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ASSOCIATION INFORMATION

IATE is a professional organization for teachers of English/language arts. IATE publishes the *IATE Newsletter* and the *Illinois English Bulletin* and hosts an annual fall conference. IATE is organized by districts throughout the state, each district having a district leader and providing local activities to members throughout the year.

IATE also maintains standing committees that address a number of professional interests and works with other professional organizations to further the interests of teachers. Composed of nearly 1,500 teachers throughout the state, IATE provides a working network for the exchange of teaching tips, current research, and professional development as well as enduring friendships.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Manuscripts should usually range in length from 500 to 2500 words (roughly two to ten typed, double-spaced pages). Query about longer manuscripts before you submit them.

If possible, submit your article electronically in Rich Text Format (.rtf) as an e-mail attachment. Alternatively, you may submit your article in hard copy (x3) to the editor's address (see above). Follow current MLA style—including documentation of references and using internal citations wherever possible.

Avoid lengthy notes and references.

Follow the NCTE guidelines for nonsexist use of language.

Include a separate title page with the following information: title of submission, author's name, author's professional affiliation, author's address, and author's telephone number.

Include a cover letter summarizing the article and stating that the work has neither been published nor submitted elsewhere.

The editors will acknowledge receipt of your manuscript and may make minor changes (for clarity, length, or language) in the manuscript without notifying you.

IATE OFFICERS

Elizabeth Kahn	President
Deborah Will	1st Vice President
Amy Magnafichi-Lucas	2nd Vice President
Richard Pommier	Secretary
Herb Ramlose	Treasurer
Janice Neuleib	Executive Secretary
Sandra Flannigan	District Leader Coordinator
Martha Frieberg	IATE Office

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ELIZABETH KAHN



For me, one of the highlights of the 2008 IATE fall conference in Oak Brook was seeing presentations by some of our “newer” English teachers. It is rewarding for veterans when teachers we have mentored attend an IATE conference, make a presentation, contribute their ideas in a session, or serve in a leadership role.

Also, novice teachers and student teachers are inspired when they attend sessions presented by early-career teachers. Some student teachers at the conference commented that seeing newer teachers presenting ideas and activities designed for their classrooms gives them hope that they too will have an impact on their departments and schools.

IATE has been working to bring new teachers into the organization through free one-year memberships for first-year teachers; through the annual Student and Beginning Teachers' Seminar at the fall conference—a seminar that brings together novice and experienced teachers to focus on issues of concern to novices; through English education programs that encourage student teachers' attendance at the fall conference; and through activities sponsored by the local IATE districts. If you have a newer colleague in your department, be sure to invite him or her to attend the 2009 conference with you.

Better yet, invite him or her to join you as a co-presenter or to propose a session of his or her own.

Another highlight of the fall conference is the chance to get away from the daily routine of scheduling make-up tests, collecting homework, signing passes, handing out announcements, and determining athletic eligibility to contemplate the big picture—to focus on thinking about what we can do to improve our students' literacy achievement without diversions. Through attending sessions and talking with colleagues across the state, I leave reenergized, with my mind full of ideas for designing new and better instructional activities for my students.

The 2009 fall conference on October 16 and 17 at the Clock Tower Resort and Conference Center in Rockford will once again provide an opportunity for teachers—both experienced and novice—to share their visions of “English in Action.” Sessions will focus on ways to engage students in active learning inside and outside the classroom. If you have never attended an IATE conference, join us and add your voice and ideas about how to open up the English classroom as a space to engage students in examining in a thoughtful and critical manner the variety of information and texts that bombard them daily. If you have attended the conference in the past, join us again for what promises to be an enriching professional experience. □

BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR YOUR STUDENTS

JOIN NCTE FOR LITERACY EDUCATION ADVOCACY DAY
IN WASHINGTON, DC
THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2009

No experience needed. Just come prepared to share your story.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
WWW.NCTE.ORG/ACTION/ADVOCACYDAY



EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

JANICE NEULEIB



In this newsletter you will begin to hear about the 2009 IATE conference to be held at the Clock Tower Resort and Conference Center in Rockford. This conference will be our first in Rockford, so we look forward to meeting new friends and colleagues. The 2008 conference

continued a long tradition of providing wonderful experiences for both current and preservice teachers, who appreciate the opportunity to begin experiencing the excitement of professional life. Please encourage any student teachers you know or work with next year to attend the 2009 meeting. And don't forget to propose a session and register for the conference yourself! Put the following places and dates for upcoming IATE conferences and NCTE conference on your calendar now:

2009: IATE fall conference, October 16 and 17 at the Clock Tower in Rockford

2010: IATE fall conference, October 22 and 23 at the Clock Tower in Rockford

2011: NCTE's centennial celebration, November in Chicago

2012: IATE conference, February 17 and 18 at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel in Springfield

As I noted above, NCTE's 100th anniversary will be celebrated in Chicago in 2011, and IATE will serve as the local arrangements affiliate. I asked in the last newsletter that you think of ways that you would like to help with this event. It's not too early to begin planning, and every IATE member will have a chance to participate. This is an excellent way to get involved in both our national organization and our state affiliate. Email me at jneuleib@ilstu.edu today, and I'll add you to our list of volunteers. Even if you don't have any ideas about how you can help, you can be sure we'll find something important for you to do.

Remember to review the IATE website for more conference information as it becomes available. Amy Lucas is web master, as well as conference chair. Her web work is most ably supported by Illinois State University's English Department Associate Chair Jim Kalmbach. You can find the website at www.iateonline.org.

Finally, don't forget that IATE has two wonderful awards available for members and their students. First, we provide an award for future teachers representing minorities. English education students of color from any university in Illinois are eligible. Complete details appear on page 16 of this newsletter. The second award is the Paul Jacobs research award. This award is available to any teacher involved in research. Those of you who are working on advanced degrees that involve teacher research are encouraged to apply. See page 15 of this newsletter for more details, and please take advantage of these awards. They are there for you. □

DISTRICT NEWS

SANDRA FLANNIGAN

This past October, I attended the 101st IATE conference at the Oak Brook Marriott. The theme, "Take a Classic and Make it Current," generated excitement throughout the weekend, as I learned how to give *The Scarlet Letter* high-tech appeal (not an easy feat) and how to inspire students to take a closer look at *Oedipus Rex*. I especially enjoyed learning about the work of the Bible Literacy Project. As I attended these and

other workshops, I thought, "How can we bring ideas like these to the districts?" This is where you come in.

While district leaders work tirelessly to plan interesting meetings, they're always looking for new ideas. What is your favorite lesson to teach? What lessons have "worked" so

————— District News *continued on page 10*

2008 IATE CONFERENCE TAKES A CLASSIC AND MAKES IT CURRENT

The 101st conference of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English, “Take a Classic and Make it Current,” couldn’t have been more aptly named. Conference Chair



Dr. Tim Duggan sang his keynote address, bringing new life to classic literature through music

Deborah Will, of Zion-Benton Township High School, gave the classic conference a contemporary look by providing a program rich in ideas for introducing technology into the English/language arts classroom.

Attended by 326 teachers from across the state and spectrum of career stages from preservice teachers to retirees, the conference featured a delightful mix of old and new. Sometimes even the old was new, as in the case of keynote speaker Tim Duggan, who transformed the traditional

keynote address into a multimodal presentation of original music based on classic literary texts. (Think *Romeo and Juliet* sung as a ballad from the American west.)

Similarly, the traditional president’s reception featured a both a “blast from the past,” as incoming president Elizabeth



The conference is a great way to renew friendships.

Kahn and her friends and colleagues celebrated to music of the ’70s, and a nod to the digital age, as participants played a high-tech version of *Family Feud*.

Illinois Author of the Year Simone Ekeles also combined her acceptance speech with a multimedia presentation, sending her audience into gales of laughter as she recounted her adventures as a young adult author (see related story on page 7).

Even the Friday night entertainment offered classics with a new twist as the performance group Wavelength entertained its audience with songs about the teaching life set to the music of traditional Broadway musicals.

Finally, the presidents’ luncheon on Saturday featured Mark H. Larson and Robert S. Boone, bringing new life to an old subject (creative writing) through their presentation of *Moe’s Café: 48*

Decidedly Different Creative Writing Prompts.

Of course, with more than forty teacher-led sessions to choose from, it’s hard to believe anyone could have left this year’s conference without at least one exciting new idea for reviving even the most traditional curriculum.

Be sure to join us on October 16 and 17, 2009, when the conference moves to an excellent location in a long-neglected part of the state (Clock Tower Resort and Conference Center, in Rockford). The conference theme, “English in Action,” invites us to consider the ways in which our classrooms can become true learning spaces filled with active learners engaged in using the English/language arts to make a difference in their world. A call for proposals appears on page 13 and is also available on the web at www.iateonline.org. It only takes a few minutes to propose your session, so do it today! □



IATE’s office manager, Martha Frieberg, is always among the first to greet conference arrivals

FROM THE SPEAKERS' BUREAU

LEARNING TO TALK IN CLASS

THOMAS M. MCCANN

It is hard for me to imagine a really good English class that does not rely on authentic discussion as a key and common instructional activity.

I use the phrase “authentic discussion” after Martin Nystrand to refer to the classroom interchanges that focus on questions that do not have predetermined answers. Nystrand contrasts “authentic discussion” with “recitation,” which refers to students’ recital of answers that the teacher already knows. I can imagine times when a teacher will want to hear students recite as a way to check their recall of key details from their reading. But to promote deep critical understandings of texts and issues, and to promote the development of procedural knowledge that affects writing development, a teacher has to have some facility in sparking, managing, sustaining, and using discussion strategically to prepare students for subsequent learning.

The important role discussion plays in learning has been apparent for years. In 1948, Benjamin Bloom and four of his University of Chicago colleagues (Axelrod, Ginsburg, O’Meara, and Williams) conducted a study on campus to investigate the differences in learning between students in classes that were dominated by presentations and classes that featured discussion. Not surprisingly, the students in the discussion-based classes learned more and were generally more satisfied with their classes. Nystrand and his colleagues found similar results among students in middle school and high school, with learners in classes that featured discussion outperforming their peers in classes with less frequent discussions. If teachers are concerned about students’ achievement in reading and writing and care about the quality of learners’ experience in their classes, then authentic discussion needs to be a common element.

While the facilitation of discussion may seem intuitively to be easy, it is a skill that needs to be developed through practice, feedback, and refinement. To use Nystrand’s language, authentic discussion begins with the teacher signaling a “dialogic bid.” Consider a teacher attempting to begin a discussion with a question like this: “What does Keno (in *The Pearl*) do in chapter 3 that shows his changing values?” Contrast this with another approach: “Some readers might think that the discovery of the pearl changes Keno’s values, especially how he feels about his family. I don’t know that this

claim is entirely true. Where do you see any evidence that he changes?” The first question reveals that the teacher already has specific answers in mind, so the danger is that an attempt at discussion never elevates above recitation. In the second instance, the teacher reveals that there is an area of doubt that can be investigated and debated, offering more possibility for opening authentic discussion.

Nystrand compares the initiating of discussion to the kindling of a fire. The introduction of the problem or provocative question provides the spark to get things going, but the follow-up is necessary to add fuel to the fire. Follow-up includes the practice of “uptake” (Collins): that is, using one student’s response to extend the discussion by inviting other students to evaluate the response. This practice requires careful listening and persistent practice at paraphrasing what others say. A key here is for the teacher to avoid offering an evaluative reply to a student’s response and instead turning to other students for the evaluation. Another element in sustaining the discussion is asking the appropriate follow-up questions. Questions should cue analysis, prompting the support for claims and the interpretation of evidence.

Dorothea Anagnostopoulos, Emily R. Smith, and Nystrand note that work on how to facilitate authentic discussion should be an essential element of teacher preparation and a key part of ongoing professional development. Colleagues can help each other refine their skills at facilitating authentic discussion. It always helps to share with others the plans for initiating discussions by planning together the problems, activities, and classroom experiences that might prompt discussion as an in-depth inquiry into questions that have significance for the learners. It helps also to allow observers to take notes on the extent of response and the patterns of response among learners. For the very bold, it helps to videotape discussions and sit with a colleague to analyze why discussion took off according to plan, or failed to achieve liftoff.

In the end, authentic discussion is an important element in the process of gaining deep understandings of the texts that we share and in the process of composing. In addition, the regular opportunities to participate in meaningful discussions do much to define the quality of students’ experience in our

————— Learning to Talk in Class *continued on page 12*

REBECCA CAUDILL YOUNG READERS' BOOK AWARD

DONNA BLACKALL



Be sure to watch this spring for the announcement of the 2009 Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (RCYRBA). Participating students in grades four through eight from all over Illinois will have cast their votes for the book they consider the best of the 20 nominated titles. The award for 2008 went to *Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie* by Jordan Sonnenblick.

A brochure listing the 2010 Master List of books and all the information necessary to participate in next year's award procedures will be available in April. All IATE members will receive this mailing. Teachers and librarians are reminded to register early to insure that materials will be in hand for the start of the 2009–10 school year.

Nominations for the 2011 Master List will be accepted until April 15, 2009. Students in grades four through eight and their teachers and librarians may nominate titles for consideration. Any fiction, non-fiction, or poetry book appropriate for grades four through eight and originally copyrighted within the past five years will be considered. The author must be living.

A session featuring RCYRBA and the Illinois high school student book awards, Abraham Lincoln, will take place at the CITE Conference at Illinois State University on April 17, 2009.

For more information about the RCYRBA, including a list of all previous award-winning titles, go to www.rcyrba.org. For information about the Lincoln Award, go to www.ismla.org and click on Grants/Awards.

ILLINOIS AUTHOR OF THE YEAR SIMONE ELKELES APPEALS TO EVEN RELUCTANT READERS

GENEVIEVE SHERMAN-CABRERA

The 2008 Illinois Author of the Year, young adult fiction author Simone Elkeles, delighted listeners at the IATE fall conference's Friday luncheon with an acceptance speech filled with humor and a genuine appreciation for her readers.

Elkeles's remarks traced her own development from a child whose "aptitude test" results suggested a career in farming to a young woman managing a business after the death of her father to a wife, mother, and author whose books keep even reluctant readers turning pages and asking for more.

Elkeles's first attempt at a novel featured a Hispanic gang member, causing a friend to suggest that she write a book that grew from her own ethnic tradition instead. When Elkeles replied that she didn't want to write "another sad book about the Holocaust," her friend suggested that she play to her own strength and write a humorous book instead.

Overcoming her initial concern that "no one thinks Israel is funny" and drawing on her own experiences as a visitor to the Holy Land, Elkeles went on to write *How to Ruin a Summer Vacation*. That first book, which appeared on the Teens' Top Ten List of the YALSA division of the

American Library Association, was followed *How to Ruin My Teenage Life*, and *Leaving Paradise*. Elkeles's fourth book, *Perfect Chemistry*, appeared late in 2008. Each successive book has garnered more praise from reviewers and more attention from award selection committees.



Simone Elkeles spent most of the afternoon signing books and talking to conference participants

Most important, though, Elkeles is the kind of twenty-first century author teens can relate to. Her multimodal acceptance speech featured e-mails from adolescent readers—many of whom are frank in admitting that her work is "the first book I've ever finished"—and her webpage, www.simoneelkeles.net, which offers readers opportunities to interact with the author. The next book in her How to Ruin series is due this year, and a sequel to *Leaving Paradise* is scheduled to appear in 2010. □

GET SERIOUS ABOUT IMPROVING STUDENT WRITING: JOIN A WRITING PROJECT SUMMER INSTITUTE IN 2009

Thanks to the efforts of several state universities, teachers in Illinois now have greatly increased access to high quality professional development programming regarding the teaching of writing. With six sites in Illinois, the National Writing Project is much closer to its goal of having a site within easy reach of every teacher in the state.

According to its website, "The National Writing Project (NWP) is a professional development network that serves teachers of writing at all grade levels, primary through university, and in all subjects. The mission of the NWP is to improve student achievement by improving the teaching of writing and improving learning in the nation's schools."

One of the ways the Writing Project strives to accomplish its mission is through Summer Institutes held at sites across the country. Summer Institutes are intensive experiences designed with teachers in mind. Teachers who have participated in these experiences have described them as "a space for critical reflection so essential to good practice," "causing a noticeable and great shift in all of my teaching," and "the best professional development I have had in all my years of teaching" (www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/doc/nwp-sites/summer_institute.csp).

To learn more about the opportunities available to pre-K through college teachers at the NWP sites in Illinois, go to www.nwp.org or contact the Illinois site closest to you:

Chicago Area Writing Project

University of Illinois at Chicago
College of Education / DHSP Building (MC 637)
1640 West Roosevelt Road, Suite 645
Chicago, IL 60608-1316
Phone: (312) 355-4445
Fax: (312) 355-4434
E-mail: cawp@uic.edu
Website: www.cawponline.org/

Illinois Writing Project

National-Louis University
College of Education
122 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60603-6119
Phone: (847) 674-2318

Fax: (847) 674-3182
E-mail: stv.zemelman@comcast.net
Website: www.illinoiswritingproject.com/

Illinois State Writing Project

Illinois State University
English Department
Campus Box 4240
Normal, IL 61790
Phone: (309) 438-7858
Fax: (309) 438-5414
E-mail: jneuleib@ilstu.edu
Website: www.iswp.ilstu.edu

University of Illinois Writing Project

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Center for Writing Studies / 201 English Building
608 South Wright Street (MC 718)
Urbana, IL 61801
Phone: (217) 333-3251
Fax: (217) 333-4321
E-mail: hawisher@uiuc.edu
Website: www.uiwp.uiuc.edu/

Eastern Illinois Writing Project

Eastern Illinois University
English Department
600 Lincoln Avenue
Charleston, Illinois 61920
Phone: (217) 581-6985
Fax: (217) 581-7209
E-mail: rlmurray@eiu.edu
Website: www.eiu.edu/~easternnwp

Piasa Bluffs Writing Project

Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville
School of Education / Curriculum and Instruction
State Route 157, Founders Hall
Edwardsville, IL 62026-1122
Phone: (618) 650-3427
Fax: (618) 650-3485
E-mail: rcordov@siue.edu
Website: www.siue.edu/piasabluffswritingproject □

CLAIRE LAMONICA NAMED 2008 IATE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT



*Claire Lamonica was the
2008 recipient of
IATE's Lifetime
Achievement Award*

Claire Coleman Lamonica, recipient of IATE's 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award, has been a "teacher and a teacher of teachers" for most of the past 30 years. Currently the editor of the *IATE Newsletter*, Lamonica has also served IATE as a district leader, parliamentarian, president, and assistant editor of the *Illinois English Bulletin*. She is also the Region 4 representative to the NCTE Standing Committee on Affiliates.

Currently the associate director of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology at Illinois State University, Lamonica remains a member of the graduate faculty in English, where she supplements her administrative work at the university by teaching an occasional course in the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in the Teaching of Writing program.

"I think it's important for administrators, particularly those involved in faculty development, to stay in touch with the classroom," Lamonica said. "But that's really just an ex-

cause because I love teaching and I love students. They energize me in a way that no other work seems to."

Lamonica began her career as an English and journalism teacher at Glenbard West High School in Glen Ellyn after graduating from the University of Missouri-Columbia with a bachelor's degree in Secondary English in 1975. Since then, she has taught courses in literature, writing, and the teaching of writing at the secondary, community college, and university levels; earned both master's and doctoral degrees at Illinois State University; and codirected the Illinois State Writing Project for ten years.

The IATE Lifetime Achievement Award is given each year to someone who has made significant contributions to IATE, to the profession of teaching, and to the field of English in Illinois. "I was surprised and delighted to receive this award," said Lamonica. "I have tremendous respect for previous recipients, and it's a real honor to join their ranks."

Lamonica and her husband, Tom, are the proud parents of three young adults, Andrew, a software engineer for zazzle.com; Gina, a doctor of physical therapy; and Peter, a systems analyst for AT&T. The couple shares its home with two cats who, according to Lamonica, "are kind enough to allow us to live there rent-free as long as we keep feeding them right on schedule." □

DON'T MISS THE 2009 CITE* CONFERENCE

APRIL 17, 2009
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

For more information:
See the registration mailing
or e-mail conference coordinator
Janice Neuleib at jneuleib@ilstu.edu.

To register online, go to:
www.conferences.ilstu.edu
and click on
"Register for a Conference."

*CONFERENCE OF ILLINOIS TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

CONFERENCE FOR ILLINOIS TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

JANICE NEULEIB

Registration is now open for the Conference for Illinois Teachers of English, which will be held on Friday, April 17, at Illinois State University. This one-day conference is an excellent way to renew old acquaintances, meet new colleagues, and get re-energized for the end of the school year. You'll leave with lots of exciting ideas to take back to your classroom.

As a member of IATE, you should have received a mailing with registration material in early February. If you did not, or if you have misplaced it, you can still register online at www.conferences.ilstu.edu. Click on the "Register for a Conference" button. The registration fee includes continental breakfast, materials, parking, and the luncheon. □

District News *continued from page 4*

well that you'd be willing to share them? Think how often we readily share ideas with fellow teachers in the lounge or the lunchroom. And don't forget those informal get-togethers at the conference between sessions. We chatter away about our ideas. So, why not extend this enthusiasm by sharing at a district meeting? Call or e-mail your district leader today and find out what you can do to help schedule or plan your next district event.

Calumet Valley

District coleaders Norm Boyer and Carol Medrano, along with Angelo Bonadonna, are planning a Moodle presentation for their district. Norm indicates that they will also invite teachers from neighboring districts to attend. Additionally, Norm reports that we will soon have a Listserv of English education programs in Illinois. For more information on these and other activities in the Calumet Valley district, contact Norm (boyer@sxu.edu), Carol (cambodia98@yahoo.com), or Angelo (bonadonna@sxu.edu).

Kaskaskia Valley

Marsha Cremer and Mary Philip, coleaders for the Kaskaskia Valley district, would like to organize things a little differently this year, appointing a representative for each school. If you are interested in serving in this position, please contact Marsha (mcremer@bths201.org). They are also planning creative activities for improving writing. For more information contact Marsha or Mary (Maryphilip@aol.com).

Northeastern

"Engaging Students in Active Learning" has been an ongoing theme for the Northeastern district. At the spring meeting, we will focus on drama as a tool for engaging students in classic novels and poetry. For more information contact district leader Sandy Flannigan (sandra.flannigan@sbcglobal.net).

North Lakes District

For those of you in the North Lakes district, we've added a coleader. Carrie Thomas from Warren Township High School will be joining Mark Onuscheck. Carrie writes, "I am currently working on putting together an interactive web community using a program called Moodle. With the online community, members of the North Lakes district will be able to keep in touch, engage in discussion, and participate in online professional development activities. Use of the forums will be available for CPDU credits for a nominal fee. I am interested in hearing from the talented members of the North Lakes district who would be interested in offering an online workshop or maybe a book discussion." You may contact Carrie (cthomas@wth.net) or check out the website at www.teacherweb.com/IL/WarrenTownshipHighSchool/MsThomas/.

Southern District

Cheryl Staley, leader of the Southern district, has organized district activities around student writing contests. At the meetings teachers discuss ways to improve writing and pick up student awards for previously submitted student work. Teachers may also submit student poetry for publication in the poetry journal of the Mt. Vernon Township High School. Cheryl (cfstaley@cchs165.jackson.k12.il.us) would love to hear additional ideas from district members.

Please take advantage of these district opportunities as well as others to network with fellow teachers throughout the school year. It's a chance to keep the enthusiasm of the conference going all year long. Be sure, too, to ask your district leader for information on next year's conference. Program chair Amy Magnafichi-Lucas has announced the theme, "English in Action," and will accept proposals to present from now until March 20, 2009. The conference will be held at the historic Clock Tower Resort and Conference Center in Rockford on October 16 and 17, 2009. □

CHANGE IS COMING! BE PART OF THE CONVERSATION BY CELEBRATING NCTE ADVOCACY MONTH THIS APRIL

Regardless of our personal political persuasions, we all know that 2009 is going to be a year when change will come to Washington, DC. Inevitably, some of that change will affect our classrooms in the years to come. That's why NOW is the time to make your voice heard in our nation's capital. You can do that by participating in NCTE's Advocacy Month this April. No political experience is required. All you need is the willingness to share a story about your classroom, your teaching, and/or your students. There are two ways to participate:

First, you can join other members of NCTE in Washington, DC, on Thursday, April 23, 2009, for "Literacy Education Advocacy Day." According to the NCTE website, participants will:

- learn how educational policies affecting English language arts teachers are shaped;
- hear key educational policymakers discuss English language arts legislation issues and participate in question and answer sessions;
- gain a deeper understanding of trends in federal legislation;
- receive a briefing from NCTE legislative counsel;

- and share NCTE positions with legislators. (www.ncte.org/action/advocacyday)

Registration is free to all NCTE members. Participants are responsible for their own transportation, housing, and meals.

If you are interested in learning more about in this exciting event, go to www.ncte.org/action/advocacyday. If you would like to get in touch with other teachers from Illinois travelling to DC, send an e-mail to Region 4 Standing Committee on Affiliates Representative Claire Lamonica (cclamon@ilstu.edu), and she'll share your contact information with others making the trip.

A second way to participate in Advocacy Month is by visiting members of congress in your home district. They all come home in the spring, and they want and need to hear from constituents. Let your legislators know how you feel about issues like No Child Left Behind, the Striving Readers Act, the Success in the Middle Act, and any other legislation that you feel has impacted your teaching and/or your students' learning. For more information about how you can get involved, visit the new and improved NCTE website at www.ncte.org and search for "Advocacy Month." You'll find lots of opportunities and lots of support for teachers who want to be on the "cause" side of cause and effect!

IATE SPEAKERS' BUREAU OFFERS HELP FOR MEETING PLANNERS

Is your school or district looking for a speaker for a special event? Is your department struggling with an issue and feeling the need for an outside perspective from someone with some expertise in the area?

If so, look no further. The IATE Speaker's Bureau has an expert for you! Speakers are available to address a wide range of issues, from rubrics to portfolios; from King Arthur to media literacy; and from rhetoric to autobiography.

FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF SPEAKERS AND THEIR AREAS OF EXPERTISE,
VISIT THE IATE WEB SITE AT IATEONLINE.ORG.



Learning to Talk in Class *continued from page 6*

classrooms. In every school, colleagues can help each other refine their skills. NCTE also helps with their network of consultants to support schoolwide and districtwide efforts, and with their publications (see, for example, McCann, Johannessen, Kahn, and Flanagan) to expand thinking about the power of classroom discourse.

Works Cited

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Thomas M. McCann is the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction in Elmhurst Community School District 205 and a member of the IATE Speakers' Bureau. If you need a presenter for a meeting or professional development event, visit the IATE Speakers' Bureau link at www.iateonline.org. □

First-Year Teacher Free Membership
Attention: First-Year English Teachers

IATE offers a free, one-year membership to all teachers who have not previously been members of IATE. IATE membership entitles you to three issues of the *Illinois English Bulletin* and two issues of the *IATE Newsletter* as well as convention information and district news. Stay current with trends in our profession and gather tips for surviving and thriving during your first year in the classroom.

Please fill out the information below and return it to: IATE, Department of English, Campus Box 4240, Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-4240; E-mail: jneuleib@ilstu.edu

Name: _____ Grade levels taught: _____

School: _____

School street address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ County: _____

Home street address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Mailing preference (please circle one): School Home

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**Illinois Association of Teachers of English
Conference 2009**

English in Action

October 16 and 17, 2009
Clock Tower Resort and Conference Center, Rockford, Illinois

Now more than ever, students are entering classrooms having been inundated with information about the world in which they reside, but too often they have not had the opportunity to examine this information and their world in a thoughtful and critical manner, thus leaving important questions unanswered. However, the 21st-century English classroom offers English educators and students a unique opportunity to tackle the big questions, which can range from conversations surrounding multiculturalism and poverty to globalization and gender issues. Literature and composition can create an inroad for these conversations to take place, thus opening up the English classroom as a space for social activism and critical engagement. How can we utilize the space of the English classroom to tackle the big questions? How can we push students to become actively involved in their communities? In the world? The IATE 2009 fall conference invites program proposals that address any and all issues related to the teaching of English/language arts, but special consideration will be given to proposals addressing the ways in which classroom teachers utilize literature and composition to encourage students to become active participants in their local or global communities.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Proposal submitted by: _____

Home Address: _____

City & Zip: _____ Home Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

School Name and Address: _____

_____ School Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Are there others presenting with you?

Name: _____ School: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ School: _____

Address: _____



Can you name a colleague or two who might serve as chair or recorder for your session if accepted?

Name: _____ School: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ School: _____

Address: _____

Are you an IATE member? ___ Yes ___ No (IATE District: _____)

Have you presented at an IATE conference before? ___ Yes ___ No

Please check the type of equipment you will need:

___ TV/VCR _____ internet connection

___ screen _____ overhead

___ other (please specify): _____

Please note: LCD projectors cannot be provided, as laptops and projectors vary. If your presentation requires this equipment, please be prepared to bring it to the conference. Thank you for understanding this issue.

This proposal is for a ___ 50-minute session ___ 90-minute workshop

The intended audience is

___ elementary ___ middle school ___ high school ___ general

Presentation title: _____

Type or print a 50-word description of your presentation. Your description will be printed in the program booklet.

NOTE: All conference participants, including presenters, are required to register and pay for their conference attendance. As a not-for-profit organization, IATE relies on this support from its members to be able to host this annual event.

Proposals should be returned by **March 20, 2009** to:
Amy Magnafichi-Lucas, Program Chair
IATE Fall Conference
Midland High School
1830 State Route 17
Varna, IL 61375

Calls for Papers

PUBLISH YOUR WORK IN THE *ILLINOIS ENGLISH BULLETIN*

Illinois English Bulletin is the written forum in which Illinois teachers of English share their ideas. Please see any recent issue of the *Bulletin* (starting with spring 2005) for a detailed “Call for Submissions.” The deadline to submit materials for possible inclusion in the spring issue is the previous **November 1**, and the deadline for the summer issue is the previous **January 15**. If you need any further information—or encouragement—to complete a teacher-research project and submit it for possible publication, please contact *Bulletin* editor Janice Neuleib at: jneuleib@ilstu.edu.

PUBLISH YOUR WORK IN THE *IATE NEWSLETTER*

Do you have news or an idea worth sharing? The *IATE Newsletter* welcomes articles, reviews, reports, announcements, brief teaching narratives, calls for papers, and other material important to the professional lives of English teachers in the state of Illinois. The deadline for submitting material for the fall 2009 *Newsletter* is **May 15, 2009**. Please send inquiries or submissions via e-mail to Claire Lamonica at cclamon@ilstu.edu.

Announcements

IATE NEW TEACHER/ INSTRUCTOR PROGRAM

English education methods course instructors and/or directors of English education programs who would like to get their students involved in key professional organizations will be happy to know that IATE offers a “New Teacher/Instructor Program” to encourage preservice teachers to join the Illinois Association of Teachers of English.

All you need to do is send an e-mail to Martha Frieburg in the IATE office at mrfrieb@ilstu.edu. Tell Martha how many students you have in your methods class(es), and she will send you a box of materials for each student.

Kits include:

- IATE membership forms (preservice and first-year teachers may join for free)
- A recent issue of the *Illinois English Bulletin*
- The *IATE Newsletter*
- The IATE brochure, “What IATE Can Do for You”
- Information about the organization from the Web site

- A free IATE tote bag

These materials will introduce students to the many benefits of IATE membership, and they will receive something they can use right now that shows their pride in being a member of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English.

TEACHER-RESEARCHERS: APPLY FOR AN IATE PAUL JACOBS RESEARCH AWARD

The IATE Research Committee is currently accepting applications for Paul Jacobs Research Awards. Members of IATE considering any form of research in English language, literature, writing, speaking, or teaching are encouraged to apply. The research may be part of a candidate’s work on a master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation, or the project may be

unrelated to any work connected to one's graduate studies. The Research Committee will consider proposals from teachers and school administrators, as well as from full-time students seeking advanced degrees. Professionals who have thought about conducting a research project in the past but who have hesitated because of lack of funding may find in the Paul Jacobs Award the financial backing necessary to complete their work. The Research Committee can grant an award for a maximum of \$500.

It is surprisingly easy to apply for an award. Here is how to do it:

1. Write a brief proposal that includes the following:
 - a. A cover letter: Let us know who you are and announce the fact that you are applying for a Paul Jacobs Research Award. Also provide your address (U.S. mail and e-mail) and phone number.
 - b. A brief description of your project: Identify a central research question or focus, and describe a method for conducting the research. The reviewers will need to see at least a distinct and substantive research question.
 - c. A timeline: Project the timeline for completing the research, or at least the portion that will be funded by the Paul Jacobs Award.
 - d. A budget: Identify how much money you would need and how it would be used. Here are some examples of appropriate costs: duplicating instructional materials, paying raters to score papers, or paying fees for data processing. Here are some questionable expenses: covering travel costs, purchasing instructional materials that a school normally funds, or paying incentives to participants in the study. The research grant is modest and should be used to support the essential costs of a study.
 - e. A status report: Let us know what you have done so far. Perhaps you have done some initial reading and can supply a brief bibliography.
2. Mail the proposal to IATE Research Committee, Campus Box 4240, Department of English, Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-4240.

Applications for awards to be reviewed at the fall Executive Committee meeting must arrive at IATE headquarters at Illinois State University no later than October 1. The members of the IATE Research Committee anticipate that recipients of

the Paul Jacobs Award will be able to share their completed research at an IATE fall conference or through publication in the *Illinois English Bulletin*.

IATE OFFERS SCHOLARSHIP FOR MINORITY TEACHER EDUCATION

College juniors and seniors of color who are currently enrolled in teacher education programs and majoring in English, English education, or Elementary education with a specialty in language arts and who plan to teach in Illinois are invited to apply for an IATE Scholarship for Minority Teacher Education. Applications for the 2008 scholarship should be mailed to Janice Neuleib, IATE Executive Secretary, Campus Box 4240, Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-4240 before September 15, 2008. The specific goals, procedures, and criteria are as follows:

Goals

The Illinois Association of Teachers of English is committed to recruiting minority* language arts teachers for both humanitarian and practical purposes. To meet that commitment, IATE reserves \$1,000 each year for one scholarship as designated by the Minority Scholarship Committee, a subcommittee of the Minority Affairs Committee.

Procedures

The Minority Scholarship Committee will issue a call for applications to the chairs of public, recognized language arts teacher education programs in Illinois colleges and universities in the spring. A follow-up call will be issued in August.

After applications are received, the Minority Scholarship Committee will judge the applications, issue an invitation to the winner to attend the fall conference (October 2008), at which the award will be given, and assist the winner in making arrangements to attend the conference. Whenever possible, the winner will be escorted by an IATE member.

In addition to the cash award, winners will receive a complimentary one-year membership to IATE, free registration for the 2008 conference, luncheon and banquet tickets, and paid lodging and mileage (if an escort cannot be secured).

Criteria

1. The candidate must be a member of a minority* group.
2. The candidate must be duly enrolled in a four-year or upper-division, public, recognized teacher-education program in an Illinois college or university.
3. The candidate must have declared a major in English, English education, or elementary education with a specialty in language arts (junior or senior status), and plan to teach in Illinois.
4. The candidate must have demonstrated potential for academic success.
5. The candidate cannot be an individual already on full scholarship, and some degree of need for the scholarship must exist.
6. The faculty member who recommends a student for one of the awards must submit these items in one

envelope:

- a. A sample of the candidate's writing done for a class in the past year (instructor comments included).
- b. A candidate essay on this topic: "What piece of literature by a person of color would you especially like to teach? Explain why you chose this particular piece and how you would go about teaching it."
- c. A sealed recommendation that addresses items 1-5 above in some detail.
- d. A cover sheet with the full name, home address, and phone number of both the candidate and the recommender.

*As in other IATE matters, "minority" here is defined as nonwhite minority, a person of color.

STAY IN TOUCH WITH IATE!

WONDER WHAT'S GOING ON AT IATE BETWEEN NEWSLETTERS AND CONFERENCES?

FIND OUT BY VISITING THE IATE WEB SITE AT:

WWW.IATEONLINE.ORG

The site features information about our organization as well as announcements about other professional development opportunities for English teachers in Illinois and nearby states.

You can also find out who your district leader is, access the Call for Proposals for the next annual conference, learn more about IATE's Best Illinois Poetry and Prose Contest for student writers, identify a speaker for a meeting or professional development event, and much more.

**TAKE A MINUTE TO EXPLORE THIS RESOURCE TODAY—
AND BOOKMARK US ON YOUR HOME AND SCHOOL COMPUTERS!**

IATE Membership

Name: _____

School: _____

Level of Instruction: ELEM__ JRH__ HS__ COL__

School Address: _____

City: _____ ZIP: _____ County: _____

IATE District: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ ZIP: _____

Home Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Mailing Preference: School _____ Home _____

Membership type: First-Year Teacher / First-Year Member__ Student__ Regular__ Patron__ Retired__

Free: First-Year Teacher / First-Year Member/Student

IATE Yearly Membership Dues (please circle one):

\$25 Regular \$30 Patron \$5 Retired

IATE Membership Pin: \$5 ____

Check enclosed for amount: \$ _____

Mail to: IATE, Martha Frieberg, Membership Secretary, 4240 English, Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-4240; Phone: (309) 438-3957; Web site: www.iateonline.org; E-mail: mrfrieb@ilstu.edu



The National Day on Writing

The National Gallery of Writing



October 20, 2009

<http://www.ncte.org/action/dayonwriting>

Americans are writing like never before—through text messages and IMs, with video cameras and cell phones, and, yes, even with traditional pen and paper. Whether it is done in a notebook or on a blog, writing, in its many forms, has become daily practice for millions of Americans. The National Council of Teachers of English invites you to explore and celebrate the integral role writing has in each of our lives by participating in the National Day on Writing/National Gallery of Writing.

Who can participate?

Everyone! NCTE invites everyone to play an active role in this celebration of writing. We encourage participants from many sectors—students, teachers, parents, grandparents, service and industrial workers, managers, business owners, legislators, retirees, and many more to submit a piece of writing.

What types of writing will be accepted?

We welcome composition in all of its forms, from textual to audio and video pieces. The only criteria is that it is a piece that matters to you. Among the entry types you can submit are:

- Letter
- Email or text message
- Journal entry
- Report
- Electronic presentation
- Blog post
- Documentary clip
- Poetry reading
- “How to” directions
- Short story
- Memo

Where will I submit my writing?

NCTE, along with our participation partners, will unveil an online National Gallery of Writing that will feature different types of composition. Writers will be able to submit pieces to the gallery website beginning in Spring 2009. The gallery will be a digital archive accessible to all through a free, searchable website. Writers will include with their piece a brief introduction and the reason they selected and submitted it to the gallery.

iate

Illinois Association of Teachers of English

IATE homepage: <http://www.iateonline.org>

Illinois State University
Illinois Association of Teachers of English
Campus Box 4240
Normal, IL 61790-4240

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