning Sciences, Bloome from Critical/Discourse Analysis, Gutierrez from Learning Sciences, and Tierney from Narrative and Participatory Action Research. The panelists challenged the audience to think about the use of the term *transformative literacy*: Lee asks that we consider intellectual alliances among literacy researchers; Bloome questioned what is meant by the term *literacy*, offered 62 adjectival literacies, and argued for the reclamation of the term literacy; Gutierrez stated the importance of understanding the role of consequential and valued learning in literacy practice and research; and Tierney discussed a shift from research for research sake, to agency as literacy researchers grapple with 'How are we going to influence society?'. Videos of each presentation are available on the [LRA website](#).

### Conference Chair's Symposium

The symposium featured a panel of scholars: David Kirkland, Jason Irizarry, and Lisa Patel. The panelists' presentations centered on "Transformative Literacy Research as Praxis." Each scholar drew from his/her research as they aligned, challenged, critiqued, queried, and re/envisaged the conference theme. Collectively, the researchers shared their work among minoritized youth, many of whom were living in economically stressed communities, highlighting the impact of the students' development and growth as empowered literacy advocates within schools and communities. Seldom at research conferences is one brought to tears; however, an audience member in this session shared with me how moved she was by the passion and research of the speakers, confessing, "It reminded me of why I do, what I do."

### Newcomers' and Graduate Students' Breakfast

This annual event was extremely well attended. We are all grateful to Jennifer Jones who has done an outstanding job of arranging the event. There

were 35 new doctoral students in attendance. During the event, a graduate student survey was undertaken with 53 respondents. The Chair reported that broad themes among the responses included the opportunity to acquire additional knowledge about methodologies, consideration of dissertation research questions, networking with faculty and other doctoral students, presenting at a research conference, and providing professional development. Suggestions for ways in which LRA could better meet doctoral students needs, as mentioned by the respondents, included: increased opportunities to share prior to the conference; job search information; networking; travel grants; and writing groups.

### Town Hall

The annual Town Hall meeting exceeded our seating capacity with well over 250 attendees present. As an honored tradition within LRA, the Town Hall Meeting's moderators, Douglas Fisher, San Diego State University, and Mariana Souto-Manning, Teachers College, Columbia University, kept the meeting moving at an engaging pace. Attendees voiced their opinions – either online via Tweets or orally – in response to various issues, or raised questions, or in response to conference presentations, while simultaneously munching on free popcorn or drinking a beverage. The re-institution of a free beer for speakers/commentators may have been a reason for such engagement – thanks Doug and friends for your charitable contribution.

### LRA Book Drive

Thank you to everyone who took time to share a book with a young person. A special note of thanks is extended to Mark Condon for his especially generous support of the book drive. All books were donated to a Dallas area homeless shelter and delivered by the Omni Dallas staff.

### New ICG

The LRA Board of Directors welcomes a new Innovative Community Group, the Gender and Sexualities Innovative Community Group, to be chaired by Corrine Wicken, Northern Illinois University.

### Technology Committee

Erica Boling (Chair) along with members of the Technology Committee, Richard Beach, and the eEditors, Ian O'Byrne and Greg Mcverry, have been working with KMG technology expert, Wyn Bryant, to redesign the LRA website. Specifically, they seek to create an aesthetically pleasing and user-friendly site that more adequately reflects the work of LRA. Look for changes coming soon.

### Board Changes

Thank you to the outgoing Board of Directors: Fenice Boyd, Kelly Chandler-Olcott, and Theresa Rogers, for their dedication and hard work on the LRA Board. And, welcome to the in-coming Board of Directors: Randy Bomer, GuoFang Li, Julia Lopez-Robertson, and Diane Schallert.

Thank you to outgoing Committee Chairs: Donna Alvermann (Albert J. Kingston Award Chair), Thomas Bean (Publications Chair), Samuel Miller (Research Chair), William Muth (J. Michael Parker Award Committee), and Jeanne Paratore (Ethics Chair) for their inspiring work during tough economic times. And, welcome to all in-coming Committee Chairs: Kelly Cartwright (Ethics Chair), Jill Castek (Albert J. Kingston Award Commit-

tee), Laurie Henry (Oscar S. Causey Award Committee Chair), Gay Ivey (Research Chair), Silvia Noguero-Liu (J. Michael Parker Award Committee), and Thomas DeVere Wolsey (Publications Chair).

We also welcome the new Co-Chairs of the Doctoral Student Innovative Community Group, Jennifer Smith, Katherine Brodeur, and Colleen Whittingham, who have quite large group of over 200 doctoral students on their listserv!

### Publications

Continued thanks to the Co-Editors of the *LRA Yearbook*, Pamela J. Dunston and Susan King Fullerton, and the Associate Editors, C. C. Bates, Kathy Headley, and Pamela M. Stecker, of Clemson University. And a hearty "thank you" to the Co-Editors of *Journal of Literacy Research* Patricia L. Anders and David B. Yaden, Jr., University of Arizona, and the Associate Editors, Ana Christina da Silva Iddings, University of Arizona and Laurie Katz, The Ohio State University.

### LRA 2014 Conference

The 64th LRA Conference will be co-chaired by Janice Almasi and Patricia Enciso. We are all looking forward to the 2014 Conference to be held December 3 - 6, 2014, Marco Island Marriott Beach Resort, Golf Club & Spa, Marco Island, FL.

## PRESIDENT ELECT'S REPORT

### Janice F. Almasi

University of Kentucky

This year our annual conference will be December 3-6, 2014, in Marco Island, Florida at the Marco Island Marriott Beach Resort. The theme for the conference is, "The Dialogic Construction of Literacies." Plenary speakers will include:

- Dr. Arlette Willis, President of LRA, who will deliver the Presidential Address on Wednesday, December 3, 2014, from 4:45 - 6:00 PM. The President's Reception will follow immediately after the address, to which all attendees are invited.
- Dr. Yetta Goodman will deliver the Oscar Causey Address on Thursday, December 4, 2014, from 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM.
- Dr. Rupert Wegerif, Professor of Education at the University of Exeter will deliver the plenary address on Thursday, December 4, 2014, from 4:45-6:00 PM. His research focuses on teaching thinking through dialogic education with technology. He heads the Centre for Teaching Thinking and Dialogue and is the Director of Research at the University of Exeter. His recent work includes the book, *Dialogic: Education for the Internet Age*.
- Dr. George Lakoff, Richard and Rhoda Goldman Distinguished Professor of Cognitive Science and Linguistics at the University of California at Berkeley, will deliver the plenary address on Friday, December 5, 2014, from 4:45 -6:00 PM. His research focuses on conceptual systems, conceptual metaphor, grammar and meaning. Lakoff, an expert in the

field, will speak on embodied cognition. His seminal works include *Metaphors We Live By* (with Mark Johnson) (1980), *Moral Politics* (1996; second edition 2002); and *Philosophy in the Flesh* (1999). His most recent work is *The Little Blue Book: The Essential Guide to Thinking and Talking Democratic* (2012)

The other plenary speakers will be announced in the fall newsletter.

Details about the Marco Island Marriott:

- The Marco Island Marriott sits on 3.5 miles of beachfront property along the Gulf of Mexico. In addition to the pristine white sand beaches and tropical breezes that are steps from the hotel and meeting rooms, the Marriott features two swimming pools, a Balinese-style Spa and Fitness Center, golf, tennis, beach volleyball, and basketball.
- The Marco Island Marriott has just completed a massive renovation and redesign of the entire property including all guest rooms and meeting room spaces.
- The property boasts eight restaurants (including a beachside bistro that can serve over 700 people at a time for lunch). As well, there are 75 other restaurants on the island within walking distance or a very short cab ride away.
- Marco Island is close to Ft. Myers and Naples and is accessible by flying into Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW), which offers nonstop service to 45 domestic and international destinations.
- Ground transportation from the airport will be arranged.
- We have negotiated a room rate of \$149/night (including Internet).
- In December, Marco Island averages high temperatures of 78°F, low temperatures of 55°F, and there is an average of 1.4 inches of rain for the month.

Please join us December 3-6, 2014 on Marco Island!

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### Patricia Enciso

The Ohio State University

I have enjoyed spending the past year learning the responsibilities of the LRA Executive team and am now looking forward to serving as Vice President through 2014. As Vice President I convene and chair the Nominations Committee. I invite your nominations for membership on this committee, which is responsible for selecting the slate of nominees for Board of Directors and President. The committee is made up of President-Elect Janice Almasi, Past President Richard Beach, and four non-Board of Directors members. Please consider nominating a peer or yourself for membership on the Nominations Committee, keeping in mind that nominees must be members in good standing with LRA. Please [contact me](#) with your nomination.

## La Costa Resort, Carlsbad CA for 2015

I also had the great pleasure of touring west coast hotel sites with Janice Almasi and our KMG support team, Lynn Hupp and Julie Dross, in preparation for the 2015 LRA Conference. We toured, checked guest and conference room capacity, considered the quality of lighting and "flow" in conference spaces, double checked the technology capacity, and checked out the surrounding area for available restaurants and amenities. In the fall of 2013 the Board of Directors approved our recommendation that the 2015 Conference be held at the Omni La Costa Resort in Carlsbad, California. We all agreed that this is exactly the kind of space that fosters conversation, ease of movement between meeting and room spaces, care-free technology, and a relaxed and beautiful indoor-outdoor environment for enjoying one another's company with delicious food and beverages.

We negotiated a guest room rate of \$169/night with complimentary Internet access in all guest rooms and meeting rooms, complimentary self-parking, and no resort fee. This is an exceptional rate for the quality of property. We hope you'll make plans now to spend time with colleagues and even add 2-3 days before or after the conference with the same group rate (<http://www.lacosta.com/lacosta-meeting-experience/>).

For families, the La Costa Resort boasts children's guided play programs, 6 pools, a water slide, and plenty of outdoor space to run around. For adults, the pools and water slide will be available, as well as a state-of-the-art athletics and fitness center, a Yoga Center, the renowned Champions and Legends golf courses, and the #1 Spa in the U.S. (I can attest to the high quality of the spa!). The Resort's food options include a well-stocked, well-priced organic and fresh foods cafe, the BlueFire Grill, Bistro 65 (where we can celebrate LRA's 65th year), and Diversions Lounge, overlooking pools and the mountains. Nearby are dozens of restaurants to suit a wide range of tastes and budgets. The Carlsbad area also features a beautiful beach, natural parks, artisan galleries, and LegoLand, all within a ten-minute drive.

La Costa Resort is 30 miles from the San Diego International Airport. Shuttles will be arranged. We're very excited about the possibilities for meeting and celebrating.

The Hampton Inn, located 1 mile from the resort, with a complimentary breakfast, is also available at a rate of \$95/night.

Plan now to join us in Carlsbad, CA, in 2015!

## PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### Richard Beach

University of Minnesota

As Past President, I want to first thank Arlette Willis and Janice Almasi for all of their hard work in organizing what was a very successful and productive Dallas conference, as well as our Executive Director Lynn Hupp and the Kautter Management Group staff for their highly efficient management of the conference. The Dallas conference set an all-time attendance record, a reflection of the fact that LRA continues to be a vibrant, active professional organization. And, I want to thank all of the LRA members who served as Chairs, Discussants, Study Group organizers, and presenters for their

contributions to this conference; it's always gratifying to witness so many members making so many contributions to the success of our conference.

Just a reminder that videos of the conference plenary addresses and paper/handouts are available on the [LRA website](#). My Presidential Address, "Understanding and Creating Digital Texts through Social Practices," is also available on YouTube, with an accompanying [website](#).

I also want to thank Jennifer Jones, Chair of the LRA Field Council, and members of the Field Council, for organizing another successful, well-attended Newcomers/Graduate Student Breakfast at the conference. Because a high percentage of conference presenters and a third of our members are graduate students who may be attending the conference for the first time, events such as this breakfast serve to invite them into the LRA community so that they will continue to attend in the future. And, these doctoral students are effectively supported by our Doctoral Student ICG, co-chaired by Amy Brodeur, Jennifer Smith, and Gail Lovette, who have generated some impressive Newsletters regarding the activities of LRA doctoral students as well as information related to conference presentations and publication strategies.

Since my last Newsletter report, I also have been pleased with the work by a number of our Committees who have made some significant contributions to LRA, as described in their Newsletter reports.

The Publications Committee, under its new Chair, Thomas Wolsey, has been working with our historian, Dixie Massey, to create a digital repository of previous editions of the LRA Yearbook housed on Box.com with a link on the website. And, he has been indexing these previous editions of the Yearbook for use by the EBSCO database system.

The LRA Policy and Legislative Committee, chaired by Caitlin Dooley, continues to work on creating [Policy Update](#) reports as reviews of related research and recommendations on policy matters for communicating with local policy makers and constituents. Given their focus on teacher education policy matters related to their Policy Update critique of the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) review of teacher education programs, they have been working on a new Policy Updates, as well as a project on research related to policy issues associated with different aspects of literacy teacher education.

The LRA Technology Committee, chaired by Erica Boling, has launched a major initiative involving a redesign of the LRA website that should be completed by late spring. They have also sponsored a new LRA Research to Practice Show moderated by Greg McVerry and Ian O'Bryne on the [LRA YouTube Channel](#), focusing on topics of interest to LRA members; for example, research on disciplinary literacies, graphic novels, and multimodality and writing.

I would also like to welcome our new Committee Chairs who began serving their three-year terms beginning with the Dallas conference, as well as thank the out-going Chairs for their service to LRA:

Ethics: Kelly Cartwright replacing Jeanne Paratore

Publications: Thomas Wolsey, replacing Tom Bean

Research: Gay Ivey, replacing Sam Miller

Albert J. Kingston Award Committee: Jill Castek, replacing Donna Alvermann

J. Michael Parker Award Committee: Silvia Noguero-Liu, replacing Bill Muth

Oscar S. Causey Award Committee: Laurie Henry, replacing Bill Teale

Our ICGs have also been active (see their reports). I was pleased that the Board approved the creation of a new Gender and Sexualities ICG, and want to thank Corrine Wickens for her work in organizing the proposal to the Board to create this new ICG. I'm pleased that we have three new Co-Chairs of the International ICG, Patience Sowa, Lori Assaf, and Amma Akrofi; LRA is certainly in a position to attract contributions by more international scholars. The Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism ICG, continues their support of the S.T.A.R. (Scholars of color Transitioning into Academic Research institutions) mentoring project for beginning scholars of color; while The Multilingual/Transcultural Literacies ICG, continues to address issues of diversity in literacy research.

I'm also grateful to Jackie Malloy for her willingness to continue to serve as our excellent Newsletter Editor for this next year.

Looking back over my term as President during the 2013 year, while it was very much a challenging transition year for LRA with the movement to a new management firm, I think that we've emerged as a strong organization thanks to all of the people who contributed to a successful transition, including our three outgoing Board members, Fenice Boyd, Kelly Cartright, and Teresa Rogers; Teresa continues to serve LRA as an Associate Editor of JLR. And, at our Saturday Dallas Board meeting, we welcomed our new Board members, Randy Bomer, Guofang Li, and Diane Schallert; as well as Julia Lopez Robertson, who is serving a one-year term to replace former Board member and current Vice-President Elect, Pat Enciso; as well as our new Parliamentarian, Patriann Smith.

I'm now looking forward to attending the 2014 conference at the Marco Island Resort. I think that I'm confident to predict that, given the typical warm south Florida weather, that it's highly unlikely we'll have a repeat of the Dallas ice storm during this conference, so I'm looking forward to jogging on a warm, sandy beach in December a long way away from the cold Minnesota weather.

## CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

### Kelly Chandler-Olcott

Syracuse University, Nominee for Vice President

**Biography:** I am a professor in, and chair of, the Reading & Language Arts Center at Syracuse University. I began my career as a high school English teacher in my native state of Maine, where four generations of my family have been K-12 teachers and administrators. Convinced there had to be moves I could make to support struggling adolescent readers other than lamenting those struggles, I enrolled in a doctoral program at the University of Maine and became so energized by working with school-based teacher researchers that I never returned to my secondary classroom. Instead, I decided to work toward influencing broader change by becoming a teacher educator. At Syracuse, I have taught courses in English methods and literacy across the curriculum since 1998, earning two university-wide teaching awards. In addition to LRA, I am an active member of the International

Reading Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Conference on Research in Language and Literacy (I served this last organization as the Membership and Elections Chair).

My long-time research interests include adolescents' technology-mediated literacy practices, classroom-based inquiry by teachers, and content literacy. More recently, I have worked to design writing pedagogy addressing students' diverse needs in inclusive classrooms. To this end, I spent a six-month sabbatical in 2012 co-teaching 9th grade English at the same urban high school where I annually direct a summer writing institute functioning as enrichment for students and professional development for teachers. Over my career, I have published five books and more than 60 articles and chapters in venues such as the *LRA Yearbook*, *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Reading Research Quarterly*, *English Education*, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *Literacy Research & Instruction*, and *Journal of Teacher Education*, with funding from the International Reading Association, the Spencer Foundation, and the National Science Foundation. It has been keenly important to me to generate research findings that are well-theorized and rigorous yet speak directly to the issues with which my collaborators, my current and former students, and the K-12 practitioners in my family continue to wrestle. I am grateful that LRA colleagues have both challenged and championed my work, often at the same time.

My roles within the organization have been varied. I have reviewed for both the Yearbook and JLR, served on the Fry Book Award Committee, mentored doctoral students' conference proposals, and moderated the town meeting. I have reviewed conference proposals as well as served as an area chair for two different areas. As a member of the Publications committee, I helped to select new Yearbook editors; as chair of the same committee, I headed up an ad hoc group that chose Sage as the new JLR publisher. From 2010 to 2013, I was a member of the Board of Directors, serving as the liaison to the Doctoral Student Innovative Community Group, a member of the Financial Advisory Committee, and the chair of the ad hoc committee that reviewed policy updates from the Policy & Legislative Committee. The annual conference is the first and most important professional commitment I schedule each year.

**Positions:** My research has often been grounded in Lave and Wenger's construct of communities of practice. I am curious about how community members, whether they are teacher researchers, anime fans, or math students, are socialized into valued practices, as well as how they transform those communities with their own contributions. LRA has historically played a key role in mentoring members at all levels of experience into greater excellence as scholars and teachers; this is a tradition we should sustain while we make participation norms as transparent and equitable as possible and commit to rebooting it as needed in changing times. When I ran for the Board in 2010, my statement described my interest in developing mechanisms to connect emerging and senior scholars across institutional lines, possibly around an early proposal review. After I was elected, I mentioned this idea to the new co-chairs of the Doctoral Student ICG, and they took it up with energy and enthusiasm alongside numerous ideas of their own. Today, both that program and the Doctoral Student ICG are thriving. I find this a telling example of what makes LRA special. Although the Board and Executive Committee have important leadership roles to play, the organization's most transformative work is done by the membership; when 30 individuals petition to begin a new gender-focused ICG, when fellows and mentors gather for the STAR (Scholars of color Transitioning into Academic Research institutions) program, when new and veteran scholars collaborate

to propose an innovative alternative session. If I were fortunate enough to be elected, I would work hard to ensure that all members can participate in and shape rich opportunities to mentor and be mentored by each other. My commitment to inclusion has been strengthened by 15+ years of working in an institution historically grounded in that value.

I am also interested in identifying and supporting new ways to make our research more visible and accessible to a wide range of audiences. The organization is already making strides in this area: for example, a number of tech-savvy members have volunteered their time and talents to launch the LRA Research to Practice channel on YouTube, and the Policy & Legislative Committee has begun to author short, descriptive pieces intended to inform members about the literacy research base related to current educational debates. But there is more work to be done, particularly in the policy arena, given recent and high-profile critiques of teacher education and the increasing influence of corporations and private philanthropies on teaching and learning. LRA does an excellent job of building its members' capacities to conduct valuable research; it would be helpful for us to turn more of our collective attention to developing and disseminating tools and technologies that will build our members' capacity to advocate for teachers, students, and communities across the globe, particularly those who are most vulnerable. It would be a privilege to engage in such work alongside others in the organization.

### Rebecca Rogers

University of Missouri-St. Louis, Nominee for Vice President

**Biography:** I am a Professor of Literacy Studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. I teach courses in literacy education and research methods. I also direct the Richard Burnett Literacy Clinic that provides literacy services to many families throughout the year. I aim to have my research function as a form of engaged scholarship that focuses on the socio-political contexts of literacy and language education, across classrooms and communities. I often use critical discourse analysis within an ethnographic tradition to understand the relationships between language, power and identity. However, more than just study literacy processes and practices, my current work focuses on how discourse analysis might be used as a tool for engaging citizens in the public sphere.

I have published six books and over 65 chapters and articles in journals such as: *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Linguistics & Education*, *Critical Discourse Studies*, *the Journal of Literacy Research*, *Review of Research in Education*, *Race, Ethnicity and Education* and *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*. My first book, *A Critical Discourse Analysis of Family Literacy Practices* (Erlbaum, 2003), was awarded the Ed Fry Book Award for outstanding contributions to literacy studies. My latest book (with M. Mosley Wetzel) *Designing Critical Literacy Education through Discourse Analysis* (Routledge, 2013) is both a guide for doing discourse analysis and a look at how we, alongside our teacher education students, used discourse analysis to design critical literacy practices. In 2009, I was a Fulbright Scholar in Critical Discourse Studies at the Universidad de San Martin, Buenos Aires, Argentina. I have received awards for my scholarship including the Early Career Award by the National Reading Conference.

I have been an active member of NRC/LRA. I began my service to NRC as a reviewer for the *Yearbook* (2001-2005) and the *Journal of Literacy Research* (2002-2005). I also served as a member of the Edward Fry Book Award Committee (2004-2006) and a member of the Student Research Award

Committee (2001-2004). Most recently, I served as a Board Member (2007-2010). I have also served on the editorial review board for several of the International Reading Association's journals and was the Chair of Membership and Elections for National Council of Research on Language and Literacy.

I find great inspiration in local efforts for literacy and social justice. I am one of the founding members of a grassroots teacher group called Educators for Social Justice. My book with M. Mosley and M.A. Kramer & the Literacy for Social Justice Teacher Research Group called *Designing Socially Just Learning Communities: Critical Literacy Education across the Lifespan* (Routledge, 2009) documents the practices of our group. For a number of years I served on the Literacy Roundtable, a coalition of literacy providers. Serving as an elected school board member for four years was an education for me in the politics of public education.

**Positions:** In the era of continued assaults on educators and public education, I believe we have an obligation as a professional organization to be concerned about how our work contributes to, resists or transforms this political context. I would like to see LRA more aggressively pursue efforts to connect our research with policy and practice contexts. Under what conditions, when and how is our research evidence being used in practice and policy? Answering this question together could offer insight into how we can strengthen our collective impact. If elected as Vice President, I will work to transform our annual conference and ongoing work as an organization into a strategic site to link research, policy and practice. The following objectives will help us meet this goal.

Generate conference themes with community members: Using techniques from popular education, I propose we adopt a problem-posing stance with educators in the city where our conference will be hosted. Through dialogue we can learn how we as a research organization might best serve the needs of educators, families, journalists, activists in that community. We might learn, for example, that people want to sharpen their research skills and be more effective at advocating for culturally responsive practices. In response, we would generate a conference strand focused on literacy methods for public intellectuals. Or, we might learn that educators want to learn how to synthesize research reports in ways that can be shared with activists, bloggers and reporters. Our call for proposals would request examples of these efforts.

Rethink conference sessions: We need to rethink the very format of our meetings. I propose that our time together highlight think tank sessions and cultural circles where researchers amongst us from diverse traditions are invited to work on problems together, in public. Our Town Hall meeting will bring together policy makers, local educators, reporters, activists, bloggers, school board members to dialogue about the conditions necessary to create literacy learning that is purposeful, filled with joy and personally and socially liberating. Because the audience of our conference will include multiple stakeholders, we need to experiment with the genre of our presentations.

Focus on the uptake of our research: Continuing this catalytic impact of the organization beyond the conference, I would build on current initiatives to disseminate our research widely (including policy briefs, equity analyses, reports of findings and LRA's 'Research to Practice' initiative). I propose that LRA initiate an Institute on Evidence in the Public Sphere that will support researchers to influence public deliberations about literacy education. LRA

could then serve as a clearinghouse for connecting media reporters, legislators, bloggers and activists to scholars with expertise in certain areas (e.g. adolescent literacy, digital literacies, vocabulary, emergent literacy). These scholars, having come through the Institute, will be skilled in reporting research findings in usable ways.

My plan to more organically develop our conference and organization where research, policy and practice are united could serve as a model for other professional organizations. As a research community, we are well poised to intervene (and study the process of intervention) in the trajectory of literacy education in the public sphere. I think it is our obligation to do so.

### Marcelle M. Haddix, PhD

Syracuse University, Board Nominee

**Professional Background:** In 2008, I joined the English and literacy education faculty at Syracuse University. I direct the English education programs and teach undergraduate and graduate courses in urban literacies, adolescent literature, 21st century writing and composing processes, and secondary English methods. Since 2009, I have also directed the Writing Our Lives project, a program geared toward supporting the writing practices of urban youth within and beyond school contexts in the local Syracuse community. As a community-engaged English teacher educator and scholar, I am most concerned with preparing publicly engaged teachers to work with/in urban schools and communities. An important part of my work as a teacher educator has been creating opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in community engagement efforts, like Writing Our Lives.

Working from this scholarship-in-action framework, I am interested in the ways that notions of community and public engagement are defined and taken up in literacy and English teaching and teacher education. In particular, my research agenda focuses on three main areas: 1) increasing racial and linguistic diversity in literacy and English teacher education; 2) preparing the current teacher force to work effectively with and within diverse school communities; and 3) examining community engaged partnerships—among families, teachers, schools, and students—that are needed to support the literacy practices of urban youth. I have published several book chapters and research articles across these areas, including in *Research in the Teaching of English*, *English Education*, *Linguistics and Education*, *Urban Education*, and *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, with funding support from the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) and the Conference on English Education. I have also received national recognition for this scholarship, including being selected for the Promising Researcher in English Education Award from NCTE's Standing Committee on Research and the Emerging Scholar Award from the Language and Social Processes Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). A key outcome of this research has been the forging of spaces for diverse voices and perspectives to be heard, whether that is in K-12 school contexts, in schools of education, or in the field of literacy research.

I credit my Syracuse University colleagues for formally introducing me to LRA. Prior to that, I considered NCTE and AERA my only professional homes. LRA (then the National Reading Conference) was not even on my radar as a viable professional community for me, an emerging literacy scholar of color. In 2009, LRA established the STAR (Scholars of color Transitioning into Academic Research institutions) mentoring program to

increase the number of scholars of color who not only are mentored by our organization but to build their capacity to become productive leaders within the organization. I was a member of the inaugural STAR cohort, and I know that my growth and participation within the organization are largely credited to the support I received from this important initiative. Since my time as a STAR fellow, I have served the organization as a member and now chair of the Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism (ERM) Committee. As ERM chair, I attend Board meetings as a non-voting member to represent and advance the mission of the committee to the entire organization; work with LRA members to organize conference panels on issues of diversity and social justice; and oversee initiatives to provide travel support for underrepresented scholars of color. I am also now the director of the STAR mentoring program. I led the development and submission of a continuation proposal for the STAR program, which has received significant support from the LRA Board of Directors. The STAR program continues to expand in its reach and visibility within and beyond the organization. In both leadership roles, my aim has been to increase awareness of the organization among scholars of color nationally and to continue to support scholars of color within the organization. These leadership positions provide me with the opportunity to mentor early career literacy scholars of color and give back to the community that nurtured and sustained me at pivotal moments in my own professional career.

**Position Statement:** Implicit in the act of community engagement is a resolve to serve with and within communities—to identify expressed needs of the community and work alongside its members to address them. Community-engaged scholarship is not just about advocacy for underrepresented groups but a form of engagement that privileges the perspectives and voices of and working in collaboration with communities to enact change. There is great synergy between my work as a community-engaged scholar and teacher educator and my goals for continued service to LRA.

At the forefront of LRA's mission is a commitment to inviting and welcoming new scholars, particularly those from underrepresented groups, to the organization and in the literacy research community more broadly. This means seeking out and listening to the diverse perspectives, needs, and interests of new and emerging scholars. The landscape of literacy research is steadily changing, and that is represented within the interests of this organization, from the increasing number of doctoral students and scholars of color who attend the conferences to the development of new research study groups and innovative community groups.

I am excited about the possibility of serving on the Board and consider it an honor to continue to contribute to LRA in meaningful and transformative ways. If elected, I will work with the LRA community to strengthen LRA's efforts toward diversity by increasing the number of scholars from underrepresented groups within the organization and building the capacity of early career literacy researchers of color to pursue leadership roles within the organization and in the field of literacy research. As a member of the Board of Directors, I would count it my responsibility to listen to and represent the perspectives and voices of the diverse communities within LRA.

### Lara J. Handsfield

Illinois State University, Board Nominee

I am honored to have been nominated to the Board of Directors of LRA, which I proudly consider to be my professional home. I'll begin this statement with a brief professional biography, followed by a description of my contributions to LRA and the wider literacy field, and my goals for LRA.

**Professional Biography:** I am a former bilingual elementary teacher, having taught in California and Rhode Island. Upon finishing my Ph.D. in 2005 at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, I joined the faculty at Illinois State University, where I am currently an Associate Professor. I teach literacy courses for undergraduate teacher candidates, as well as masters and doctoral courses in theoretical foundations and social and cultural contexts of language and literacy.

My research explores intersections between language, literacy, and teacher development, and is grounded in collaborative inquiry with practicing teachers. This work includes critical examinations of comprehension instruction in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms, and how teachers negotiate multiple and conflicting political demands in their work. My most recent research uses microethnographic discourse analyses and analyses of body movements across time and space to understand how student and teacher identities and ideologies of language and literacy are co-constructed and challenged during everyday classroom practices. My research has been funded by the Spencer Foundation and published in a variety of outlets, including the *Journal of Literacy Research*, the *LRA Yearbook*, *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Language Arts*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Linguistics and Education*, and *Research in the Teaching of English*. I am also Co-Editor of *Action in Teacher Education*, serving as Lead Editor for 2013-2014.

**Contributions to LRA and the Wider Literacy Field:** When I joined LRA, I found an organization that was both inviting to new members while also actively working to be more inclusive of scholars from historically marginalized groups and innovative research methodologies that are accountable to diverse student populations. I immediately recognized these goals as consistent with my own professional work and interests. I have presented at LRA every year since joining, and the 2014 conference will be my 10th consecutive year attending the conference. Since joining, I have been active in the Ethnicity, Race and Multilingualism (ERM) Committee (formerly an Innovative Community Group [ICG]) and, more recently, the Multilingual/Transcultural Literacies ICG. I have served as an ERM Committee Member (2011-2013), and conference Area Chair (In-service Teacher Development, 2011-2012), and I currently serve on the Research Committee (2014-2016). I have reviewed for *JLR*, the *Yearbook*, and the annual conference since 2006.

I have also been active in other literacy organizations. I am currently on the Publications Committee of the International Reading Association, and I served as President (2012) of the Illinois Language and Literacy Council, which orchestrates the annual Illinois Young Authors Conference. I participate in AERA's Language and Social Processes and Writing and Literacies SIGs, and have reviewed for AERA's annual meeting, *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, *Linguistics and Education*, and *Language Arts*.

**Goals for LRA:** My primary goals for LRA are three-fold: 1) Continue supporting the research of emerging scholars and scholars from underrep-

resented groups; 2) build on current efforts to better communicate amongst ourselves and with policymakers and practitioners; and 3) increase LRA's international membership and global presence. These goals are mutually supportive and consistent with LRA's mission ([http://www.literacyresearchassociation.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=73](http://www.literacyresearchassociation.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=73)).

By mentoring emerging scholars, LRA makes a commitment to cutting-edge research and methodological innovations that attend to issues of equity. I view the S.T.A.R. (Scholars of color Transitioning into Academic Research institutions) mentoring program as central to this work. As a board member, I would work to continue and enhance support for this program and to promote the work of S.T.A.R. mentees within LRA and in the broader field. This goes beyond being open to new ideas. Rather, it means actively working to diversify the organization and promote rigorous and transformative research.

Every December I leave the annual conference energized, having participated in stimulating conversations that offer new questions and ways of seeing my own work, and I doubt my experiences in this regard are unique. I support current efforts to extend these conversations beyond the time and space of the conference itself. In the past decade, I have seen LRA embrace new technologies and ways of communicating with its membership (e.g., Listserv, forums), begin to establish a social media presence (e.g., Google+, YouTube, Twitter), and to communicate with outside stakeholders (e.g., Policy Updates). In consultation with the Policy and Legislative Committee and the Technology Committee, I would advocate for continued and further efforts in these areas (e.g., press releases to media outlets, LRA Facebook page) to project our work out more broadly.

I recently spent a morning in a fourth grade classroom, where children whose personal and family histories transcend national boundaries were engaged with popular media texts that were similarly transnational and cross-cultural in nature. When we changed our name from the National Reading Conference to the Literacy Research Association, we invited the prospect of becoming more global and globally influential. Consistent with the work of the International ICG and the Multilingual/Transcultural ICG, I would explore new possibilities for inviting more international and transnational scholars into the organization, and for establishing a more global presence.

LRA's membership is rich in intellectual resources and a desire to positively impact literacy research and practice to promote equity and social justice. If elected, my primary approach would be to listen and learn from the current leadership and the membership. I am thrilled and humbled at the prospect of serving as a board member to support LRA's mission.

### Rachel Karchmer-Klein

University of Delaware, Board Nominee

I am an Associate Professor of Literacy Education at the University of Delaware where I teach face-to-face, hybrid, and online undergraduate and graduate courses in literacy problems, differentiated literacy instruction, educational technology, and digital literacies. I began my career as an elementary teacher before pursuing my doctorate in Reading Education at Syracuse University. After earning my Ph.D. in 1999, I worked as an Assistant Professor of Literacy Education at Virginia Commonwealth University where I taught for four years before moving to UD in 2003.



My research interests focus on the relationships between Internet technologies and reading and writing, with particular emphasis on the practical implications of technology use in K-12 education. My work includes empirical studies of elementary and middle school students' digital literacy skills, preservice teachers' technology preparation, and practicing teachers' perceptions of the changing nature of literacy in light of technological advances. These investigations have been published in *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Reading Research and Instruction*, *Action in Teacher Education*, *National Reading Conference Yearbook*, *Research in the Schools*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Computers & Education*, *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, *Journal of Computing in Teacher Education* and the *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*. Additionally, I co-edited the book *New Literacies for New Times: Innovative Models of Literacy Education Using the Internet* and published book chapters covering topics such as foundational digital literacy skills, multimodal digital writing, and designing effective technology preparation for preservice teachers. The range of topics and publication outlets reflects my interest in writing for a wide audience and translating research to practice.

I was fortunate to attend a doctoral program where faculty members were active in NRC/LRA. In fact, three of my mentors from SU have held the position of NRC president (Hinchman, Leu, & Mosenthal). Their commitment to the organization and willingness to apprentice me into the research community solidified my long-term involvement. For instance, I clearly remember my first NRC presentation. It was a co-authored paper with my advisor, Don Leu, and part of a symposium led by prominent researchers whose work I had read, but never met in person. Don and I composed the presentation together and I was aware I would do most of the talking. When the time came for the symposium to begin, Don informed me he would sit in the back of the room while I presented. I still remember the fear that overcame me at that moment. The room was packed because the audience was there to listen to well-respected researchers who were conducting cutting-edge work in the area of literacy and technology. Then there was me; a doctoral student knocking at the knees. In retrospect, I realize my advisor's intentions. He believed in me enough to fly solo. He also recognized the nurturing environment of NRC and knew I would benefit from the thoughtful discourse that would take place in response to our work. To this day I appreciate the opportunity given to me at that first conference. I share the story with my doctoral students and when the time comes, I let them fly solo. I want them to feel connected to the field in a way that only happens by jumping in feet first and opening dialogue with fellow researchers about important educational issues.

Since joining NRC/LRA, I have served the organization in several capacities. I was a member of the Publications Committee, and served both the Yearbook and JLR as a reviewer. I also served as a co-chair of Area 10: Technology, conference proposal reviewer, co-editor of the newsletter, Town Hall moderator, and most recently, mentor in the DSICG Proposal Mentoring Project. Perhaps my most notable role was when I served as Chair of the Field Council from 2006-2009 requiring me to spearhead new ways to promote the organization at the local, state, and national levels. During this time I also served as an appointed member of the Board of Directors, which informed me of the roles, responsibilities, and procedures vital to the organization's success.

If elected to the Board of Directors, I would work toward two goals. First, I believe the future of our field depends upon enticing great minds to join us in exploring and examining the critical issues of today and, more importantly, tomorrow. I am grateful to work at a university with a thriving doc-

toral program and I am proud of the number of UD doctoral students (past and present) who participate in LRA. In 2013, I participated in the DSICG Proposal Mentoring Project and I volunteered to do so again for the 2014 conference. This project pairs faculty with doctoral students whom they mentor through the LRA proposal process. I would like to see this project expanded to include all members interested in soliciting constructive feedback on their work, mainly focusing on the rigor expected of LRA conference proposals. The second goal would be to strengthen the organization's web presence. The current website contains a plethora of rich information including the Research to Practice Series, Voice of Literacy, and the Conference Plenary Videos. I would like to see these resources used more widely in doctoral seminars, professional development sessions, and teacher preparation courses by both members and non-members of LRA. By increasing awareness of these materials we would promote the core values of the organization, increasing visibility and our voice nationally and around the world.

I am honored to be nominated for the Board and would appreciate the opportunity to serve the organization.

### Marla H. Mallette

Binghamton University, Board Nominee

I am truly honored to receive a nomination for the Literacy Research Association's Board of Directors. As the premier organization in literacy research, it would be a privilege to be a part of the leadership team that promotes excellence in literacy research. As I briefly describe my professional background, contributions to LRA, and ideas for LRA, I hope that the passion, dedication and motivation with which I approach my professional work are evident. If I am elected to the Board, I will serve the organization with the same high levels of enthusiasm and commitment.

**Professional Background:** I began my career as a first-grade teacher in Clark County School District in Las Vegas, NV. Although I absolutely loved teaching young children, when I began to work on a master's degree, I discovered my proclivity for the university climate. In preparing for doctoral studies, one of my mentors, John Readence, encouraged me to attend the National Reading Conference (i.e., prior to 2010, LRA was NRC). My first NRC was an amazing and incredible experience. As a young and aspiring scholar, I was quite taken by the warmth and encouragement I received from the scholars I admired and respected. I felt immediately welcome into the literacy research community, and knew that this community was the one in which I wanted to belong. The following year, in collaboration with my mentors at UNLV, I presented at NRC for the first time. I am honored to note that I have presented at the conference every year since then, and feel fortunate to be a Board Member candidate while concurrently cherishing being a part of the LRA community for 20 years.

Currently, I am an associate professor of literacy at Binghamton University. I teach graduate level courses in literacy methods, assessment, and research. My research interests include: teachers' and students' beliefs about literacy learning, literacy instruction provided to struggling readers, and mixed methods research in literacy. I have published articles across a range of journals (e.g., literacy, education, research), which have focused on early literacy, beliefs about literacy, and literacy research. In addition, I have co-authored and co-edited books on literacy methods, literacy research, and early literacy. Along with Diane Barone, I am a Co-Editor of *The Reading Teacher*, a publication of the International Reading Association.

**Contributions to LRA:** During the nineteen years I have been a member of LRA, I have been afforded many opportunities to serve the organization. Along with Rachel Karchmer, I co-edited the Newsletter. I served on the Oscar Causey Award Committee. I served as both a committee member and chair the Outstanding Student Research Award Committee. I have reviewed proposals for the annual conference and the Yearbook as well as served as an Area Co-Chair. I have also had the pleasure of hosting the town meeting. Yet, I think my greatest contribution to the organization was in establishing the Literacy Research Methodologies series with Nell Duke for the 2005 and 2006 conferences. This series, which included sessions designed for graduate students that focused on thinking about the various methodologies used in literacy research, was a unique addition to the conference program. Although there are invited sessions each year at the conference, this series was the first time there were a group of invited sessions organized around a central theme. In recognizing the importance of investigating the methodologies used in literacy research, LRA has since added a new content area (i.e., Area 11: Research Theory, Methods, and Practices) to the annual conference program. I believe my service to LRA has been consistent throughout my career and my efforts were recognized at the 2011 conference, where I was honored as the recipient of the Albert J. Kingston Award for distinguished service contribution to the Literacy Research Association.

**Ideas for LRA:** Mentoring graduate students and continuing a commitment to methodological diversity are two issues that I am very passionate about. Through the years, I have been fortunate to act on these issues through the support and context of LRA. It was at LRA that I first met Nell Duke. While at a dinner together, we found ourselves talking about our work. We realized we were studying the same topic, but we did so from very different methodological perspectives. The supportive climate cultivated by LRA contributed greatly to our collaboration and our development of the Research Methodologies Series. As a Board Member, I would like to continue to think of new and innovative ways in which the organization can build on these traditions.

I think it is the responsibility of a Board Member to listen to and act upon the concerns raised by the members of the organization. One issue that seems to surface each year at the conference is the organization's political involvement. Although LRA has made progress in working to have a political influence (e.g., responding to the NCTQ Report, commissioning White Papers, inviting prominent political figures to present at the conference), this is still an area in which we need to improve. We must be persistent in advocating for literacy and we can best do this through raising the profile of LRA, having policy makers come to understand the importance and value of our work and our perspectives. The members of LRA conduct important and compelling research, which produces new knowledge and understanding of literacy learning and instruction, we need to work on disseminating our research to a broader audience and advance our political involvement. As a Board Member, I would like to advance our political standings, explore innovative ways to more broadly disseminate our work, continue to promote a collaborative community, expand our support for doctoral students and new members, and act upon the concerns raised by the LRA membership.

I feel fortunate to be a part of the LRA community and I am grateful for the many opportunities to serve the organization. Yet, serving on the Board would be the greatest honor and privilege.

## Deborah Wells Rowe

Vanderbilt University, Board Nominee

**Professional Background and NRC/LRA Connections:** My professional career has been organized by an interest in understanding how children see the world and especially how they learn language and literacy in every day classroom activities. These interests launched me on a professional path as a teacher and continue to guide my current work as a researcher and teacher educator. After 5 years of teaching in one of the first state-funded kindergarten classrooms in Kentucky, I spent the next 5 years, completing master's work at Wake Forest University with Pat Cunningham, and then doctoral work in Language Education at Indiana University-Bloomington, where Jerry Harste was my major professor, and also president of NRC. From 1986 to the present, I have served as a faculty member in the Department of Teaching & Learning at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University, where I teach undergraduate and graduate courses in reading and language arts methods, and qualitative research methods. I am currently serving as a co-editor of the *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*.

My research focuses on the ways that preschoolers learn literacy through interactions with teachers and peers, and how their learning is actively shaped by materials, tools, and spaces. My work assumes that children's language and literacy learning is shaped by the social and cultural practices of the classroom and community, and that it is almost always multimodal whether constructed on the page, or more recently, on the screen. I have been especially interested in young children's ways of weaving together talk, print, images, and dramatic play. I typically approach this research through long term, qualitative observations and interactions with children and their teachers — spending several mornings each week at my research site. This year is no exception. With a talented group of doctoral students, I am currently studying how emergent bilingual preschoolers use iPads to compose dual language eBooks. Building on the work of my mentors and other early literacy researchers, my goal has been to unpack the "scribbles" so that teachers and parents can better recognize and support the powerful learning that occurs in the preschool and early elementary grades.

LRA has been my primary professional home since 1982 when I attended my first conference, and I have missed only a few since. For me, LRA is both about ideas and people. The annual conference provides me with opportunities to engage with the cutting edge ideas of other scholars and to push my own thinking and research. It also provides me with opportunities to form a strong network of professional associations that enrich my work. I have been involved in LRA in a variety of ways, including serving as a co-editor of the *NRC Yearbook*, reviewing program proposals, serving on the editorial board of the *Journal of Literacy Research*, and serving on a variety of committees. I am currently appointed to the ethics and Oscar Causey Award committees.

**Position Statement:** I am excited about the opportunity to contribute to LRA as a member of the Board of Directors. If elected, I am committed to making sure that the conference continues to provide rich opportunities for intellectual exchange between literacy scholars at the annual conference and for dissemination of cutting edge work through its publications, the LRA Yearbook and Journal of Literacy Research. I think it is critical that LRA continue efforts to mentor newer scholars and that it represent and remain open to the variety of methodological approaches used to study literacy learning and instruction. As a board member, I would also actively support initiatives to increase connections between LRA members and researchers

working in other parts of the world. I believe LRA should be strategic in developing mechanisms that support exchange and awareness of literacy research being conducted internationally.

### Sharon Walpole

University of Delaware, Board Nominee

Literacy Research Association plays an important role in my work. The annual conference is the place where I first share my research; it is where I connect with national colleagues and plan joint projects; it where I introduce my graduate students to previous students and to researchers; it is where I mentor them as presenters and encourage them to formulate new questions. Face-to-face work at the actual conference continues virtually throughout the year. For me, then, the service I would provide on the board would be paying it forward for myself and for my students. For me, a vibrant and active Literacy Research Association is essential to my work.

Because I think that others feel the same way that I do, I am going to be as frank as possible here to enable informed decisions about board membership. Boards of organizations are important. They make critical decisions that have lasting effects on membership. Selection of board members who will represent your interests is an important responsibility.

I was a high school teacher for eight years. After my Ph.D., I made the very unusual decision to work as an instructional coordinator (really a literacy coach/assistant principal) in an elementary school. There I learned what it really means to put research into practice. I came to the University of Delaware in 2002, and was tenured there in 2007 (the year that I also earned the National Reading Conference Early Career Achievement Award). In 2009 I was invited to give the NRC Annual Research Address. I earned full professor at Delaware in 2012 and continue to work there.

I first came to present at NRC in 1995, and I have presented every year since. I remember my first NRCs fondly. I attended conference events, formal and informal, from 7 am to midnight. I overcame my initial shyness, and I learned to match faces to names. Plenary sessions broadened my perspective. I learned the importance of active participation in Study Groups. Since then, I have been very active on a range of committees.

It may help you to know how I situate myself in our field. My UVA graduate training coincided with the work of CIERA. CIERA partnerships gave me great opportunities. I was a research assistant and coauthor with Barbara Taylor, David Pearson and Kathleen Clark of the "Beat the Odds" study. I was also involved in other CIERA projects, and the importance of a series of efforts, linked together, stays with me today. That is how I would like to see the work of Literacy Research Association. We can be a group of researchers whose individual efforts are part of a much larger whole, a whole that advances access to literacy for all.

Early on, I would have described my theoretical orientation as thoroughly cognitive. I was active in federally-funded reform efforts. My publications were about the design of schoolwide assessment and instruction. For several years, I worked primarily in the support of literacy coaches. I joined with Michael McKenna to write about coaches and coaching and to design their professional support. That work broadened my perspective. My interests and orientations are broader than beginning reading now. I realized, over time, that I was actually a theoretical pragmatist as defined by Dillon, O'Brien, & Heilman (RRQ, 2000). I want to tackle problems that are

important to teaching and learning, and I want to tackle them in community. I want to design and refine interventions in actual classrooms and schools. I want the interventions to matter. Because of that, I have to be methodologically flexible. I have to study research design, teacher education, adult learning, and literacy policy.

I remember being stunned by David Reinking's Presidential address. He challenged us all to embrace formative design to the exclusion of all other research paradigms. I admit that I thought him crazy – but I actually didn't understand what formative design had to offer. Formative design can include any type of data and analysis as long as it involves partnerships and iterative processes and its end goal is the creation of an effective and feasible intervention. This insight helped me as I served as a scientific reviewer for IES; formative design is a common characteristic of development projects. For me, formative design principles link individual research efforts into a coherent whole. Perhaps LRA can be a group of individuals whose work, taken together, constitutes an ongoing formative experiment.

I want LRA to be methodologically flexible and inclusive of a broad range of theoretical perspectives as long as they are expressed in high-quality research designs. The conference must be a place where we all learn best practices in research from one another. Conference proposals must be well written and rigorously reviewed. Once a presentation is accepted, we must embrace questions and questioning as part of our scholarly discourse at the conference. We must be willing to make careful, informed arguments and to disagree about ideas.

I have been impressed with several recent organizational efforts. We have sessions and study groups which enhance methodological understanding. We are expanding our web presence and embracing social media to experience and extend the conference. We are actively supporting doctoral students. We are welcoming newcomers. These initiatives are essential and members must support them with time and resources if we are to maintain our organizational health. I would also like to see the organization actively reach out to researchers who are choosing other venues for their presentations, maintaining our commitment to literacy broadly defined and carefully studied. I would also like to see us continue to invite representatives of funding agencies to that we can understand their perspectives. I will work towards those goals and the goals of others if I am elected to serve on the LRA board.

## AWARDS

### Albert J. Kingston Award

Jill Castek, Committee Chair, Portland State University

The LRA community and the Albert J. Kingston Award committee members congratulate the 2013 award winner Dr. Norm Stahl, Professor Emeritus from Northern Illinois University. Dr. Stahl's service to LRA has been ongoing and enduring. One example is his weekly policy and professional updates distributed to the LRA community through the listserv. He began this practice while serving as Chair of the Policy and Legislative Committee, but his commitment has continued years later even beyond his LRA presidency and retirement from Northern Illinois University. Many of us have come to count on these regular updates from Dr. Stahl. They serve as a reminder of the importance of staying well-informed.

Please nominate a deserving colleague for the Albert J. Kingston award. The purpose of this award is to honor an LRA member for distinguished contributions of service to the Literacy Research Association. Recipients of the Kingston Award, which has been presented annually since 1985, receive a plaque and a lifetime membership in LRA.

To submit a nomination, send one copy of the nominee's updated curriculum vitae and a letter that describes the nominee's service contributions to LRA. Nominees must have belonged to LRA for at least five years. Any LRA member may nominate deserving individuals for recognition of their service to LRA. Nomination materials should be submitted via e-mail to the Kingston Award Committee Chair, Jill Castek ([jcastek@pdx.edu](mailto:jcastek@pdx.edu)), by August 15, 2014. More information about the Kingston Award, including its history, criteria used in the review process, and a listing of past recipients, is also available on the [LRA website](#). Thank you.

### Distinguished Scholar Lifetime Achievement Award

Jane Hansen, Chair, University of Virginia

The Distinguished Scholar Lifetime Achievement Award Committee was pleased to award Keith Rayner with our award at the 2013 LRA conference. He is the Atkinson Professor of Psychology at the University of California, San Diego. K. Rayner is known for his work on eye movements during reading, single-handedly developing the now widely accepted methodology for studying reading through eye movements. He is the main architect of our knowledge of how the eyes proceed through text and how information is accrued. Rayner is extending this work to the aging, autistic, and ADD populations, and his cross-cultural approach looks at how various writing and linguistic systems impact eye movements.

Our Committee met at LRA, and is now deliberating the merits of two nominations for our 2014 award. Over the next few months we will finalize our nomination and submit the name to the Board for approval.

### Early Career Achievement Award

Diane Lapp, Chair, San Diego State University

The Early Career Achievement Award Committee is pleased to share that Dr. Allison Skerrett was the 2013 recipient of this prestigious award. Dr. Skerrett was nominated by her colleagues Drs. Nancy Roser and Randy Bomer from the University of Texas, Austin. A review of Allison's work made obvious her tremendous impact on teaching and learning in secondary English classrooms, and in discipline literacy.

Congratulations again, Dr. Skerrett.

The committee invites you to share nominations for the 2014 award. Please see the guidelines for submissions below. We also encourage a resubmission of the many outstanding nominees from last year.

Guidelines for nominations: Early Career Achievement Award

Purpose of award. The Early Career Achievement Award is awarded annually to honor the new members of the LRA community who have been actively involved in research, teaching, and service for approximately 3-7 years and have demonstrated outstanding commitment and accomplishment.

Criteria for consideration. Nominees for the Early Career Achievement Award can be of any rank. However, nominees must: (1) be members of the LRA (for at least three years, but not necessarily consecutively) and they must, (2) possess a terminal doctoral degree, and (3) have worked in the field seven years or less from the conferral date of their degree to the posted deadline for this competition.

Procedures for nomination. An LRA member may be nominated by a peer member of LRA through a recommendation letter outlining the candidate's contributions to the field of literacy research and the nominee's participation in LRA. Nominating letters should be submitted to the committee chair, Diane Lapp by May 1, 2014. Nominees will then be asked to submit: (1) a current curriculum vita, including affiliations, degrees, research honors and awards, publications, and service on editorial boards of research journals; (2) a statement of approximately 1,500 words delineating professional growth and research agenda; (3) a letter of support from the candidate's current institution (e.g., teaching/research colleague, department Chair). These materials are to be submitted to the Chair by May 15. The recipient will be contacted by September 1 so that they might attend the Annual Conference to receive the award.

Please send nomination letters by May 1 to: Dr. Diane Lapp, Committee Chair, San Diego State University, 4424 Upland St., LaMesa, CA 91941, [lapp@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:lapp@mail.sdsu.edu), 619-405-8705.

### Edward B. Fry Book Award

Barbara A. Bradley, Chair, University of Kansas

Please consider nominating a book for the Edward B. Fry Book Award. The award, established by Dr. Fry, recognizes an outstanding book on literacy research and practice. Eligibility for the award is limited to current members of LRA who have written or have been one of several authors of a book. The book must have a copyright date within five years of the date of the award being given. Nominated books should: Advance knowledge about literacy; display inquiry into literacy; and show responsible intellectual risk taking.

Letters of nomination, along with a copy of the nominated book, should be sent to the committee chair before the deadline of May 15, 2014. Nomination letters must directly address the ways in which the nominated book meets the criteria outlined above. Letters cannot simply reiterate the endorsements or summaries designed to promote the text. Self-nominated books are accepted, although committee members cannot nominate a book they have authored. A book may be re-nominated if it has been previously nominated but did not win the award. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Barbara Bradley at [barbarab@ku.edu](mailto:barbarab@ku.edu).

We also wish to acknowledge the 2013 Edward B. Fry Book Award winner, Guofang Li for her book, *Culturally Contested Literacies: America's "Rainbow Underclass" and Urban Schools*.

### J. Michael Parker Award - Contributions to Adult Literacy Research

Silvia Nogueron-Liu, University of Georgia

LRA awards the J. Michael Parker Award to new scholars—that is, graduate students and those who completed their doctorates within the past

six years—for a paper presented at the conference that addresses adult literacy/language development and instruction. The award was established in 2001 in honor of J. Michael Parker, winner of LRA's Student Outstanding Research Award for his work in community-based adult literacy. To be true to the spirit of J. Michael Parker's work, the award recognizes studies that examine ways adults further their own language and literacy development within or outside of formal learning contexts, including different social and cultural contexts for learning. The award is designed to encourage work in adult literacy with a variety of populations, including, but not limited to, learners in formal settings such as adult basic education and ESOL classes, as well as those engaged in literacy practices embedded in diverse cultural settings.

Recipients of the award receive a small cash award to be used for conference expenses, as well as a plaque commemorating the award. They are also recognized during a general session of the conference. The award is presented to both papers with a single author and to co-authored papers. For single authored papers, the recipient will receive \$500 and a plaque commemorating the award. For co-authored papers, the recipients will each receive a plaque and will decide amongst themselves how to divide the \$500 award.

#### Criteria for Consideration for the Award

- The research is capable of making a significant contribution to theory and/or practice of adult literacy development and instruction.
- The methodology is appropriate to the research question and of sufficient rigor.
- Implications of the research are of a scope needed to impact the field.

Applicants are required to submit a proposal of their research to the LRA 2014 Conference, and check the box for the J. Michael Parker Award on the proposal application. If the proposal is accepted, a full research paper (25 pages or less), based on the accepted proposal, must be submitted electronically by September 15, 2014. Papers must be double-spaced and in 12-point font. The text limit does not include references or appendices.

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact the award chair (Silvia Noguero-Liu, [snoguero@uga.edu](mailto:snoguero@uga.edu)) to discuss how their research may fit with the intentions of the award.

#### P. David Pearson Scholarly Influence Award

Taffy Raphael, Chair, University of Illinois at Chicago

2013 was the inaugural year of the P. David Pearson Scholarly Influence Award. Our first awardee, Dr. Peter Johnston of S.U.N.Y. at Albany, received the award that was presented at our annual meeting in Dallas. This annual award honors, in P. David Pearson's name, the author(s) of an article/chapter/book written at least 5 years prior to the nomination, that has demonstrably and positively influenced/impacted literacy practices and/or policies within district, school and/or classroom settings.

We encourage you to think about influential materials that have affected your professional work and submit nominations by September 5, 2014, for consideration in 2014. Nominators should demonstrate how the findings or implications of the article/chapter/book have been used directly by edu-

cators to craft influential policies and/or initiate and implement innovative classroom practices.

The submission packet should include a letter of nomination outlining the case with supporting evidence (along with the key piece of writing, author's CV, and documentation of the influence of the piece on instruction and/or policy).

Please submit to me via email ([taffy@uic.edu](mailto:taffy@uic.edu)).

2013 Committee members were: Patty Anders, University of Arizona; Kathryn Au, SchoolRise LLC; Wanda Brooks, Temple University; Douglas Fisher, San Diego State University; Taffy Raphael (Chair), University of Illinois at Chicago. Our Board Liaison was Arlette Willis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

#### Student Outstanding Research Award

Catherine Compton-Lilly, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Are you a graduate student who is already looking forward to the next LRA Conference? Are you conceptualizing a promising paper based on your research? Consider applying for the LRA 2014 Student Outstanding Research Award. The Student Outstanding Research Award is presented annually to honor a student member of LRA in recognition of an outstanding research paper presented at the Annual Conference.

Last year's award was presented to Angie Zapata, an Assistant professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia and alumni of the University of Texas, Austin where she worked with Dr. Nancy Roser. Melody's award-winning ethnography, "Examining the Multimodal and Multilingual Composition Resources of Young Latino Picturebook Makers" was selected from a competitive selection of submissions.

In order to be considered for the award, the author must hold student status and the research must be conducted by the student. The paper must be written solely by the student or co-authored with students, and cannot be co-authored or co-presented with a faculty member. The proposal must have been accepted by the Annual Conference Committee for presentation at the Annual Conference. Papers representing various forms and genres of research (including conceptual papers) are welcome. More information can be found soon by clicking [here](#).

To be considered, Catherine Compton-Lilly must receive the application materials at [comptonlilly@wisc.edu](mailto:comptonlilly@wisc.edu) no later than August 31, 2014, at 11:59 PM (EST).

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Ethics Committee

Kelly Cartwright, Chair, Christopher Newport University

The LRA Ethics Committee met on December 6, 2013, and discussed the roles and responsibilities of the Ethics Committee, given its recent shift from an ICG to standing committee status. Specifically, the committee reviewed and discussed the LRA Ethics Statement and the Ethics Committee description in the LRA Policy and Procedures Handbook. In the course of that discussion, several committee members noted that our field is rapidly changing with the emergence of new literacies, such as Facebook and other shared

spaces. Consequently, new ethical concerns arise as we seek to conduct research in these areas that are not often adequately addressed in professional organizations' ethics statements. One of the responsibilities of the LRA Ethics Committee is to raise and discuss these ethical issues in literacy research with the membership. Thus, members of the LRA Ethics Committee are planning to propose an alternative session for LRA 2014 on Ethical Issues in Conducting Research with New Literacies. If you are interested in contributing to such a session, please contact Brian Rose at [brian.rose@unco.edu](mailto:brian.rose@unco.edu) with a brief description of your potential contribution.

We look forward to hearing from you as we explore ethical issues arising in this new area of literacy research.

### **Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism (ERM) Committee**

Marcelle Haddix, Chair, Syracuse University

The Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism (ERM) Committee had a very successful and enjoyable conference in Dallas, Texas, even in an ice storm! Thank you to ERM members for their support and involvement. I would especially like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the 2013 ERM Committee members: Helen Abadiano, Central Connecticut State University; Grace Enriquez, Lesley University; Mileidis Gort, University of Miami; Lara Handsfield, Illinois State University; Ramón Antonio Martínez, University of Texas at Austin; Iliana Reyes, University of Arizona.

And, welcome to our newest committee members: Mikel Cole, Clemson University; Detra Price-Dennis, Teachers College, Columbia University; and Joel Dworin, University of Texas at El Paso.

The committee's work includes proposing research sessions that focus on issues of diversity, equity, and social justice; increasing the representation of scholars from underrepresented groups within the LRA membership; and supporting the development of literacy scholars of color in leadership roles within the organization and in the field.

**Travel Scholarships:** For the 2013 conference, we awarded four travel scholarships to early career scholars and/or doctoral students from underrepresented ethnic, racial or linguistic backgrounds that show promise of scholarship in the literacy field. The recipients of our 2013 scholarships were:

Ann Bennett, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Rebecca Linares, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

Laura Jimenez, Boston University

Angela Lopez Velasquez, Southern Connecticut State University

**ERM-sponsored events in Dallas, TX:** ERM hosted a variety of events during the conference, including two research sessions titled "Transforming Literacy Learning and Teaching through Translanguaging and Other Typical Practices Associated with Doing 'Being Bilingual'" and "Multimodality & Multiliteracies: Composing In and Out of School."

As part of the ERM committee, the STAR (Scholars of color Transitioning into Academic Research institutions) program is a two-year mentoring program for scholars of color beginning their careers as literacy researchers. At the 2013 conference, the STAR mentoring program hosted a round-

table session, featuring the scholarship of new and returning STAR fellows, and a post-conference retreat. This April, STAR fellows and mentors will meet in Philadelphia, PA for a day-long writing retreat.

The committee is now planning for the 2014 conference. If you are interested in participating in ERM-sponsored events or research sessions and/or if you would like to join ERM, please contact committee chair, Marcelle Haddix at [mhaddix@syr.edu](mailto:mhaddix@syr.edu).

### **News from the Field Council**

Jennifer Jones, Field Council Chair, Radford University

**What is Field Council?** The LRA Field Council is an active committee that works throughout the year to recruit, retain and reclaim members of our outstanding organization. The Field Council likewise serves as an advisory body to the LRA President and Board of Directors regarding the work of LRA. Finally, the Field Council promotes the dissemination of research and literacy practices through cooperative efforts with institutions and professional organizations. The Field Council is comprised of representatives from each state, as well as representatives from the international community, along with Regional Chairs who serve as Field Council leaders. Regional Chairs include:

West: Mary Kallus, Nancy T. Walker, and Paula Carbone

Midwest: Barbara Bradley and Debbie East

Northeast: Kay Stahl and Cheryl North-Coleman

South: Priscilla Griffith and Lane Roy Gauthier

International: Kimberly Lenters and Pelusa Orellana

Recruitment efforts are ongoing among Field Council members each year. During 2013, the LRA Field Council made over 65 contacts to recruit new members from literacy and literacy-related disciplines, with particular emphasis on underrepresented scholars. In 2014, the Field Council will follow-up with these contacts. Likewise, LRA Regional Chairs piloted a "Congratulations on your new position" recruitment effort. The LRA Job Postings were surveyed for new positions; search chairs were contacted for the names of new faculty members. When names of job assignments were provided, new faculty members were contacted by Field Council representatives to say "congratulations" on behalf of LRA and reminded the individual of how LRA can serve as a valuable resource for promotion and/or tenure. The Field Council received a favorable response to this effort and plans to continue it throughout 2014. Finally, LRA Field Council Regional Co-Chairs for the International Community, Kim Lenters and Pelusa Orellana, attended the International ICG meeting at the LRA conference to recruit and promote active membership among our international attendees.

In an effort to retain LRA members, the Field Council encourages and promotes active, engaged membership in the LRA community. At the 2013 LRA Conference, the Field Council hosted "Lunch & Dinner Out" opportunities for attendees who were new, traveling alone, or just wanted to network and meet new colleagues. Over 60 people, new to LRA and seasoned members alike, participated in Lunch & Dinner Out this year. It was a delightful time for everyone who participated. One hundred forty-four newcomers and doctoral students, along with 33 members of the Field Council and the LRA Board of Directors participated in the Field Council

sponsored Newcomer and Doctoral Student Breakfast event at LRA 2013. Attendees were offered warm welcomes by Richard Beach and Arlette Willis. LRA publications were highlighted, along with Doctoral Student and International ICGs, and the Michael J Parker and the Student Outstanding Research Awards. The LRA Field Council will continue to offer events and opportunities for LRA members to connect and become involved during 2014.

The Field Council invites all members of LRA to join in the effort to recruit, retain and reclaim members to this exemplary professional research organization. Encourage doctoral students, new faculty members and international colleagues to join our organization. LRA provides networking opportunities for collaborative research and opportunities to grow professionally through LRA's publications, the conference and ICGs.

Encourage colleagues who are already members to become involved! LRA offers a number of ways to connect and serve, such as reviewing for conference proposals, committee service, and participation in ICGs and study groups at the conference, which often thread into research and discussion throughout the year. Some of your colleagues may have once been members but haven't renewed. Commit to inviting one potential member to join the Literacy Research Association this year! Encourage colleagues who are already members to become active in the organization.

**Field Council Support:** The Field Council is here to support you in your efforts to recruit and reclaim LRA members! As you connect and inform literacy researchers to our dynamic organization, share your efforts with the Field Council ([jjones292@radford.edu](mailto:jjones292@radford.edu)). The Field Council will gladly offer follow-up communications and support with individuals considering membership, as well as warm welcomes and new member support to those choose to join LRA.

Thank you for your efforts to recruit, retain and reclaim literacy researchers to our outstanding organization this year!

### Policy and Legislative Committee

Caitlin McMunn Dooley, Chair, Georgia State University

The Policy and Legislative Committee has had the good fortune of having many interested LRA members. A special thank-you to all of our members (official and ad hoc): Renee Casbergue, Danielle Dennis, Colleen Fairbanks, Terry Fisher, Rachael Gabriel, Chinwe Ikepeze, Barb Kapinus, Sharon Kletzien, Deborah Litt, Carla Meyer, Ian O'Byrne, Katherine Ohle, Trika Smith-Burke, Norm Stahl, David Quinn, Kristien Zenkov.

**Policy Updates:** We have two LRA Policy Updates on the Common Core State Standards that have been graciously co-authored by LRA members Freddy Hiebert, Kathy Hinchman, and Tom Wolsey. You can read these updates and comment here:

- [LRA Policy Update: CCSS and Close Reading](#)
- [LRA Policy Update: CCSS and Text Complexity](#)

These Updates have also been read by anonymous reviewers who have expertise in the areas. You know who you are. We thank you for your insightful comments and suggestions! Pending Board approval, these docu-

ments will be published on the LRA Website. We expect to have another LRA Policy Update on CCSS and Technology soon. Stay tuned!

In addition, Carla Meyer, Danielle Dennis, and Colleen Fairbanks are leading an effort to create an Update in response to what's being called the "Third Grade Reading Guarantee" that is being pushed through state houses by the [Campaign for Grade Level Reading](#). For this Update, we will rework the LRA Policy Brief on "Test-based Grade Retention" so that LRA members can share relevant research with State and national policy makers.

**Book on Teacher Education Policy:** Danielle Dennis is leading an initiative to turn our "LRA Response to the NCTQ Review of Teacher Education Programs" into a book. She will work with the Committee to carry out the book project.

Looking forward to LRA 2014 (think WARM!)

We are currently working on submitting a proposal to the 2014 LRA Conference that would highlight research on educational policy as related to language arts and literacy learners. Kristien Zenkov and Katherine Ohle are leading this effort.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the committee, or would like to lend a hand, please don't hesitate to email [Caitlin Dooley](#).

### Publications Committee

Thomas DeVere Wolsey, Chair

The Publications Committee and editors of the *Yearbook* and *Journal of Literacy Research* have been hard at work on a number of initiatives during the last few months. We are looking forward to an online submission system for future issues of the *Yearbook* replacing the email submission system from the past. We will keep you posted as we continue to explore this possibility. Many thanks go to LRA Historian Dixie Massey who has archived an electronic set of most older issues of the *Yearbook*. Thanks to her efforts, these volumes are now available on the LRA Website members area for download. Finally, we have a new agreement with EBSCO who will index and make available PDFs of the *Yearbook* articles beginning with volume 59. While they are not yet available, they will be soon. Watch the Listserv for more on our licensing agreement with EBSCO and the availability of articles in that database.

### Technology Committee

Erica C. Boling, Chair, Rutgers University

The Technology Committee, and especially our eEditors, Ian O'Byrne and Greg McVerry, have been hard at work! We have officially launched our online LRA: Research to Practice shows. The purpose of these shows is to identify and discuss research topics of interest to the LRA audience and share questions that still remain. In addition, we strive to identify and invite exceptional classroom practitioners to the shows as we connect research topics to classroom practice. Live shows are scheduled to occur once a month using Google Hangout-on-Air. We are recording the shows and also streaming them using YouTube. You can view examples of previous shows at the LRA YouTube Channel.

Since launching our first Research to Practice show in November, we have introduced topics such as disciplinary literacy, graphic novels, and multimo-

dality and writing. Guest speakers have included Dr. Michael Mandarino, Dr. Stergios Botzakis, and Dr. Jennifer Rowsell. Our February show focuses on "gender" as a lens in literacy-based instruction, and panel discussants include Dr. Caitlin Ryan from Eastern Carolina University, Dr. Nancy Niemi from the University of New Haven, and Dr. Kim Richard from the University of Saint Joseph. We are always looking for guest speakers and new topics for our upcoming shows, and so we encourage LRA special interest groups, area chairs, and general members to volunteer and/or recommend guest speakers and topics. Please forward your suggestions to [Ian O'Byrne](#) or [Greg McVerry](#).

In addition to launching our Research to Practice shows, the technology committee and eEditors are launching a major initiative involving the redesign of the LRA website. Over the last couple of years, we have been gathering feedback from LRA members through surveys, Town Hall meetings, committee updates, and ongoing conversations regarding the website. We are currently putting together a proposal that outlines a list of recommendations for website changes. This proposal will be submitted to the LRA Board of Directors for review. We are very excited about having input on the changes that will occur and look forward to launching the new site.

Finally, we'd like to remind LRA members about our Digital Texts and Tools Repository. At the meeting in Dallas, many of you requested the opportunity to share your work and open resources online. To that end, the Technology Committee would like to remind you that the Digital Texts and Tools Repository is designed specifically for this purpose. Please join and share your work with your colleagues. We look forward to hearing from you!

## INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY GROUPS

### Doctoral Student Innovative Community Group

Jennifer M. Smith, Senior Co-Chair, Texas Women's University

Thanks in large part to the continued support from the LRA community, the Doctoral Student Innovative Community Group (DSICG) has had our most successful year yet. We had a record turnout at our study groups throughout the week and were delighted to see many new faces. At our annual business meeting on Friday, December 6, we elected a new leadership team using a QR code to link our membership to an electronic ballot. We are proud to announce the 2013-2014 DSICG Leadership Team: Jennifer Smith and Katherine Brodeur (Co-Chairs); Colleen Whittingham, Assistant Co-Chair; Meagan Caridad Lloyd and Carrie Symons, Membership Secretaries; Laura Tortorelli and Sarah Lupo, Treasurers; Gail E. Lovette, Alumni Liaison; Tricia DeGraff, Christine DeSimone, Kristin Gorski, April Leach, and Christy Irish, Technology Committee; Emily Howell, Jennifer Lapointe, Jennifer Nigh, and Haley Olson, Newsletter Editing Team; Leila Nuland, Conference Coordinator; Historian, Stacey Korson; Newsletter Writers: Joy Myers, Megan Marshall, Susan Fields, Carrie Symons, and Elizabeth Morphis, Newsletter Writers; and Debalina Maitra and Ann Van Wig, Members at Large.

We are certainly energized by the phenomenal year that our DSICG had in 2013 and are excited by what 2014 has in store for our group. At the 2013 LRA conference in Dallas, our group continued to grow in large numbers and we are pleased to have such a variety of research interests, universities, and backgrounds represented within our ICG. Our primary goal for the

coming year is to continue to operate as a resource to doctoral students at all stages of their programs within the LRA organization.

The DSICG events at the 2013 LRA conference proved to be an enormous success. Our daily study groups saw the highest attendance rate ever with 30 to 40 doctoral students present at our Wednesday through Friday afternoon groups. We were honored to host Drs. Anders, Gambrell, Hall, Neuman, and Yaden, and we learned much from their presentations. Moreover, our Thursday night Happy Hour provided our doctoral student membership the opportunity to network and socialize with each other. At our annual Sara Bruce McCraw Doctoral Student Networking Session on Saturday morning, we informally shared our research and created a list of contacts in order for individuals to form writing/support groups. As we strive to meet the needs of our growing membership, we have prepared and distributed our annual survey to provide us with feedback regarding how to continue improve our LRA conference events and DSICG resources.

The DSICG is pleased to continue our established, successful initiatives. In 2013, we again published three newsletters to assist our members in learning more about topics of interest to graduate students, including tips for the LRA conference. We solicited article topics and pieces from our membership and were pleased with the diversity of newsletter articles this past year. In terms of staying in contact with our membership, we maintain a current listserv, Facebook page, website, and Twitter account to promote networking among doctoral students. Further, we facilitated our third annual panel discussion, Academia 101, focused on providing students with information about the transition from graduate school to academia and the professional world. A panel of newly graduated PhDs, representing a range of positions, answered questions and shared their experiences with doctoral students.

Now in its fourth year, our LRA conference Proposal Mentoring Program continues to support doctoral students who are proposing to present their own research at the 2014 LRA conference. Again this year, we have had overwhelming support from the LRA community to serve as our faculty mentors and we are in the process of pairing established faculty with doctoral students to mentor them as they submit their proposals. As a way of expressing our appreciation and connecting doctoral student mentees and faculty mentors paired together for our Proposal Mentoring Project, we hosted a breakfast for all participants on Friday, December 6. We are extremely grateful to the many faculty members who have volunteered their time and expertise to support the doctoral students of LRA and hope to continue to offer this breakfast as a token of our appreciation.

The DSICG continues to grow with the strength and support of its members. In the coming year, we plan to maintain our mission to seek out ways to support the professional growth of doctoral students within LRA and are interested in information that will help us provide new opportunities for students. We are also always open to new members and encourage those of you working with doctoral students to pass on our information. If you are interested in joining the DSICG, please contact Meagan Caridad Lloyd and Carrie Symons at [LRA.DSICG@gmail.com](mailto:LRA.DSICG@gmail.com) to join the Doctoral listserv.

Thank you for all that you continue to do to support doctoral students and our DSICG. Best Wishes for the Coming Year!



## Gender and Sexualities Innovative Community Group

Corrinne Wickens, Acting Chair, Northern Illinois University

We would like to announce the newly formed Innovative Community Group on Gender and Sexualities. This is diverse group of scholars who take to heart issues of gender and sexuality: this includes the broad spectrum of gender and sexual identities as they most often connect with core issues of identity, literacy practices, and representation in children's and young adult literature. We likewise recognize the significant intersections of gender and sexuality with other social and cultural identity markers.

Our purpose is:

- To promote and encourage literacy research that highlights perspectives around gender and sexualities, especially as those identities intersect with race, class, language, nationality, religion, age, ability, and culture.
- To increase awareness, access to information, and collaboration among a diverse network of scholars that supports LGBTQ individuals and counters homophobia and heteronormativity in LRA, schools, and communities.
- To advocate for LGBTQ youth, families, and educators in and out of schools through policies, curricula, and instructional practices that include and support gender and sexual diversities.
- To encourage interaction and engagement with organizations and scholars involved in outreach, advocacy, and/or research related to gender and sexual identities in various local and global contexts.

Look for our inaugural meeting and upcoming sessions at the annual conference this December in Marco Island. We invite everyone to join us! Any ideas or suggestions, contact Corrine Wickens at [cwickens@niu.edu](mailto:cwickens@niu.edu).

## International Innovative Community Group

Amma Akrofi, Texas Tech University; Lori Assaf, Texas Tech University; and Patience Sowa, Zayed University, Co-Chairs

In this issue, we wish to share the profiles and paper abstracts of our 2013 Travel Grants Recipients.

Our ICG is has the unique privilege of awarding partial travel support each year to a small number of international scholars to help defray their cost of attending annual meetings. Grant recipients are required to meet four eligibility criteria. They must: (1) be doctoral students or junior faculty members, (2) attend the annual meeting for the first time, (3) live in countries with limited research infrastructure and funding, and (4) be applicants who have not received the grant within the past 3 years. This year we awarded \$3600 to four international scholars to travel to Dallas, Texas. On behalf of LRA and the International ICG, we wish to congratulate each of our winners.

The individual profiles of the recipients and descriptions of their presentations demonstrate the rich diversity of people and international research being conducted by members of the ICG.

Lin-Miao Lu is an Assistant Professor at Kainan University, Taiwan.

The paper she presented was "Literary transformations of Chiang Kai-shek in postwar Taiwan: A great Chinese generalissimo or an untrustworthy ally?" It focused on the power relations and political issues in Taiwanese children's books published after WWII. The paper critiqued Taiwanese children's literature that portrays the historically significant figure – Chiang Kai-shek – in the history of Taiwan with the aim of facilitating and cultivating critical reading of texts by her preservice teachers.

Wendy Crocker is an Assistant Professor at the University of Western Ontario, Canada.

Her paper, "I cannot read it here or there, I cannot read it ANYWHERE: Autonomous literacy across two school contexts," focused on the ripple effect of elementary school principals' perceptions of relations between school and home literacy in Canada and Mexico. Her study emphasized the need "for education to shed light on those students who have a foot in two worlds, but who live one life" (Rogoff, 2003, p.361).

M. Francisca Valenzuela is a Directora de Estudios, Educación de Párvulos, Universidad de los Andes, Santiago, Chile.

The title of her paper was "Semantic Awareness in Preschool Age: An Assessment Instrument." It described the design, application and analysis of the metric characteristics of a psychometric test created to assess metalinguistic semantic abilities of 1128 Chilean preschool children from private, partly government-funded, and public schools. The study was important not only in terms of determining semantic knowledge but specifically in understanding what children can do with words.

Zaira Arvelo-Alicea is a graduate student working on her dissertation in Puerto Rico. She is currently also conducting research with colleagues at Purdue University.

The title of her paper was "Cross Case Analysis of Social Imagination in Kindergarten's Wordless Book Readings." It reported on a concurrent mixed methods study that explored the relationships between low SES Puerto Rican ELLs' reading experience and social cognition during reading events. The relationships between these phenomena were addressed in two ways: (1) by assessing a class through quantitative measures and qualitative tasks that target indexes of reading and sociocognitive skills and (2) by describing the phenomena in more detail through in-depth collaborative qualitative tasks with a small sub-sample of cases.