



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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### **Robert T. Jiménez** **Vanderbilt University**

I hope your summer was everything you hoped it would be. Here in Nashville, Tennessee (early July), we just finished one of the hottest summers on record. The heat wave was finally broken with a prolonged rainfall of 4-½ inches and things seem to be greening up a little. I take that as a good sign and I also take a number of developments as good signs for LRA. These include the following:

Gwendolyn Thompson McMillon has agreed to be the Treasurer of LRA. We are incredibly fortunate that Professor McMillon is willing to serve in this capacity. Her qualifications include a BA in Economics and an MEd in School Finance. Dr. McMillon has also served on her university's Budget Review Committee as a Chair and member. She will replace Susan L'Allier in December. Please welcome our new treasurer and also let Professor L'Allier know how much we have appreciated her excellent service to LRA.

The leadership of LRA has created an Ad-hoc Strategic Planning Committee. This committee is charged with creating a strategic plan to guide directors and officers as they make decisions involving LRA. It is expected that these plans will provide a touchstone for determining how well future directions and decisions align with both the mission statement and the strategic plan. Some of the areas that the committee has been asked to address include:

- Foster and encourage international scholarship and representation within LRA;
- Create a more diverse membership and leadership within LRA;
- Better understand as well as have an influence on issues of policy and advocacy involving literacy research and instruction.

Jeanne Paratore and Julia López-Robertson will chair this committee and Jim Hoffman, Georgia García, Loukia Sarroub, and Aria Razfar will serve as members.

LRA is in the process of generating a list of promising minority scholars, doctoral students, members, and non-members so that we can better diversify our membership and leadership. Many of you were very helpful with respect to recommending your colleagues and current doctoral students. We put together a list of 60 to 70 individuals and I look forward to seeing this work have a positive influence on our organization. Please continue to bring to my attention those whom you would like to see become more involved in LRA. Another action that would move LRA forward would be for everyone to update their membership profile with demographic information at: [www.literacyresearchassociation.org/mbrupdate taf?](http://www.literacyresearchassociation.org/mbrupdate taf?)

This past spring we elected Janice Almasi as our incoming Vice President Elect. Janice is the Carol Lee Robertson Endowed Professor of Literacy Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the

University of Kentucky. In addition, we elected Misty Sailors, University of Texas, San Antonio, Cynthia Lewis, University of Minnesota, and Ray Reutzel, Utah State University, as incoming members of the Board of Directors.

Like you, over the years I have heard many individuals voice their concerns over how well LRA recognizes and welcomes various types of research. Of course, this is a concern that all of us have a responsibility to address, but I would appreciate any thoughts you might have on this matter. I will be meeting, for example, with Professor Don Compton this summer to brainstorm some ideas on how to help quantitative and qualitative researchers better recognize and understand one another. Don is a colleague of mine here at Vanderbilt and he is the current president of the Society for the Scientific Studies of Reading (SSSR).

Finally, I know that President-Elect Rick Beach and Vice President Arlette Willis are putting together a first-rate conference for us. I always love spending time in San Diego, but this December will be even more special given that it will be LRA's annual meeting. Take care, enjoy the rest of your summer and fall term, and make sure San Diego is on your calendar.

## PRESIDENT-ELECT'S REPORT

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### **Richard Beach** **University of Minnesota**

This year, our annual LRA meeting will convene from November 28 to December 1, 2012 in San Diego, California at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina. We received a record number of proposals for this conference, so we should have a good turn-out.

One advantage of the Sheraton hotel, located on beautiful San Diego Bay, is that it is only a short distance from restaurants in the Gaslamp Quarter, Horton Plaza, and Old Town (we'll have shuttle buses to these destinations). Given the hotel's location right across the street from the San Diego airport, conference attendees can take the free hotel shuttle from the airport and arrive at the hotel in about five minutes.

The conference theme is *Investigating 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacies: Exploring Uses of New Literacies*, a focus on how literacy researchers are examining uses of both digital and print literacies in different social and cultural contexts. Each of our three invited plenary session speakers will be addressing this theme. David Barton, Professor of Language and Literacy, Lancaster University, England, will be discussing his work on social aspects of digital literacies in communities of practice. Mimi Ito, Professor in Residence and John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Chair in Digital Media and Learning, University of California, Irvine, will be discussing her media ethnography research on adolescents' uses of digital literacies. Kevin Leander, Associate Professor of Language and Literacy, Vanderbilt University, will deliver the Saturday Integrative Research Review. Kevin's research focuses on spatial aspects and embodiment associated with digital literacy learning.

Other plenary speakers include Linda Gambrell, Distinguished Professor of Education, Clemson University, and new co-editor of *Reading Research Quarterly*, who will deliver the Oscar S. Causey Address, and Robert T. Jiménez, Vanderbilt University, President of LRA, who will deliver the Annual Presidential Address.

We also have a series of five Area Chair Invited Speaker sessions featuring well-known scholars.

- Area 2 (In-service Teacher Education/Professional Development in Literacy): Diane DeFord, University of South Carolina
- Area 4 (Literacy Assessment, Evaluation, and Public Policy): Pam Grossman, Stanford University
- Area 6 (Adolescent, College, and Adult Literacy Processes): Jonathan Osborne and Sam Wineburg, Stanford University; and Jennifer J. Wimmer and Roni Jo Draper, Brigham Young University
- Area 8 (Literacy Learning and Practice in Multilingual and Multicultural Settings): Olga A. Vásquez and Alison Wishard Guerra, University of California, San Diego; and Belinda Flores and Ellen Riojas Clark, University of Texas, San Antonio Academy for Teaching Excellence
- Area 10 (Literacy Technology and Media): Roy Pea, Stanford University.

Additionally, Cristina Alfaro, San Diego State University, has organized a school visit to the Chula Vista Learning Community Charter School in Chula Vista, California, that served as a model for success in raising its 95% Latino students' academic performance through an innovative cultural and linguistic diversity curriculum.

We have also shifted the 13 different Study Group sessions from the morning to the noon hour. Also, the Newcomers' event will now occur on Wednesday evening. The band, Out of the Blues, featuring LRA members Frank Serafini and Tom Bean, who have played at previous LRA conferences, will be making a return performance on Thursday night. We look forward to seeing as many of you who can attend at what should be an exciting conference.

I also want to thank members of the Technology Committee, chaired by David Lund, and the LRA Web designers, Erica Boling and Dana Wilber, who continue to make improvements to the LRA website ([www.literacyresearchassociation.org](http://www.literacyresearchassociation.org)). While members can continue to use the LRA listserv, they encourage LRA members to post messages in the **General Forum** for research and opinions on current issues related to literacy research and policies. Similarly, Study Groups, ICGs, the Field Council, and Committees have their own Forums. Members may also post job announcements on the **Job Postings and Announcements** page.

The **About LRA** page includes information for use in recruiting new members provided by the very active LRA Field Council, under Jennifer Jones's leadership, and contains a document titled *Is LRA Right For You?* and activities of the LRA Field Council.

The Committee has also sought to provide more research and instructional resources on this site under **Research Resources/Publications**, including a **Digital Texts and Tools** site, <https://sites.google.com/site/textsandtools>,

designed by LRA members with documents and tools related to literacy research.

The site's **Research Repository** includes links to LRA members' bio pages listing their research organized according to members' research foci. Members can then search for other members' research on certain topics. If you have not already added yourself to the **Research Repository**, you can do so by clicking on "My Profile" and then "Update My Profile" to add links to your bio pages and categories identifying your research foci. In doing so, you will be eligible for another drawing to win a new iPad to be awarded at the LRA Business Meeting.

We hope that all LRA members will take advantage of these different resources available on the LRA website, as well as use the website to recruit new members.

## MICHAEL J. PARKER AWARD COMMITTEE

### William R. Muth, Chair Vanderbilt University

If you are presenting adult literacy/language research at this year's LRA conference, please consider applying for the J. Michael Parker Award.

LRA honors new scholars, such as graduate students and those who completed their doctorates within the past six years, for papers they present at the conference that address adult literacy/language development and instruction.

The award was established in 2001 in honor of J. Michael Parker, winner of LRA's Student Outstanding Research Award, for his work in community-based adult literacy. To be true to the spirit of J. Michael Parker's work, the Award recognizes studies that examine ways adults further their own language and literacy development within or outside of formal learning contexts, including different social and cultural contexts for learning. The award is designed to encourage scholarship in adult literacy with a variety of populations, including, but not limited to, learners in formal settings such as adult basic education and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, as well as those engaged in literacy practices embedded in diverse cultural settings. *Potential applicants are encouraged to contact the chair to discuss how their research may fit with the intentions of the award.*

Recipients of the award receive a small cash award to be used for conference expenses. They are also presented with a plaque commemorating the award during a general session of the conference.

The award committee accepts single- or co-authored papers. For single-authored papers, the recipient will receive \$500 and a plaque commemorating the award. For co-authored papers, the recipients will each receive a plaque and will decide amongst themselves how to divide the \$500 award.

The criteria for consideration for the award include:

1. The research is capable of making a significant contribution to theory and/or practice of adult literacy development and instruction;

2. The methodology is appropriate to the research question and of sufficient rigor;
3. Implications of the research are of a scope needed to impact the field.

**Applicants are required to submit the full paper (25 pages or less) electronically by October 1, 2012.** Papers must be double-spaced and in 12-point font. The text limit does not include references or appendices.

Submissions and questions should be sent to the committee chair, Bill Muth, at [wrmuth@vcu.edu](mailto:wrmuth@vcu.edu)

Applicants will be notified of the results of the review of their paper prior to the conference, and the plaque and honorarium will be presented to the winner during a plenary session at the conference.

## TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

### David Lund, Chair Southern Utah University

Our 2012 conference approaches quickly; so too the end of my tenure as the Chair of the Technology Committee. I need to thank all those who have been so helpful in accomplishing so many of our goals during the last three years. I could list them all, but will not do so on the off chance that I will forget someone. Suffice it to say that the list includes all those who have served on the committee, as well as the e-Editors of the LRA. In addition, Richard Beach and Bob Jiménez have been splendid in supporting the ideas and projects of the Technology Committee.

The biggest project we undertook was the total revision of our organization website. It is now close to being the 21<sup>st</sup> Century product envisioned by the committee and e-Editors. There are still a few minor items to be worked on, but by and large, it is ready to go. A few of the new features include forums for every group in the organization who wishes to have one, including committees, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), and of course, the general membership. There is even a place to post job listings. There is an entire section about the organization and its place in literacy education and research. The resources and publications section has too many items to list, but among them are archived *Yearbooks* and *JLR* articles, the Voice of Literacy podcasts (set up by Betsy Baker), open-access research databases, and organization policy briefs and newsletters. The directories list all of the important people in LRA (that is everybody), and the conference section has information for upcoming and past conferences, including plenary session videos for the past seven years and links to the LRA YouTube and Vimeo channels.

If you have not yet visited the website and explored the new features, or signed up to participate in the forums you are interested in or already part of, now is the time to do so.

In addition, much has been done to enhance the technology available to the membership at the conferences and we are still trying to get everyone to utilize available technologies to make the LRA a year-round resource to the membership of the organization.

Again, thanks to all who have helped to get us where we are. I hope that we will continue to move to the forefront of technology use among peer organizations around the world.

See you in San Diego!

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD COUNCIL

### Jennifer Jones, Field Council Chair Radford University

***Did you know that there are literacy researchers in our field who are not members of the Literacy Research Association?*** Some are new to the field and may not be aware of the Literacy Research Association. Some may have been members of LRA in the past but dropped out for individual reasons or simply have failed to renew memberships. In each of our institutions, such individuals exist. As the new academic year begins, make a commitment to find at least one person in your field who is not a member of LRA. Share the numerous benefits of LRA membership. Invite your colleague to attend the annual conference. ***Commit to inviting a researcher in our field to join the Literacy Research Association this year!***

The LRA Field Council is devoted to the "Three Rs" of LRA membership: ***Recruitment, Retention & Reclamation.*** Regional Chairs and Field Council Representatives have developed an exciting array of new materials for the promotion and support of LRA membership. These materials will prove helpful in your quest to invite a colleague to join LRA this year. An informational checklist entitled ***Is LRA Right For You?*** will be showcased under the Join LRA tab on the website this fall. A new LRA Membership brochure highlighting the benefits of LRA will be available, as well as support documents providing ***Tips for New LRA Members*** and ***Tips for Those New to the LRA Conference.*** Each of these documents will be available in both English and Spanish and may be downloaded from the LRA website this fall.

Many thanks to LRA members who participated in Field Council's request for new member tips on the listserv. Your contributions have proven most helpful in the development of our new materials.

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

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

## DOCTORAL STUDENT INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY GROUP

**Lorien Chambers Schuldt, Stanford University**  
**Gail Lovette, University of Virginia**  
**Co-Chairs**

The Doctoral Student Innovative Community Group (DSICG) membership continues to grow and we are looking forward to the conference in San Diego at the end of this year. We are continuing to deepen and expand our work on several initiatives to support the doctoral students of LRA. This includes the publication of three newsletters each year that we send to our members. Thanks to our new newsletter editing team, these newsletters now feature more in-depth and substantive articles on topics applicable to students throughout their graduate careers and reach a wider readership.

Our summer newsletter will include articles with advice about how to work toward publication and how to develop relationships with other students throughout the graduate program. The newsletter also includes previews for our study groups at the 2012 conference in San Diego and a celebration of DSICG members' professional successes. In addition, we maintain a listserv and Facebook page to promote networking among doctoral students, and our new and enlarged Technology Committee is working on building a space for the DSICG on the new LRA website. A recent survey of members has shown that doctoral students are very interested in networking opportunities and we look forward to utilizing the forum space on the LRA website soon.

After a very successful round of study groups in Jacksonville 2011, as evidenced by a major increase in attendance at our study group sessions,

we are looking forward to a wonderful line-up of study group presenters for the 2012 conference, should our proposal be accepted. We also hope to continue our Academia 101 panel presentation, which provides graduate students with opportunities to hear from recent graduates in a variety of academic and research positions.

We also received very positive feedback from professors and graduate students who participated in the LRA proposal mentoring process—a mentoring opportunity for graduate students who are making the transition to presenting their own research. While we await the decisions about the submitted proposals, we are thrilled to have had such overwhelming support from the LRA community and look forward to expanding and improving this opportunity with the valuable feedback we received. As always, we are extremely grateful to the many faculty members who have volunteered their time and expertise to support the doctoral students of LRA. We also extend our appreciation to the LRA Editorial Board at Clemson University who invited doctoral students to participate as student-reviewers for the *LRA Yearbook*. We are delighted that this experience provides doctoral students with valuable experience in reading and reviewing manuscripts, while also helping them to build their knowledge of scholarly writing within their fields.

The DSICG is always open to new opportunities that will help further graduate students' professional development. If you have suggestions or opportunities for students that you would like us to advertise, please do not hesitate to contact us (Lorien Chambers Schuldt: [lorienc@stanford.edu](mailto:lorienc@stanford.edu), Gail E. Lovette: [gail@virginia.edu](mailto:gail@virginia.edu), and Jennifer Smith: [jsmith30@mail.twu.edu](mailto:jsmith30@mail.twu.edu)). We are always open to new members. If you are interested in joining the DSICG or know students who might be, please contact Leah Saal ([lsaall@su.edu](mailto:lsaall@su.edu)) to join the Doctoral listserv.

## Investigating 21st Century Literacies: Exploring Uses of New Literacies



LITERACY  
RESEARCH  
ASSOCIATION

Nov. 28-Dec. 1, 2012  
Sheraton Hotel and Marina in San Diego, California

