



West Virginia Beckons!

*“Building Bridges to Simultaneous Renewal:
Philosophy to practice . . . Practice to policy . . .
Urban to rural”*

Don't miss the 2007 NNER conference, October 3-6! This is your once-a-year opportunity to gather with colleagues from all parts of the country, from Hawai'i to Manitoba, New Mexico to Maine, Texas to New York, and so many other places in-between.



Some enticing West Virginia scenery.

These few days in October will help sustain you through the 365 to follow.

In meetings, over meals, while walking and talking, you'll have numerous occasions to exchange ideas and learn about new strategies for fulfilling the NNER mission in your settings. You'll strengthen and expand collegial networks, and, most important, return home with renewed energy and optimism about the future.

The conference theme is deliberately ambitious. It represents 20 years of NNER growth and progress, particularly celebrating two decades of accomplishments in the member settings. Embedded in each element of the theme is learning acquired over this period and member settings' contributions to the conversation.

Policy, a long-standing focus for the NNER, is a major component of this year's conference. We will explore the question of where and how our work might influence education policy stakeholders at the local, state, and federal levels. This process will help illuminate connections between the policies and theories that guide our work and the actions and strategies that put these principles into practice.

Rural and urban education will be addressed through conference strands framed by critical issues related to this work. Sessions are planned with the goal of finding new ways of grappling with the challenges while extending and generalizing the successes that can help ensure every student an excellent education.

Many thanks to the *Benedum Collaborative at West Virginia University*, hosts of the 2007 annual conference. It is a conference tradition that the host group creates opportunities for conference participants to learn about the history and culture of the local setting. Such experiences help to strengthen connections among the NNER members. The



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Benedum planners have integrated cultural connections into the conference program to allow time for exploration of the West Virginia Cultural Center.

Registration information is available on the NNER Web site:
<http://depts.washington.edu/cedren/nnr/index.htm> §

NNER Governing Council

Update from the chair

I am sure that the NNER at your settings has had a productive spring and early summer. Meanwhile, our executive director, **Ann Foster**, and the NNER Executive Board* (EB) have begun taking action on the Governing Council's (GC) decision earlier this year to become a separate 501(c)3 non-profit entity, which means becoming independent of the Institute for Educational Inquiry (IEI).

As part of that decision we adopted new operating bylaws that allow us to file various and necessary applications and paperwork. Although all of this may sound relatively simple, those of you who have experience setting up a non-profit know that there are several hoops to jump through, with visits to accountants and lawyers, and so forth. We have also been in close communication with Dr. John Goodlad and the IEI Board of Directors to ensure an efficient and congenial conclusion to the process. We are planning opportunities at our fall conference to provide con-

*Governing Council Members: **Carol Wilson, Nick Mitchell, Deb Shanley, Dennis Pothoff, Jean Eagle, Gary Callahan**



*See you
in West
Virginia
in
October!*

crete details, but a quick laundry list of accomplishments or projects underway would include:

- The chairperson of the NNER Governing Council has become a member of the IEI board of trustees, which will ensure close communications; and IEI's chief operating officer, currently **Dick Clark**, is a member of the NNER governing council.
- The NNER has been granted non-profit status in Washington State; and it has received its own Internal Revenue number for financial tracking, audits, and reporting.

Although all of this may sound relatively simple . . . there are several hoops to jump through

- We are in the process of contracting for accounting/auditing, bookkeeping and payroll services.
- We have liability insurance for directors, officers, and events.
- Final negotiations are being conducted with the IEI Board for contracted services and space for the coming year as we assume independent status.
- We have had conversations with a variety of individuals about physical space - whether we need it, if so, how much, where, and so on.

The EB met with **John Goodlad** and the IEI Board chairperson on July 18, to review all of the above and to hear about John's



**Greg Bernhardt,
Governing Council chair**

plans for the IEI in the immediate future.

John plans to attend the October NNER Conference. He said that at that time he will introduce the individual whom he has selected to carry on IEI's work with him over the coming years. That news will be kept under wraps until the conference.

Some other items:

- In October, the EB will present the council with a budget that moves the NNER to a calendar year, rather than the Sept.-Aug. fiscal year that the IEI currently uses.
- A variety of partnership activities (with, for example, iNET, NPDS, and others) has been monitored.
- Some new membership inquiries have been addressed and orientation plans have been made for California State University-Chico, the newest NNER member.

(Continued on page 7)

2007 NNER Summer Symposium:

Walking & talking, listening & learning in Seattle

A highlight of NNER's 22nd birthday year was its third summer symposium, held July 16-20 in Seattle. Thirty-three participants representing 11 NNER settings and one potential new setting gathered for this special opportunity to review and gain new insights into the values, strategies, and conditions that guide the NNER work.

Activities were designed to give participants different ways of learning, interacting, contemplating, and moving to higher levels of understanding. These included large- and small-group sessions co-facilitated by NNER executive board members – **Greg Bernhardt, Gary Callahan, Jean Eagle, Nicholas Michelli, Dennis Potthoff, Deb Shanley, and Carol Wilson** – as well as **John Goodlad, Dick Clark, and Tom Bellamy**.

Participants were also able to “listen in” on a conversation with **John Goodlad** about Jane Roland Martin's book, *Educational Metamorphoses*. And they had a chance to move out of the meeting rooms for a “community engagement” activity (see side bar) to observe a sample of the public's behaviors and what those behaviors suggest about how people think about the public good in a democracy. The symposium concluded with open-space and role-alike conversations, and team planning for post-session activities in the settings.

The broad diversity in roles, geography, and backgrounds provided an ideal context for understanding the NNER work from different perspectives. Participants noted that discussion, and constructive disagreement with so many committed and inspiring colleagues made for a stimulating yet validating and inspiring experience. ♣

*Join us in West Virginia
in October!*



Hawk's Nest State Park

Symposium Participants

Michael Alfano, Rachel Axinn, Christopher Baker, Christine Bolender, Brian Boyd, Martha Corpus, Laurie Friedman-Adler, Vincent Fuccillo, Brian Giza, Tiffany Hall, Sam Hausfather, John Hoover, Bob Huot, Jill Janes, Doris Johnson, Anne LaPlante, Deb Mallonee, Robert Mayes, Suzanne McCotter, Ron McDermott, Kerrie Naylor, Pat Parsons, Mark Penny, Pieranna Pieroni, Brian Recht, Rene Roselle, Suellen Rundquist, Rory Scanlon, Howard Schechter, Don Schulte, Dacota Stewart-Dick, Caren Town, Debbie Youngblood. ♣

A Sidewalk View of the Ecology of a Democracy in a Community

Looking for signs of democratic life alongside the displays of cherries, peaches, cheese, and sausage – teams of symposium participants spent a day exploring some of Seattle's landmarks, including the Pike Place Market, while at the same time looking for evidence of democracy in everyday life. Participants who didn't know each other well, formed teams, and then set about negotiating places to visit and how to get there.

In their dual roles of tourist and action researchers, participants had to stay alert for situations that suggested some particular views of democracy as it applies to the public good. They used digital cameras to document good and bad examples of themes such as a diverse society at work, the tension between freedom and authority, equal justice under the law, open inquiry, and the unavoidable paradoxes of the public and private good. To supplement the pictures, teams took notes of more probing conversations they had with the real-life actors in these real-life scenes.

The teams later used their photos and notes to create 10-minute PowerPoint presentations which they shared with the whole group to describe their findings as well as their reflections on their own group-building processes. All in all, a productive day, a productive symposium! ♣

What is a *partner school*? Why do we need them? And how do effective leaders actually lead in these environments? These and other important related questions held the attention of more than 80 partner-school leaders, who gathered in June for the 2007 LTPS conference held in Seattle. The event was carefully planned to provide useful background and support for principals new to partner-school work. They were joined by university partners, central administrators, and members of this year's LTPS year-long cohorts.

To carry out its ambitious agenda, conference organizers tapped a deep well of expertise and experience. Speakers included **Tom Bellamy**, **David Chrislip**, **Bruce Field**, **John Goodlad**, **Lee Teitel**, **Alfonso Thurman**, and **Pat Wasley**, dean of the College of Education at the University of Washington.

A New Jersey team made up of representatives from Montclair State University and Franklin Elementary School in Newark, and led by principal **Sue Taylor**, described how partner schools can help the school and university fulfill their respective missions. In addition, **Hector Giron** and **Rob Williams**, partner-school principals from last year's LTPS cohort, shared their own instructive partner-school leadership journeys.

Focus sessions were led by **Steven Baugh**, **Karen Ballak**, and **Tom Bellamy**. Twenty-eight partner-school principals and prospective principals, members of this year's LTPS cohorts, facilitated "conversation cafés" throughout the conference. These occasions offered participants informal opportunities to engage in the kind of conver-

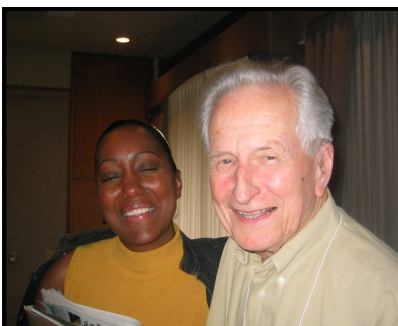
Leaders for Teacher Preparing Schools (LTPS) Holds Annual Conference

sations that can synthesize ideas, stimulate questions and new ideas, and create memorable insights to carry back home.

Applications for the 2007-2008 prospective principal and experienced partner-school principal cohorts are now being accepted and are available on the NNER Web page or by contacting Annie Brelsford at: abrelsford@uwb.edu. ♣

The LTPS Mission

To support partner-school principals and prospective principals; to enhance and develop skills necessary to lead successfully in partner schools – schools that work in partnership with universities to improve learning for current P-12 students and future teachers. – and, to support school leaders to work effectively within communities in poverty to ensure access to quality learning for all students. ♣



John Goodlad with **Sylvia Bookhardt**, principal of Rishel Middle School, Denver.



John G. & friends: **Dick Clark**, **Judith Muter** (associate dean, University of Texas, El Paso), and **Josie Tinajero** (dean, UT, El Paso).



A rapt audience for a talk by **Alfonso Thurman**, dean of the College of Education, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.

"What do I do when I get back home?"

Suggestions for Advancing Your Partnership's Work and Foundation

Post-symposium reflections by: **Carol Wilson & David Chrislip**

For every complex problem, there's an answer that's clear, simple, and wrong." D. Chrislip

At the end of an inspiring conference or symposium with NNER colleagues, the most frequently asked question is, "What do I do when I get back home?" This question holds profound import for deepening, expanding, and sustaining our collective work. A thoughtful response recognizes that advancing the Agenda for Education (AED) in a Democracy means further developing our own capacity and that of our partnerships to do ongoing, complex work. And to do so implies effort in: (1) building and continually strengthening a shared understanding of the AED within the partnership in order to enact the democratic principles it proposes, and (2) developing capacity as a collaborative partnership to identify and respond constructively to issues as they arise, thus reflecting democratic principles in the way we work together.

(1) Strengthening Shared Understanding of the AED

Our advice is simple: start where you are. This may mean beginning very small; or your setting may be ready to expand to include an even wider circle, community members perhaps. If it fits you and your situation, you may want to begin by introducing some aspect of the AED through existing venues, e.g., faculty, department, or partnership council meetings. Informal discussions. Evaluation conferences. Administrative meetings. Accountability groups. There may be established professional-development study groups or other venues where you can introduce an article or a book. Or, you might help create a forum to include school and university faculty, as well as pre-service teachers. The idea is to encourage discussion and inquiry, using sound pedagogy to elicit ideas in ways that create a forum for exploring these principles and how they apply in your setting.

(2) Developing Capacity to Identify and Respond to Issues

This area requires consideration of the kinds of issues that must be addressed by a partnership—or an individual school or university for that matter. How we understand the issue and how we frame it will make a big difference in the kind of response we develop, and, ultimately, the effectiveness of that response. Our work is public work, and it is complex.

Given the substance and complexity of this work, and recognizing that we have to start somewhere, following are four suggestions for how to help advance the work at home. Again, these suggestions aim at building capacity in your setting, not defining and solving all the issues overnight.

1. *Think long term, but take short, immediate steps.* Find something you can begin doing right now. Perhaps it's that book group with school and university colleagues, or maybe a book group that also engages community.
2. *Form mini-partnerships as you go, always with the idea of creating space for others to join.*

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3. *Cultivate the conveners, those people who have the influence to bring others together and are respected in their group or community.* These are the people who can bring other important voices to the table and also help the work to be truly collaborative. This might include the grandmother in a particular community whose advice is often sought by other community members; or, it may be the director of a local non-profit organization, the head of the Parks and Recreation Department in your community, or the chair of the science department.

It's also critical to bring in the unheard voices—the “unusual suspects.” This work requires both the people who are acknowledged and respected by others, as well as those from whom we seldom hear. Most important, we have to learn how to bring in those with differing points of view, views with which we're not always comfortable.

4. *Begin learning how your setting approaches issues, how it decides what to work on and how to work on it.* This will require distinguishing between technical, routine matters and adaptive work. This distinction necessitates a different approach to addressing and resolving concerns, challenges, and

“It's also critical to bring in the unheard voices—the “unusual suspects.”

problems. Experts can help us with routine, technical work by both diagnosing a problem and offering the solution. But since most of the important issues in pub-

lic education require adaptive work – that is, the work of defining the specific problem and defining solutions, both require learning from those involved – we need to take the work a step at a time. In the first step, we describe the concern. We know something is wrong but we are not sure what, so we frame the issue in such a way that both the problem definition and the solution are left open. Our stated goal is to address the presenting issue. At this point, we set aside our preconceptions of problem and solutions and allow these definitions to emerge out of our engagement with others.

Step two is to engage essential voices in defining the problem. Once the problem is defined through the interaction of different voices, we can work on defining solutions, step three. By proceeding in this fashion, we accomplish two things: we acknowledge the demands of adaptive work where mutual learning is required, and we enact the democratic principles implicit in the AED. ♣

Resources:

David D. Chrislip, *The Collaborative Leadership Fieldbook*, Jossey Bass, 2002, San Francisco.

Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, Belknap/Harvard, 1994, Cambridge, Mass.

Take Note

Ann Foster

Executive Director

As Governing Council Chair **Greg Bernhardt** noted in his commentary (see p. 2), the NNER is celebrating a long and productive history and looking forward to continuing to advance the Agenda for Education in a Democracy.

Please take note of one very important change as we work through a transition period: the NNER has a new Web page address, much easier to remember *nnerpartnerships.org*. I hope you'll bookmark this page and check in periodically for news and updates. I would welcome receiving any items that you would like to post. You can send those to me at afoster@uwb.edu.

Learning from each setting's recent experiences and events is an important function of the NNER.

Cindi Chance from Georgia Southern University had an op-ed published in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. She did a wonderful job of rebutting a report on a study of teacher preparation in Georgia. The text is available on the NNER Web site.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you in West Virginia. The wide variety of presentations and diverse points of view represented in the sessions will enrich our network. §

Governing Council (contd from p. 2)

- A successful summer leadership symposium was held July 16 -20 in Seattle, with 33 participants.

Ann Foster Activities

Ann has been working on a long list of organizational tasks too numerous to list here. She has also been working on communication projects that have included:

- Seeing that an NNER newsletter went out at the end of May; and has arranged for our newsletter to continue into this next year.
- Sending out the annual-report template to all of our settings, reminding us that it will be discussed at the Tripartite Council meeting in West Virginia.

I would be happy to respond to any questions you might have about any of the above activities. I look forward to seeing you in October for the Tripartite Council meeting on Wednesday and Thursday, October 3-4; the Governing Council meeting will be held on the 4th.

I hope that you have had a good summer and took some well-earned time off for rest, travel, or family activities before we begin yet another productive academic year.

Best regards,
Greg Bernhardt
Governing Council Chair
Wright State University
Partnership
Dayton, Ohio



**ANNUAL REPORT
DRAFTS will be
shared at the tripar-
tite council meeting
Oct. 3-4 at the an-
nual conference**

**Remember to have
new participants
sign up for the NEW-
COMERS' SESSION
on Oct. 4**

**GOVERNING
COUNCIL meeting
Oct. 4. 1:00-4:00**

National Network for Educational Renewal



SETTING

STATE/PROVINCE

California State University, Chico	California
Colorado Partnership for Educational Renewal*	Colorado
University of Connecticut	Connecticut
Georgia Center for Educational Renewal at Georgia Southern University	Georgia
University of Hawai'i and Hawai'i Institute for Educational Partnerships	Hawai'i
Illinois State University	Illinois
University of Southern Maine and Southern Maine Partnership	Maine
The Brandon School-University Partnership (The Brandon School Division and Brandon University)	Manitoba
St. Cloud University and the St. Cloud School District	Minnesota
Metropolitan St. Louis Consortium for Educational Renewal*	Missouri
MU Partnership for Educational Renewal	Missouri
Nebraska Network for Educational Renewal*	Nebraska
Montclair State University Network for Educational Renewal	New Jersey
University of New Mexico – Albuquerque Partnership	New Mexico
CUNY and the New York City Department of Education	New York
Miami University Partnership	Ohio
Wright State University	Ohio
South Carolina Network for Educational Renewal*	South Carolina
Arlington University-School Network for Educational Renewal (AUSNER)	Texas
University of Texas at El Paso	Texas
Brigham Young University and BYU-Public School Partnership	Utah
University of Washington	Washington
Benedum Collaborative at West Virginia University	West Virginia
University of Wyoming and Wyoming School-University Partnership	Wyoming

*denotes multiple IHE site settings

National Network for Educational Renewal

NNER News

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*Please submit suggestions for
articles, information about
people, and events in NNER
settings to Ann Foster at fos-
teraw@u.washington.edu.*

