



## *And a Good Time Was Had by All!*

# University of Texas at Arlington Hosts 2008 NNER Annual Conference

NNER annual conferences are more than just conferences. They are a combination of professional meeting, scholarly exchange, and family reunion. The 2008 annual conference was no exception. The University of Texas at Arlington and its partners, organized meetings and events that fostered collegial and continuous interaction around the conference theme of "Looking Back to Inform the Future." NNER leaders had many and different opportunities to reflect on the past, examine current collaborations, and articulate future plans and issues.

### Conference Highlights

- NNER leaders – including **Mary Ellen Finch, Dick Clark, Nick Michelli, Josie Tinajero, Deb Shanley, John Anderson, Jeanne Gerlach, Tom Bellamy, and Tony Smith** – shared with their audiences their personal stories and connections with the AED:

♦**Nick Michelli** described how intimidated he felt when first meeting with **John Goodlad** in early leadership associates work. ♦**Deb Shanley** and **John Anderson** shared perspectives on their creative student-immersion program, arranging for Kearney, Nebraska, to meet New York City. This cross-setting collaboration in many ways reflects the innovative work that prepares future teachers to understand the context of education in this democracy. ♦ **Tom Bellamy**

highlighted the work that he, the IEI board, and **John Goodlad** have completed to create the **Goodlad Center for Educational Renewal**, which will continue work initiated at the IEI. ♦**Tony Smith** reminded his audiences that our first and foremost focus must be on students and what they need to learn to help sustain and improve this democracy.

- **Breakout sessions** were designed around the three conference strands of NNER past, present, and future.
- In his keynote, **George Wright**, president of Prairie View A&M University, reminded us of the deep-rooted inequities that we strive to overcome through our schools. ♦**Sally Wagner**, executive director of the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation, focused her remarks on our "political democracy," and on the importance of being mindful.
- The **tripartite council** examined highlights of annual reports submitted by the settings and gave feedback on work related to the NNER goals.
- The school group elected **Roy Blakeney** from SCNER as its representative to the governing council and the A&S group elected **Caren Town** from GSUPER. Caren also serves on the editorial board of the new NNER journal.

*("Conference" continues on p. 3)*

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**RESERVE THE DATES!**  
**OCTOBER 15-17, 2009**  
**Annual NNER conference**  
**10th Anniversary of**  
**"In Praise of Education"**  
**Seattle, Washington**

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS!**  
**2009 NNER**  
**Annual Conference**  
**DEADLINE: March 16!**

# A Close-Up: Recipients of the Clark and Michelli Awards, 2008

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2008 Recipient of the Clark Award for Exemplary Partner-School Work

## The Ho'okulāiwi Partnership

by Richard W. Clark

It seems that everyone wants to improve education, and there appear to be three general approaches to the task: (1) top-down system reform; (2) replacing the system with home schooling, vouchers, or some other form of privatization; or (3) instigating continuing improvement by creating partnerships between local community members and local educators.

We are all familiar with the first approach. Policymakers from distant perches decide what should be learned, how it should be learned, the tools to aid learning, and the measures to deter-

mine whether students and educators are successful. Ever since we learned that the "nation is at risk," top-down reform has dominated official state and federal policy, most recently in the form of No Child Left Behind legislation. After 25 years (long enough for two entire generations of students to go through the nation's schools), it should be evident that this approach does not work.

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Dick Clark (2nd from left) presents the 2008 Clark Award for Exemplary Partner-School Work to the Ho'okulāiwi Partnership for the revitalization of public education in a native-Hawaiian community. Representing the partnership are Kaulu Kauwe (left of Dick) and to the rt of Dick, Kalehua Krug, Kaleinani Tim Sing, 'Iwalani Hodges, Margie Maaka. ♦

2008 Recipient of the Michelli Award for Promoting Social Justice

## Little Village Education Partnership

*Future teachers genuinely involved in a sustained way within a diverse community*

by Nicholas Michelli

It is a deeply appreciated honor that the NNER gives the Social Justice Award in my name. Once again, the committee has selected an outstanding program. Located in a quiet rural area of Illinois, **Illinois State University (ISU)** prepares the largest number of teachers in the state. The program's work reflects a genuine obligation and commitment to children in the Chicago Public Schools, the state's largest public school system located to the north. ISU established the Little Village Partnership to address that need and to provide diversity experiences for its students.

Working in a professional development school in the city's largest Mexican neighborhood, ISU students can spend a year-long internship working with children, teachers, school administrators, the community, and ISU faculty. In addition, students can complete their student teaching in that setting. This total-immersion experience clearly has changed lives and presented new opportunities for children of Little Village and the future teachers.

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Nicholas Michelli (2nd from left) presents the 2008 Michelli Award for Promoting Social Justice. Representing recipient Illinois State University (ISU) are (left of Nick) Lesley Van Thournout (ISU/Little Village PDS graduate and now CPS teacher); (rt. of Nick) Robert Lee (director, Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline Programs and Partnerships); Cheryl Witucke (Little Village PDS site coordinator); and Diana Johnson (director of Teacher Housing Resource Center at Chicago Public Schools). ♦



"Conference," continued  
from p. 1

- **Nick Michelli** was re-elected chair of the education group; **Jean Eagle** and **Leslie Wilson** continue as chairs, Jean for the school group and Leslie for A&S.
- The governing council welcomed **Donna Cooner** and **Rod Lucero** as representatives of the new Colorado State University setting. It also elected **Dennis Potthoff** for another term on the executive board, approved the 2009 budget, approved the online NNER journal proposal, supported **Cindi Chance's** proposal for a policy symposium to be held after the 2009 NNER conference, and discussed options to expand NNER technology communication. ♦

## Conference Candids



(Top photo) **Mary Ellen Finch** gives a plenary presentation on the NNER history. (Bottom, from left) **Marisol Quinones-Diaz**, **Leslie Wilson**, and **Gene Edgar**.

# New NNER Journal Launched

Looking for somewhere to publish work related to the NNER mission? Here's the perfect forum: NNER's new online journal, *Education in a Democracy: A Journal of the NNER*, which will offer articles of interest to the broad membership of the organization. (All articles will be peer reviewed in a double-blind process.) The journal will be published in an online format (*nnerpartnerships.org*), with paper copies distributed at each annual NNER conference. The first issue of *Education in a Democracy* will debut prior to the 2009 NNER conference.

The journal is now inviting submission of manuscripts that address issues related to the Agenda for Education in a Democracy (AED). It encourages various forms of scholarship on topics such as fostering effective participation in a social and political democracy; ensuring access to the knowledge and skills necessary for leading satisfying and responsible lives; helping educators to be competent; and informing readers about educational policy issues related to the AED/NNER. Deadline for receipt of articles for the first issue is **March 1, 2009**.

The journey from idea to reality began when arts and sciences members expressed a desire for greater NNER involvement. As the discussion continued, it became clear that the real need was for a forum in which *all* NNER groups could share their work on different aspects of the AED.

After the 2007 NNER annual meeting, a publication committee was formed to consider the possibility of founding a new journal. The committee first met in February 2008 at Miami University. It

then met several times during the annual meeting to finalize procedures for submitting manuscripts, inviting articles, and formatting the first issue. It refined the journal's purpose, created a timeline for publication, and crafted a proposal to submit to the executive board and governing council. The proposal was formally approved

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## Take Note

*Ann Foster*

Executive Director

Even as we celebrate the learning and networking from the 2008 NNER conference, planning has begun for next year's conference. Marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of "In Praise of Education," the 2009 conference will return to its Seattle roots. **John Goodlad**, **James Comer**, **Henry Levin**, and **Deb Meier** will open the session by reflecting on their work and the changing context of education since their presentations in 1999. These notable leaders are featured in *Those Who Dared: Five Visionaries Who Changed American Education*, a new book edited by **Carl Glickman**, and due for release this fall. Carl and **George Wood** will be panel moderators.

The planning committee made up of NNER members from the Washington setting and colleagues from the NNER is working to craft an interactive conference where participants can reflect on our work and our responsibilities to advance our mission. The call for

(continued on p. 7)

# The NNER: Nurturing Great Leadership, Benefiting from Great Leadership



*The success of the NNER conference each year is owed to scores of dedicated, hard-working individuals. Two such exceptional leaders are **Stephanie Kenney** and **Barry Graff**. This article summarizes just a few of their achievements and contributions.*

While education collaboratives have come and gone over the years, the National Network for Educational Renewal has steadily rolled along—learning, growing, making a difference for education in countless large and small ways. Our success is owed to many, but especially to members across the network, who have led the way in expanding NNER’s work and attracting new members.

Two such capable leaders are **Stephanie Kenney** of the Georgia Southern Partnership, and **Barry Graff** with the Brigham Young University Public School Partner-

ship. In particular, both have played pivotal roles in establishing an orientation program for newcomers that has become a standard and essential part of the annual NNER conference.

## Background

Several years ago, some members suggested that the NNER provide new conference attendees, including those not part of a setting, with an introduction to the annual conference and to the NNER culture. It had become evident that newcomers were not aware of how much members relied on the annual conference as an opportu-

nity to renew friendships and engage in discussions on a variety of topics. The annual conference is part of a broader expanse of NNER endeavors that include the leadership associates programs, task-force work, governance structure, and cross-setting collaborations. Taken as a whole, these activities form a safety net for members, where issues and challenges can be openly addressed, differences aired and new learning acquired. In practice, however, this “net” and its camaraderie were not apparent to new participants.

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## NNER Welcomes Its Newest Setting: *Colorado State University (CSU) Partnership*

The **School of Education at Colorado State University (CSU)** and the **Poudre School District** have been official partners and participants in state and national school-renewal efforts for 15 years. The partnership, formerly a member of Colorado Partnership for Educational Renewal, is now a separate setting with NNER’s mission firmly embedded in university and school practices. Intensive field experiences and continuing collaboration with PDS faculty and administration serve to bridge the School of Education and the school community.

Teacher education is not an isolated program. It is, instead, a collaborative partnership within the

university and with teachers and administrators in public school settings. These partnerships demonstrate strong capacity for taking advantage of the resources of the total learning community in preparing effective new teachers.

The teacher education program serves nearly 1000 undergraduate students from 7 colleges in 16 endorsement areas: 12 initial programs in secondary education; three K-12 programs in art, music, foreign language; and one early-childhood education program. Built on partnerships with the local school districts, these programs allow future teachers to acquire experience in real schools

with real students from the very beginning of their preparation.

A recent report from the Colorado State accreditation review team cited some special strengths of the program: “CSU students were very well prepared to teach from a content standpoint. . . due, in large part, to the exceptional professional development school model that has been developed at CSU and which is seen as among the best in the state and nation. The courses are generally co-taught by a CSU professor and a teacher or administrators in one of the PDSs. Students receive the theoretical foundations of the topic. . . then are able to practice

*(continued on p. 7)*

## Leadership *(continued from p. 4)*

In conference evaluations, some new participants also had expressed feelings that the conference was “closed to them.” They felt uninformed about the purpose of the conference and how the work was organized and conducted; as a result, they were not able to connect with their new colleagues as they had hoped.

In 2004 a trial newcomers’ half-day workshop was added to the conference. **Stephanie** and **Barry** agreed to co-facilitate this session, which entailed considerable work developing a curriculum that would cover the essential elements of the conference and the NNER mission. It also meant planning informal and formal activities, and opportunities for introductions and interactions. As a result, new participants acquired a network of colleagues even before the conference began!

Stephanie, a university leader, and Barry, a school leader, are a winning combination. Their individual backgrounds combined with deft facilitation skills and experience with local leadership associates programs guaranteed a highly successful launch of the newcomers’ orientation. Each year, Barry and Stephanie continued to plan and facilitate the orientation, sometimes attracting as many as 50 participants! Their only compensation is the enthusiastic feedback from participants and the genuine gratitude of the NNER. Thank you, Stephanie and Barry!

*Included on this page are some highlights of Stephanie and Barry’s work in their respective settings, which illustrate how commitment to NNER work begins locally and continues to the network level.*



From left to rt., Greg Bernhardt, governing council chair, Barry Graff, and Stephanie Kenney prepare for a newcomers’ session

### **Stephanie Kenney**

Since 2002, **Stephanie Kenney** has served as associate dean for undergraduate teacher education and accreditation in the College of Education at Georgia Southern University (GSU). She has an impressive record of education service at the college, university, state, and national levels. As the GSU Partnership’s contact person for local initiatives, Stephanie demonstrates that “partnering” is an action word. The impact of her leadership is evident in the range of collaborative work that has become integral to the local educational culture. For example, Stephanie has been instrumental in bringing together the three tripartite council members and other interested parties for regular meetings to address issues and collaborate on local initiatives. Stephanie’s leadership and the group’s commitment to equitable quality education influenced the *High Flying Schools* selection criteria to include a requirement that schools nominated for this award must offer concrete demonstration

*(continued on p. 7)*

### **Barry Graff**

**Barry Graff** is currently assistant superintendent with the Alpine SD, American Fork, Utah. He has been a major contributor to the success of the Brigham Young University Public School Partnership for many years. As a member of the Professional Development Academy he has assisted in the planning and implementation of a biennial national conference focused on educational leadership. Success of that conference is reflected in the nationally known presenters who participate and the 1,600 individuals who attend. Barry’s work with the academy has also supported the joint efforts of the five partnership school districts in defining professional development directions and opportunities for both teachers and administrators.

Barry also has sponsored and instructed several cohorts in the Brigham Young associates program. While Alpine SD sponsors the associates, each cohort includes members of the David O.

*(continued on p. 7)*

## Ho'okulāiwi (continued from p. 2)

The second approach, privatization of schooling, has had its supporters for many years, even without receiving the level of official recognition afforded the first approach. One fascinating aspect of privatization efforts is that they often are advocated by the same people who want to impose greater top-down control on the existing system. Solutions such as home schooling are responsive to those close to instruction but promote private interests to the detriment of the common good. At best, they have a record of mixed success in meeting the privatization goals of individual growth.

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The Ho'okulāiwi partnership . . . invites true engagement of all parties essential to successful renewal of education.

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The third approach, creating partnerships, is promising as long as it's adequately supported and not corrupted by narrow interests in the local community or by forces from the state and federal levels. Partnerships make it possible for educational initiatives to respond to individual needs while still attending to learning that is important to the community.

The **Ho'okulāiwi Partnership** is an exceptional example of the third approach: it invites true engagement of all parties essential to successful renewal of education.

The Ho'okulāiwi partnership includes representatives from the local community (Nanakuli/Waianae), the Hawai'i state department of education, and the University of Hawai'i, including its Center for Hawaiian Language and Indigenous Education. The partners maintain a dual focus on local needs along with educa-

tional practices, curriculum, leadership, and inquiry.

Their work has resulted in an educational program that emphasizes opportunities for the students at Nanaikapono Elementary to learn about their culture and language while becoming proficient in subjects valued by the broader world.

Student reading and math achievement, although still not at levels set by either the community or the state, is a vivid indicator of the value of this approach. Between 2002 and 2007, student test scores in reading and math improved substantially every year except one. During that one year, a curriculum and instructional program were imposed on the school, with implementation monitored from outside the partnership. Student scores declined that year (as did teacher morale) but improved the following year when the partnership was again allowed to implement its locally developed practices.

Ho'okulāiwi continues to improve its preparation of teachers, helping them understand the needs of the community; advance inquiry on student learning and appropriate teaching strategies; and serve as a living example of democratic collaboration.

Recognizing the success of the program, the Hawai'i legislature and local philanthropies allocated \$2.7 million to continue the partnership's work over the next biennium. Not every effort to engage local partners in educational renewal will yield the kind of resources obtained by Ho'okulāiwi. Chances are good, however, that if school and university educators work closely and continually with their local communities, the children ultimately benefit. ♦

~ Richard W. Clark

## Little Village (continued from p. 2)

Collaboration with the Little Village community resulted in the Little Village Community Housing Project that gave university students access to affordable housing in the school neighborhood. This immersion approach has created a community within the community for students, while immersing them into the Little Village community. Plans are underway to build a residence space for 100 ISU students within the community, making for an exciting and socially just addition to their teacher preparation. Our Illinois State University colleagues are to be congratulated for what really is a unique program – the only one I know of that genuinely involves future teachers in a sustained way within a diverse community distinctly different from their own.

~ Nick Michelli

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One ISU teacher candidate reflected on her immersion into the school and community notes, "I want to stay here because I think that it's so much more powerful when the students know I'm here, and I'm in this community." Students point out that living in the community is helpful in forming trusting relationships with students and their families. They also can spend time before and after school working with students and not worry about a long commute. They can also engage in community activities as part of the community rather than as guests from afar. This inclusive and reciprocal approach to educating future teachers is founded on Illinois State University's Realizing the Democratic Ideal that states that teachers must . . . "aspire to teach everyone, especially those on the margins, those who have been or are in danger of being excluded." ♦

of democratic practices that improve students' learning and model the engagement that leads to active participation in our democracy.

Stephanie played a key role in the local Developing Networks project, which grew into the Portal Partnership. She continues to bring together school, university, and community members to solve local issues impeding the development of quality schooling. In another role, Stephanie is co-chair for the eastern region of the League of Democratic Schools.

As colleague Dianne Bath noted, ". . . Stephanie is one of the most supportive and quiet visionaries I have worked with in my career. She goes about her work keeping the dignity of everyone intact with grace and patience. She is a service leader." ♦

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**Take Note** (continued from p. 3)

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proposals and conference information is posted on the NNER Website.

At the conference in September, Tony Smith reminded us that students' well-being must be at the center of our actions and policies. The full text of Tony's comments is posted on the NNER Website.

The next governing council meeting, with lunch, will be held Feb. 6, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Embassy Suites during the AACTE Conference in Chicago.

The League of Democratic Schools (LODS), an IEI initiative, brings together school personnel from schools that promote democratic practices for all students; many member schools are in NNER settings. To learn more about the LODS go to the NNER Website and click the link to the LODS newsletter. ♦

McKay School of Education and the various colleges of arts and sciences at Brigham Young University. This collaborative demonstrates enduring and practical commitment to the values of NNER and to the Moral Dimensions of Teaching.

Barry is a member of a leadership associates group made up of the five partner superintendents and district administrators, deans from the colleges of arts and sciences, and faculty from the McKay School of Education. At the group's most recent meeting Barry made a presentation on building social capital and social democracy. Barry's leadership adds the voice of public school partners to the conversation at local and network-wide initiatives, and he serves as a model of stewardship of schools and the NNER. ♦

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**New Setting** (continued from p. 4)

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and apply the concepts almost immediately in the school. . ."

As a long-standing active member of the NNER, the CSU setting, with its new configuration, continues to demonstrate firm commitment to partner-school work, the NNER mission, and cross-setting collaboration. The setting participated in the LTPS June conference for three years where **Jennifer Roth** from Ft. Collins High School presented examples of their partner-school work. **Donna Cooner**, director of educator licensing, and **Rod Lucero**, CSU associate professor, are contributing a chapter to a book on best practices in partner schools. And Poudre High School partners have presented their innovative Passageworks program at the NNER conference and created a video of partner-school roles for the LTPS program. ♦

at the 2008 Annual NNER Conference in Arlington, Texas.

*Education in a Democracy: A Journal of the NNER*, is another milestone in the work of our organization. Many thanks to the publication committee for their time and collaborative efforts. Committee members include: **John Anderson**, professor of political science at Nebraska-Kearney (the first chair of the A&S tripartite council); **Jean Eagle**, chair of the school tripartite council and director of Curriculum, Intervention, and Partnerships for the Talawanda SD (then the school's representative to the executive board); **Laura Nicosia**, assistant professor of English and the director of English Education, Montclair State University; **Tom Poetter**, professor of educational leadership and director of Miami's Partnership Office; **John Skillings**, professor of mathematics and statistics at Miami (then senior associate vice president for academic affairs); **Caren Town**, professor of English at Georgia Southern University (the new A&S representative to the executive board); and **Jim Tomlinson**, professor of teacher education and biology at Wright State University.

At the 2008 annual meeting, **Anderson**, **Poetter**, and **Skillings** were selected as the first co-editors, and the publications committee members were named as the first editorial board. The board encourages you to submit your manuscripts and to contact us if you would like to serve as a journal reviewer. Miami University has agreed to host the journal for the first three years, so all correspondence should be sent to John Skillings at [skil-lijh@muohio.edu](mailto:skil-lijh@muohio.edu). ♦

# National Network for Educational Renewal



SETTING	STATE/PROVINCE
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California State University, Chico	California
Colorado Partnership for Educational Renewal*	Colorado
Colorado State University and the Poudre School District Partnership	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

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