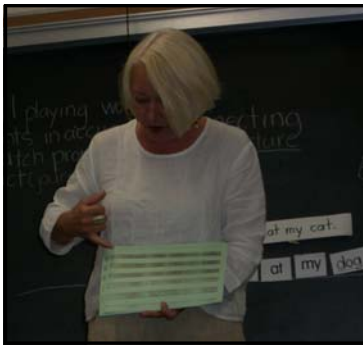


WRITING(S) ON THE

Volume 3, Issue 3

*Newsletter for the Northeastern Pennsylvania Writing Project at
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania
Fall 2008*

NPWP Holds Another Successful Summer Institute at ESU



The Northeastern Pennsylvania Writing Project (NPWP), a branch of the National Writing Project, is beginning its fifth year as a graduate level professional development

program at East Stroudsburg University (ESU). This past summer eight teachers representing Lehigh and Monroe counties in Pennsylvania and Warren County in New Jersey participated in the four-week, intensive summer institute sponsored by NPWP. The teachers shared ideas and practices, discovering that even writing strategies used by a kindergarten teacher could be made to work for eleventh grade students.

The NPWP is committed to exploring the ways in which writing and engaging diversity facilitate

academic success for all students. During the summer institute, teachers work on their own writing; read and discuss research and theory in the areas of writing and diversity; develop research questions around topics of writing and diversity that relate to their specific classrooms and interests; and develop effective practices for using writing in the classroom.

Sue Haney Czahor, a 15 year veteran teacher at Resica Elementary School, said that during the NPWP 2008 Summer Institute, she experienced “the emotional, genuine, human side of creative expression.” Other 2008 participants include Michele Berosh, Southern Lehigh Middle School—Southern Lehigh School District; Shannon Brown, Pocono Mountain East High School—Pocono Mountain School District; Racquel Coleman, Pocono Mountain West Jr. High School— Pocono Mountain School District;

(Continued on page 2)



From the Director Lucy Stanovick

No Favors in Colorblindness

I hear white teachers proudly proclaim their colorblindness. I hear young teachers ask if there *will come a day when race isn't used to describe an individual, and we are all on an equal starting ground?* My counter-question to this has become *why is it that in order to be equal, we shouldn't talk about race? Can't we be equal with our differences?*

Whether we realize it or not, race is part of everyone's identity; as Peggy McIntosh wrote in the 1970s, it is simply that white people have not had to think of themselves in terms of their whiteness because it is the dominant racial norm in U.S. culture. White people rarely consider how being white has helped to shape identity in terms of confidence and opportunity, not to mention the privilege to not think of themselves and the ways they are treated as related to their skin color.

To say that one does not see color is to deny a central part of someone's identity. It's like saying you don't see sex. Really? You don't see the physical fea-

tures that differentiate a woman from a man? Then what do you see? How do you interpret me? We learn norms of behavior and values and those are, like it or not, related to factors such as race, class, and gender. So, if you don't see sex, then what is the gendered norm by which you interpret people? Men and women are not the same; we are socialized differently with different values, sensibilities and life experiences. And these factors affect our sense of who we are.

If you don't see race, than what is the racial norm by which you interpret people? A white person who does not see color is often, unwittingly, seeing a person of color as a white person, assuming that they have the same life experiences, values, and cultural background.

For white teachers to take the position of colorblindness means that the teacher will hold everyone to one standard and norm, and in most if not all cases, that is the norm of the white teacher.

(Continued from page 1)

Robyn Fusciardi, Stroudsburg High School—Stroudsburg Area School District; Mauri Massaro, Stroudsburg High School— Stroudsburg Area School District; Nicole Silvis, Warren Hills Middle School—Warren Hills Regional School District, and Garyl Violi, Coolbaugh Elementary and Learning Centers—Pocono Mountain School District.

If you have any questions or comments, please call Director Lucy Stanovick at 570-422-3753. Please submit all future special announcements, articles and ideas to Editor, Karen Jackson Petersen at kjp1npwp@ptd.net

Northeastern Pennsylvania

Writing Project

Director,

Lucy Stanovick

Deputy Director,

Leslie Antonette

Co-director,

Susanne Rasely



With Gratitude

I have found a new hobby in Screenwriting. Who knows where this will all lead but it certainly is an interesting writing endeavor. Perhaps one

day I will stroll down the red carpet to receive an award for a fabulous screenplay or perhaps I will just write for fun. Who knows but here goes...

My Formula for a Lifetime Movie

By Rosi Finlayson (SI 06)

Lots of hidden agendas

In friendships that are fake

With toxic individuals

Who wreak havoc in their wake

Setting up rumors, lies and a decoy

To hide their secret little affair

Hoping that the decoy

Will never become aware

Of the plan and there are many

To carry out the devious act

While the knowing individuals

Honor silence in a pact

Covering up a crime of jealousy

Quite a story to be told

In a lifetime movie

Did you ever play a role

For the toxic individual who

Was really not a friend

Who has plans to harm the decoy

How in the world will this all end?

NPWP Spring Conference

The NPWP will hold its fourth annual *The Writing(s) on the Wall* spring conference on April 5, 2009, at East Stroudsburg University. The conference is open to K-16 teachers and pre-service teachers. For more information, visit us on the web at www.esu.edu/npwp.

NPWP Teacher Consultant Linda K. Rogers

Publishes 3rd Book



Dr. Linda K. Rogers (SI 07) has written *Shaped by the Standards: Geographic Literature Through Children's Literature* (2008), published by Teacher Ideas Press. Arranged around the national standards strands in Geography, this book explains the strands and the standards and includes 2-4 lesson plans for each strand. For more information, visit www.teacherideaspress.com.

COMING SPRING 2009!

"Finding your Voice"

A unique professional support experience for teachers who are in their first 5 years of teaching.

- Small group discussions and writing based on real-life classroom experiences and concerns
- A sense of community to support and encourage new teachers

Registration information will be forthcoming in January 2009. Any questions please contact Kathy Dekmar, kfdekmar@ptd.net.



NPWP Leadership Team Retreat: Renew, Refresh, Recapture and Reach Out at The Shawnee Inn

“Structure needs to be created by all; *all* of our voices need to be heard,” Deputy Director Leslie began, and we thought about that—we, this group of nine teachers in summer-mode, relaxed and ready. During two days in early August, the NPWP leadership team met to strengthen the structure and purpose of our site.

Seated at a three-sided rectangle of tables, we began our two-day journey to the center of the NPWP Leadership Team (LT). Pioneers of our still-young site, we approached the task seriously, debating, making motions, eating mints from enormous wine glasses and trying to get poster paper to stick up on the wall. The group created personal “vehicles” to represent the team. “I’m emitting hearts,” said TC Beth Wunschuh; her sketch was of a VW bus, adorned with a peace sign and hearts coming from the exhaust pipe. The Leadership Team “vehicle,” we decided, carries many people—giving and taking, switching in and out, leading and following, accepting and listening.

Other topics included continuity, new initiatives, a model for team meetings and the formation of an Agenda Team for those meetings. After many hours of discussion and brainstorming, the LT developed and approved positions designed to do just this. This group, now affectionately known as the A-Team, consists of a Facilitator, Secretaries and a Treasurer. At the retreat, members of the LT were nominated to these roles and voted in. The holders of the positions for the 2008-2009 year are TC Kathy Dekmar as Facilitator; TC Beth Wunschuh, TC Jean Cassimina, and TC Kathy Kilker as secretary on a rotating basis. At a subsequent, TC Beth Ward was voted in as treasurer.

We also discussed, why we often overburdened educators, wanted to include NPWP on our already-full plates. Because we are risk takers, enlightened and validated; because we can change the world, one person at a time; because all the best writings are on the wall.



Collaborative piece written at the Retreat

I am an NPWP Leader because.....

I want to affect change
 I require myself to be around interesting people that make
 me laugh
 I desire growth within myself
 I need to put myself out there
 I enjoy seeing the results of other's leadership
 To show my students I care
 To find ways around boxed in administrators

Like words chosen for a great novel, I am thoughtful and
 thought-out

Like words chosen for a great speech, I am deliberate and
 meaningful

Like words chosen for a poem, I can be emotional but crea-
 tive

Like words chosen for a love letter, I can be trusted and
 passionate.

I was lucky enough to be chosen for this journey
 I am smart enough to choose to join.

I believe writing uncovers
 The real - beautiful - true
 And the uncovering is worth the work
 I believe writing is a need
 Filling and fulfilled when I teach.

I like to learn from others' voices,
 Gather that all up and then spread it out somewhere else.
 It's a chance to listen.
 I believe in writing.

Education was not enough;
 I needed to learn.
 Tell me no if you must -
 just don't stop me from finding
 YES

No Purpose Without Passion
No Passion Without Purpose
 Breaking rules one brick at a time,
 because all the best writings are on the wall.

I am a risk taker
 Willing to take and give,
 lead and follow,
 I offer my ear, heart, soul and brain,
 and I hope you will too.

I've pushed forward despite the voice that screamed
 Turn back,
 You are afraid
 You are a fraud.
 That voice barely whispers now
 I am strength, I am passion,
 I am tenacious,
 And I see this in you.

You chose me.
 I get to be with people I like and can learn from.
 I feel challenged
 and enlightened
 and validated
 As a person and a professional
 I have ideas to offer
 I want to do what works and is best for children.

Shallow talk runs deep.
 I want to see me in the mirror,
 This is something I can believe in and do.
 I am needed,
 respected
 and valued,
 Plus I like to raise MY eyebrows at Sue.

Changing the world
 One person at a time
 Making my own time
 In my own corner
 Connecting with others changing the world
 One person at a time
 In their own time
 In their own corner
 Makes us all part of the follow and lead

I know when to say when;
 I work well with others;
 I have integrity;
 I have ideas
 I offer Professional Development to those who ask and give
 it to those who don't.

Special
Announcements

Congratulations to director, **Lucy Stanovick**, for receiving tenure and a promotion at ESU!

Congratulations to TC **Linda K. Rogers (SI 06)** who has been promoted to Full Professor at ESU!

Congratulations to **Frank Roccanova (SI 06)** for earning his Masters in Secondary Education at ESU!

Congratulations to TC **Jennifer Marmo (SI 05)** who has been named English Department Chairperson at East Stroudsburg North High School!

Saturday Sessions 2008-2009

Saturday Sessions are back! During the 2007-2008 school year, we began running free professional development on Saturdays. This was a great opportunity for TCs to present and for teachers to come get a taste of what we're all about. We're back this year with a whole new menu of classroom goodies that, as we say, can be "served up" Monday morning. Mark your calendar, plan to join us, and invite a friend!

All sessions are located in Lower Dansbury from 9-11 am.

November 1: Geography, Location and Writing with Linda Rogers

January 10: Writing the Numbers with Charlie Mathers

February 7: Quill and Quilt with Paula Schmelz

April 18: Your Library as a Writing Resource with Nora Goodwin

May 16: Performance Writing with Beth Ward and Gillian Bresnyan

Sand

Sue Haney Czahor (SI 08)
 Welcoming underfoot, soft and soothing,
 Yielding, then pushing back,
 Light and dark where the sun casts shadows
 In patterns where dune grasses wave.
 Saddened when waves slap
 Relieved as the sun warms,
 Revealing footprints of bathers and birds.
 Spattered with remnants of shells
 who lost the struggle to return to the sea.
 With holes dug by shrieking children
 searching for crabs or China.
 Whispering surf collapsing creations
 Swirls then disappears,
 Blaming sand for the havoc.
 Swept again to the sea,
 To be teased and rocked by the waves
 Sighing then settling to the ocean floor.

NPWP
Teachers
Teaching Teachers

Look out for the
 NPWP's trip to the
 NWP Annual Conference in San Antonio,
 Texas.

Check us out at
www.esu.edu/npwp

The Spring Anniversary Dinner

Elyse Vitthers (SI 07)

To encourage a continued connection to the NPWP each year an anniversary event is planned. In 2008, Jean Cassamassima and I planned this event. It provides an opportunity to keep up with the work of the NPWP and meet members from other cohorts.

It was a beautiful early spring evening when TCs from each Summer Institute gathered, along with our fearless leaders, Lucy Stanovick (ESU), Sue Phillips (East Stroudsburg South), and Leslie Antonette (ESU) for a wonderful dinner at The Willow Tree in Stroudsburg. The night was filled with laughter and hope, fearlessness and fun. After a delicious meal, each person wrote about an experience in their own lives that might surprise others to know about them. Each experience was put into the hat and pulled at random to be read by another's voice. The audience had to guess the author. I think we all found out a great deal more about our friends at the Project. People do lead such interesting lives!



The Pennsylvania Writing Project News and a Request for Action

The Pennsylvania Writing Project Network kicked off a year of change, focus, and re-visioning with its first meeting of the season on September 6, 2008. Items discussed were states achievement gaps, the PWPN on-line lesson plan data base (www2.lv.psu.edu/ce/pwpm), and hearings the Pennsylvania Department of Education is holding to gather information as it goes through the process of revising the Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening Standards. The network and NPWP are asking you to get involved. If you have information about hearing dates and times, please contact NPWP (call 570-422-3753 or visit on the web at www.esu.edu/npwp), so we can spread the word. Also, write to your congressional leaders. Let them know that writing is key to learning, because it involves the construction and production of learning. It is how we make lessons our own, engaging those higher order thinking skills like synthesis and evaluation. If we erode the presence of writing in the classroom, we erode the learning capacity of our students.



For assistance or special accommodation, call 570-422-3753.

Notice of Nondiscrimination: East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, veteran status, disability or age in its programs and activities in accordance with state and federal laws. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding this policy: Director of Diversity/Ombudsperson, 200 Prospect Street, 115 Reibman Building, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301, 570-422-3656.

What is the NPWP?

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Writing Project (NPWP) at ESU is a branch of the National Writing Project. Each summer, the NPWP hosts a four-week, intensive summer invitational, for teachers interested in exploring ways in which writing, teaching writing, and engaging diversity can facilitate success for ALL teachers and students.

At the NPWP, we believe that through diversity we grow; writing is a process of learning and self-discovery; and writing connects us to each other across time, place and culture.

What is the National Writing Project?

A nationwide professional development program for teachers, begun in 1974 at the University of California, Berkeley. The primary goal is to improve student writing achievement by improving the teaching of writing in the nation's schools.

Together, these teachers prepare for leadership roles by demonstrating their most effective practices, studying research, and improving their knowledge of writing by writing themselves.

After the institute, writing project teachers, known as Teacher Consultants (TCs), conduct project-sponsored programs in their own schools and in neighboring schools and districts. They attend to two purposes: developing teacher knowledge and leadership in their home communities and putting this knowledge and leadership to work to improve student achievement.

NPWP Mission Statement

The NPWP is dedicated to exploring the ways in which writing, teaching writing, and engaging diversity can facilitate success for all teachers and students.



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