



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Robert T. Jiménez

Vanderbilt University

Hello, LRA!

I know that this is a particularly busy time of the year for many of our members, but I encourage you to begin planning for your attendance at our next annual conference to be held in San Diego, CA at the Sheraton Hotel and Marina. Rick Beach and Arlette Willis have already begun to plan what I am sure is going to be another memorable event. Our last annual conference nicely demonstrated that our organization is strong and healthy. Our membership currently stands at 1,210 and we continue to maintain healthy balances in all of our accounts, both intellectually and financially. This year, we also welcomed three new members to the board of directors. They are Patricia Enciso at The Ohio State University, James Baumann at the University of Missouri and Flora Rodriguez-Brown at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

While 2011 was a good year, I will always remember it as the year that we, the Literacy Research Association, met for our annual conference in Jacksonville, Florida at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Before each day of the conference I was able to look out at the St. John's River and watch the sunrise as it lit up the water and the city. Each day of the conference glowed with both scholarly and inspiring sessions. Patty Anders enthusiastically launched our annual meeting with her address, titled, "Widening the Circle of Literacy Research: Sampling the Past—Envisioning Possibilities." She was spellbinding as she brought to life our organization's history decade by decade from the 1970s to the present. Although forever youthful, she was able to use her personal and insightful firsthand knowledge of many of our previous leaders to demonstrate where we have been, the changes we have gone through in terms of our understanding of literacy, and the challenges that currently face us. And, her talk clarified the enormous contributions that past presidents have made to insuring that LRA continues to stand out as the premiere professional organization devoted to research on literacy in all of its forms. Simply put, it was a great presentation!

Our plenary speakers followed Patty's example with presentations that widened the circle for literacy research and practice. Thursday morning, we heard from Lesley Mandel Morrow as she presented the Oscar S. Causey address. In her talk, she picked up on the changes that literacy theory, research, and instruction have gone through over time and how many of these changes have resulted, ironically, in better instruction but impoverished policies. Donald Macedo then reminded us why our work matters in his address Thursday afternoon. He pointed out how injustice drives and defines the challenges that face those who want to distribute literacy more equitably. His recognition that poverty should never be viewed as natural or normal is a perspective that deserves more attention. He exhorted us to be hopeful and to continue work that allows submerged voices to emerge. Eve Gregory came to us from London, and on Friday she tantalized us with videos and reports of children from a variety of religious, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds and how these factors

affected their becoming literate. I will never forget Bodisarawati from a Tamil Hindu home learning to write in rice! Finally, Juan Guerra spoke to us at the Integrative Research Review about the need to recognize all of the linguistic and cultural understandings that young people bring into schools as resources for both teaching and learning. His conclusion that we need to support students so that they can communicate as effectively as possible with whatever audience they face should, in the future, generate exciting new research and theory.

As you might guess, the plenary sessions were just the tip of the iceberg in terms of the really interesting and downright unforgettable presentations that occurred throughout the conference. I could not stop laughing when Lee Gunderson showed us all the things that one should **not** do as part of an LRA presentation. His contribution, along with the incredibly valuable tips provided by Taffy Rafael and David Reinking on how to succeed as an LRA presenter, hopefully made it onto your schedule. In addition, our innovative community groups, although fairly recent as part of LRA's conference structure, are making excellent contributions to our organization. Let me thank all of you who attended an Innovative Community Group (ICG) meeting. The ICGs are having a very healthy impact on LRA and I encourage everyone to participate. We now have a Multilingual and Transcultural Literacies ICG, a History of Literacy ICG, a Doctoral Student ICG, and an International ICG. Our next steps will include figuring out ways to harness the energy of the ICGs to improve LRA.

The executive committee plans to meet three more times between my writing this newsletter and next year's annual meeting in San Diego. Your board of directors will also meet once again before that date. As you might guess, we will work on a number of issues and challenges facing LRA. For example, we plan to continue past efforts to identify and appoint promising young scholars from diverse and minority backgrounds to committees and other responsibilities within LRA. Please let us know of anyone you believe fits this description, yourself included.

We also plan to continue working with TEI, our organization's management firm, to provide all of the products and services that we need to thrive as an organization. More specifically, LRA plans to unveil a new online proposal submission system that we believe will eliminate the kinds of problems we have experienced in the past. In addition, our president-elect, Rick Beach, is working with TEI to develop and refine LRA's website. This change has the potential to better connect our membership and to provide services such as conference papers, videos, and podcasts of conference sessions. I'm sure Rick will explain these changes much more fully.

Finally, we are committed to finding effective ways to use the scholarship generated by LRA to have a positive impact on the teaching and learning that occurs in school classrooms. Our new chair of the Policy and Legislative Committee, Barbara Kapinus, is working with us to make sure that LRA has a place in meetings dealing with the big questions involving literacy, such as the Common Core Standards. We are excited about this work since, as Patty Anders noted in her address, our previous lack of influence on policy has long been a concern of LRA and its past leadership. I look forward to speaking to you in San Diego. Please stay in touch.

PRESIDENT-ELECT'S REPORT

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 and Marina Hotel. This hotel, located on beautiful San Diego Bay, is only a short distance from restaurants in the Gaslamp Quarter, Horton Plaza, and Old Town as well as Balboa Park and the San Diego Zoo (we'll have shuttle buses to take you to these destinations). It's also located right across the street from the San Diego airport, so conference attendees can take the free hotel shuttle from the airport and arrive at the hotel in about five minutes. Because San Diego has a relatively mild climate year-round, the weather for the end of November should be warm and sunny.

The theme of the 2012 conference is *Investigating 21st Century Literacies: Exploring Uses of New Literacies*, a focus on how literacy researchers are examining uses of a range of new digital and print literacies in different social and cultural contexts. Three of our invited plenary session speakers will be addressing this theme. David Barton, Professor of Language and Literacy, Lancaster University, England, one of the originators of literacy practice theories, will be discussing his work on social aspects of digital literacies in communities of practice. He is author of 13 books, including *The Anthropology of Writing: Understanding Textually-mediated Worlds* and *Beyond Communities of Practice: Language Power and Social Context*. 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. She is the primary investigator and organizer of a large-scale study of adolescents' uses of digital media, that resulted in the book, *Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out: Kids Living and Learning with New Media*. The Saturday Integrative Research Review plenary speaker is Kevin Leander, Associate Professor of Language and Literacy, Vanderbilt University. His research focuses on spatial aspects and embodiment associated with digital literacy learning; he co-edited the book *Spatializing Literacy Research and Practice*.

Other plenary speakers include Linda Gambrell, Distinguished Professor of Education, Clemson University, and new co-editor of *Reading Research Quarterly*, who will give the Oscar S. Causey address; and Robert Jiménez, Vanderbilt University, President of LRA, who will deliver the annual presidential address.

We also have a special treat for your evening entertainment. 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.

Session proposals for this conference are due on March 12, 2012. They need to be submitted electronically by 11:59 PM EST (see the LRA website for submission details). We are employing a new electronic conference submission system also employed by AERA to insure that the electronic submissions process runs smoothly.

Thanks to the good work by the Technology Committee, chaired by David Lund, and the LRA web designers, Erica Boling and Dana Wilber,

we launched a re-designed LRA website in the Fall, 2011 (<http://www.literacyresearchassociation.org>). We hope that you'll use the new General Forum feature on this site for online discussions and job postings. Area Chairs and LRA Committee/ICG members will also use their own private Forums for conducting discussions during the year. While we'll continue to use the LRA listserv, please do participate in the General Forum to share your research and opinions on current issues related to literacy research and policies.

We've also sought to provide more research resources on this site. The Research Repository includes links to LRA members' bio pages, listing their research for your use in locating colleagues with related research interests. You can now search for other members' research based on those members' research foci. We hope to have the majority of LRA members included on the Research Repository by this summer. 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 focus.

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Patricia L. Anders

University of Arizona

It is bittersweet—having that word “past” by my name above. Serving as President of the Literacy Research Association is an opportunity to pay back: Like many of us say, NRC/LRA is our scholarly home, and that has been true for me since 1976. Do the math—I have a big bill to pay! The benefits I have enjoyed over all these years are immeasurable.

I feel pretty good about what was accomplished during my time in the Presidential lineup. For example, the By-laws and Policy and Procedures documents have been improved and we have advanced ourselves as a more democratic organization. Another change was to try to improve communication between our Executive Committee and TEI, our management firm. Toward that goal, we had a monthly conference phone call during the last year to review projects and to set timelines for accomplishing projects. I think these meetings contributed to efficient and productive Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings. That was another of my goals—to make sure meetings were efficient and productive. I think that was accomplished—our meetings got through the agenda and were finished on time! Another accomplishment I hope everyone likes as much as I do was the rewriting of our mission statement. We dedicated time at Executive and Board meetings to a “writing workshop” type activity to compose the statement. If you haven't read it yet, check it out on our webpage. The many changes on our website were accomplished by the Executive Committee (Vice President Beach led the charge) and the technology committee (David Lund, Chair). Much still needs to be done, but we had a good start.

One of the reasons LRA works so well is that TEI, represented by Executive Director Chris Roper, stands by us, manages or does much of the labor, and works closely with us. Over the years, many members have developed a close working relationship with Chris and think the world of him: Chris, we appreciate you!

I watched other past presidents during the 2011 conference to get a sense of what it is like to not have the clamor around you being President. Surprise! Each seemed to have lots to do and to be entirely engaged. Being president of LRA is a terrific honor; loaded with a heavy sense of responsibility for the success of the organization, but if the health and vigor of our past presidents is any indication, I look forward to the coming years with enthusiasm. Oh! A few past presidents were not in Jacksonville and you were missed. LRA doesn't let go of their Presidents all that easily, however. On my agenda as Past President are several tasks. During the next few months, I will be making committee appointments. There will be an opportunity for you to indicate your interest in a committee and I look forward to seeing the names of members from which I will make appointments.

Another task for this year is to appoint a committee to consider the creation of a strategic plan for LRA. I am awaiting the results from the membership survey to see if the majority of members think we should have a strategic plan. Thanks to Sam Miller, Chair of the Research Committee, for analyzing the survey data.

I am also responsible for chairing a Management Relations Committee. The Vice President (Arlette Willis) is on this committee and President Jiménez will be appointing a third member. Finally, many of you most likely recall that the editors of the *Handbook of Reading Research* created a fund, from the proceeds of the *Handbook*, to promote international research. It has taken some time, but progress is being made toward developing the logistics for initiating the use of this money. You will be hearing more about this in the future.

In conclusion, thank you for the opportunity to serve. LRA is in good hands as we move forward. Each member, in their own special way, makes important contributions to what LRA is and what it will become.

ALBERT J. KINGSTON AWARD

Donna Alvermann, Chair

University of Georgia

The purpose of the Albert J. Kingston Award is to honor an LRA member for distinguished contributions of service to the Literacy Research Association. Congratulations to Marla Mallette, the 2011 recipient of this award. In presenting the award to Marla at the annual meeting in Jacksonville, FL, Susan L'Allier (recipient of the Albert J. Kingston Award in 2010) described the many valuable contributions that Marla Mallette has made to LRA since her first conference presentation in 1995. Susan went on to note that Marla had told her, "[I] never saw an NRC/LRA Committee [I] didn't want to join."

Consider nominating one of your hardworking colleagues for the 2012 Albert J. Kingston Award. Submit one copy of the nominee's current curriculum vitae and a letter of nomination that describes the nominee's service contributions to LRA. Nominees must have belonged to LRA for at least five years. Any LRA member may nominate deserving individuals for recognition of their work. Nomination materials should be submitted via e-mail to the Kingston Award Committee Chair, Donna Alvermann (dalverma@uga.edu), by **August 15, 2012**. More information about the Kingston Award, including its history, the review process, and a listing of past recipients, is available on the LRA website (<http://www.literacyresearchassociation.org/index.php/component/content/article?id=82>). On this website, you

will also find a link to a brief biography of Albert J. Kingston. Recipients of the Kingston Award, which has been presented annually since 1985, receive a plaque and a lifetime membership in LRA.

EARLY CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

David O'Brien, Chair

University of Minnesota

Julie Coiro, of the University of Rhode Island, was the 2011 recipient of the Early Career Achievement Award presented at the afternoon plenary session on December 1, 2011. The Early Career Achievement Award is awarded annually to honor new members of the LRA community who have been actively involved in research, teaching, and service for approximately 3-7 years and have demonstrated outstanding commitment and accomplishment.

There can be no recipients without LRA members who take the time to nominate deserving colleagues. Please take the time to engage in this important task. Nominees for the Early Career Achievement Award may be of any rank. However, nominees must be members of the LRA for at least three years (not necessarily consecutively), possess a terminal doctoral degree, and have worked in the field seven years or less from the conferral date of their degree to the posted deadline for this competition.

An LRA member may be nominated by a peer member of LRA through a recommendation letter outlining the candidate's contributions to the field of literacy research and the nominee's participation in LRA. Please send the nominating letter to David O'Brien dobrien@umn.edu by **April 15, 2012**.

EDWARD B. FRY BOOK AWARD

Melanie R. Kuhn, Chair

Boston University

Please consider nominating a book for the Edward B. Fry Book Award. The award, established by Dr. Fry, recognizes an outstanding book on literacy research and practice. Eligibility for the award is limited to current members of LRA who have written or have been one of several authors of a book. The book must have a copyright date within five years of the date of the award being given. Nominated books should:

- Advance knowledge about literacy
- Display inquiry into literacy
- Show responsible intellectual risk taking

Letters of nomination, along with a copy of the nominated book, should be sent to the committee chair before the deadline of **May 15, 2012**. Nomination letters must directly address the ways in which the nominated book meets the criteria outlined above. Letters cannot simply reiterate the endorsements or summaries designed to promote the text. Self-nominations are accepted, although committee members cannot nominate a book they have authored. A book may be re-nominated if it has been previously nominated but did not win the award. If you have any questions or

need additional information, please contact Melanie R. Kuhn at melaniek@bu.edu.

We also wish to acknowledge the 2011 Edward B. Fry Book Award winner, *Change is Gonna Come: Transforming Literacy Education for African American Students*, by Patricia A. Edwards, Gwendolyn Thompson McMillon, and Jennifer D. Turner (Teachers College Press).

THE J. MICHAEL PARKER AWARD

William Muth, Chair

Virginia Commonwealth University

We are pleased to announce the recipient of this year's J. Michael Parker Award, Dr. Laurie A. Henry, who is an Assistant Professor at the University of Kentucky. Her paper was titled "Literacy Content Knowledge Expertise among Adult Education Providers in Kentucky." Dr. Henry studied the literacy content knowledge of 520 adult education providers in Kentucky. She found that the majority of these adult educators performed highest on questions related to fluency and comprehension instruction and had the most difficulty with items related to informal assessments of vocabulary development, alphabetic instruction, and emergent literacy skills. Her findings have important implications for professional development and program design. We congratulate Dr. Henry for being this year's J. Michael Parker Award recipient, and thank her for her dedication to the field of adult literacy.

If you are interested in being considered for the J. Michael Parker Award, read on...

LRA awards the J. Michael Parker Award to new scholars—i.e., 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 work 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. If applicants have any questions about the award, they are encouraged to contact the award 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 and are recognized during a general session of the conference.

The award is presented for both single author and to 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.

Criteria for Consideration for the Award

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 a proposal of their research to LRA and check the box for the J. Michael Parker Award on the proposal application. If the proposal is accepted, a full research paper (25 pages or less), based on the accepted proposal, must be submitted electronically by **October 1, 2012**. Papers must be double-spaced and in 12-point font. The text limit does not include references or any appendices.

Submissions and questions should be sent to the committee chair, William Muth, at wrmuth@vcu.edu.

Review Process

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

OSCAR S. CAUSEY AWARD

William Teale, Chair

University of Illinois at Chicago

The Oscar S. Causey Award is given each year for outstanding contributions to reading research. Last year's recipient, Lesley Mandel Morrow, presented her 2011 Oscar S. Causey Address, "Theory, Research, Policy, Practice: IMPACT," at our recent Annual Meeting in Jacksonville. The 2012 recipient of the Oscar S. Causey Award, announced at that meeting, is Linda Gambrell from Clemson University. She will present her address at the 2012 LRA Annual Meeting.

Please consider nominating an LRA colleague for the Oscar S. Causey Award. Any LRA member may nominate an individual for this prestigious award. When assessing nominees, the Oscar S. Causey Award committee members address five criteria:

This individual:

- has published **substantial** research in literacy.
- has published **significant** research in literacy.
- has published **original** research in literacy.
- has generated **new knowledge** through literacy research.
- is a recognized **leader** in the conduct and promotion of literacy research.

If you wish to nominate a candidate for the 2012 award, please e-mail a letter of nomination and a current and complete/full version of the candidate's curriculum vitae. The letter of nomination should address in detail the candidate's qualifications using each of the criteria listed earlier. The curriculum vitae should not be an abbreviated version or a compilation of newer activities. A full version is necessary because the award is based on the nominee's scholarship—in its entirety—over the career span.

The deadline for nominations is **August 15, 2012**, but the committee urges you to prepare the materials before summer (because your nominee may not be on campus to secure the materials you need for the nomination after the spring semester ends!). Please e-mail all materials to: Bill Teale at wteale@uic.edu. Thank you.

STUDENT OUTSTANDING RESEARCH AWARD COMMITTEE

Marla Mallette, Chair

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

The LRA Student Outstanding Research Award is given annually for an outstanding student conference paper. All forms of research, including conceptual papers, are welcomed and the winning paper is published in the *LRA Yearbook*. In 2011, there were two award-winning papers: "Disciplinary Literacy in New Literacies Environments: Expanding the Intersections of Literate Practice for Adolescents," authored by Michael Manderino, and "Multimodality and Aurality: Sound Spaces in Student Digital Book Trailers," co-authored by Nathan Phillips and Blaine Smith. Congratulations to Michael, Nathan, and Blaine!

Please remind those who are eligible to apply for the LRA Student Outstanding Research Award to check the box on the electronic submission form when they are submitting their proposal online. To be eligible: "The paper must be based on the proposal submitted to the LRA Annual Conference program while the author held student status, and based on research conducted by the student. The paper must be written solely by the student or co-authored with students, and cannot be co-authored or co-presented with a faculty member," although it does not have to be dissertation research. If you are the organizer or convener of a session, please remember to check the box that someone in your session may wish to be considered for the award. Although this first step in the application process is not required, those who check the box will be contacted about the award. For complete guidelines on the application process, see the LRA website.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD COUNCIL

Jennifer Jones, Chair

Radford University

As members of the Literacy Research Association, many of us can fondly recall a specific mentor who shared info about LRA with enthusiasm, prepared and presented at LRA, and/or eventually invited and encouraged our own proposal submissions to the LRA conference. As we begin making preparations for an outstanding 2012 annual conference in San Diego, California, please take a moment to self-reflect and take action with your students.

- *Have you shared with your doctoral students about the Literacy Research Association?*
- *Have you invited a doctoral student to co-author a proposal with you?*
- *Have you invited a doctoral student to submit a proposal to LRA's 2012 conference?*

- *Does your institution receive LRA publications such as the Journal of Literacy Research?*
- *Have you introduced your mentees to the Innovative Community Group (ICG) specifically for Doctoral Students?*

LRA's Field Council promotes the dissemination of research and literacy practices through cooperative efforts with institutions and professional organizations. The Field Council also strives to build a strong network of LRA members within each state in order to increase the quality of communication and information dissemination between the Board of Directors and the LRA membership. We welcome new members and encourage active participation and engagement with the LRA Listserv, Innovative Community Groups, and LRA publications.

The Literacy Research Association is an excellent professional resource and network organization to support new and growing researchers. Take a moment to share info about LRA with your students today! Begin **now** to explore funding possibilities to support your students' participation at LRA in San Diego for the 2012 conference. The Field Council looks forward to hosting an engaging **Newcomers' Luncheon** at the event and the **Doctoral Student ICG** will provide excellent sessions for newcomers as well. Field Council Representatives are available from each region and state and are happy to provide more information and encouragement to prospective new members. Information on LRA's Innovative Community Groups, publications, and conference is available on the LRA website. Field Council Representatives' contact information will be available via the LRA website by February, as well. Invite someone to become a member today!

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Sam Miller, Chair

University of North Carolina, Greensboro

The Research Committee is a newly appointed standing committee whose overall charge is to monitor and increase awareness of relevant trends in literacy and related research and the overall status of research in the field and within LRA. As such, we are asked to monitor funding opportunities, serve as a resource to the LRA Board of Directors and to other LRA committees, and promote research in a variety of other ways. Our members include Caitlin McMunn Dooley (Georgia State University), Seth Parsons (George Mason University), Elizabeth Swaggerty (East Carolina University), Eithne Kennedy (St. Patrick's College), Gay Ivey (James Madison University), and Georgia "Joey" Garcia (University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign). Sam Miller (University of North Carolina at Greensboro) serves as chair. We are proposing a strand of sessions about research for next year's conference; however, all submissions will undergo the peer-review process so we will know more once that process is complete. We have recommended to the publications committee that *JLR* and the *Yearbook* become more accessible to ratings organizations as well as to readers, a recommendation with which they concurred. We also discussed issues related to "open access" and "impact" as they have to do with the research of LRA members and hope to provide educational materials and/or presentations about these topics for membership. If you have any suggestions for our committee, please contact us. If you are interested in our discussions, please attend our meetings at the next conference.

Outstanding Reviewers for the *Journal of Literacy Research* Awards



From left to right: Douglas K. Kaufman (co-lead editor), Elizabeth Dobler (reviewer award recipient), Mariam Dreher (reviewer award recipient), and Susan Florio-Ruane (co-lead editor). Not pictured are Douglas K. Hartman (co-lead editor) and Allan Luke (reviewer award recipient).

The inaugural Outstanding Reviewers for *Journal of Literacy Research* Awards were presented to Elizabeth Dobler, Mariam Dreher, and Allan Luke (not shown). *JLR* Co-Lead Editors, Douglas K. Hartman (not shown), Douglas K. Kaufman, and Susan Florio-Ruane, presented them on behalf of *JLR* at the annual breakfast for peer reviewers held on Friday, December 2, 2011.

DOCTORAL STUDENT INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY GROUP

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

Thanks to the support of LRA members, the Doctoral Student Innovative Community Group (DSICG) had another successful year and is looking forward to what is ahead in 2012. At our business meeting on Friday, December 2, 2011, we had a record turnout and were delighted to see many new faces interested in serving on the steering committee. The new and enlarged steering committee consists of: Lorien Chambers Schuldt and Gail E. Lovette, Co-Chairs; Jennifer Smith, Assistant Co-Chair; Jacquelynn Popp, Secretary; Leah Saal, Membership; Zoi Philippakos and Susanna Eng, Treasurers; Elizabeth M. Hughes, Alumni Liaison; Aly Waibel, Lindy Johnson, and Carol Hunt, Technology Committee; Marla Robertson, Melanie Reaves, and Sabrina Izbrand, Newsletter Editing Team; Elena Forzani, Nicole Nesheim, Rebecca Katz, Laura Tortorelli, Michelle Falter, Rebecca Binks, and Laurie Friedrich, Members at Large.

The DSICG launched a number of new initiatives to support the doctoral students of LRA, in addition to maintaining our established, successful initiatives. In 2011, we published three newsletters to assist our members in learning more about topics of interest to graduate students, including tips for the LRA conference. In addition, we maintain a listserv and Facebook page to promote networking among doctoral students, and are looking forward to building a space for the DSICG on the new LRA website. In addition, we held daily study groups at the 2011 LRA conference. Our groups provided doctoral students with a range of opportunities for development, including

research methodologies and publications. We were very grateful to have Drs. Reinking, McKenna, Conradi, Kaufman, Florio-Ruane, and Rowe share their expertise with doctoral students. We had our highest attendance ever at these sessions, with the attendees providing very positive feedback. In addition, we held our first panel discussion, *Academia 101*, focused on providing students with information about the transition from graduate school to academia and the professional world. A panel of newly graduated PhDs, representing in a range of positions, answered questions and shared their experiences with doctoral students.

Now in its second year, we are continuing to support students who are transitioning to presenting their own research through the LRA conference proposal mentoring process. We have had overwhelming support from the LRA community and are in the process of pairing established faculty with doctoral students to mentor them as they submit their proposals for the 2012 LRA conference. 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, as this experience provides doctoral students with valuable experience in reading and reviewing manuscripts, while also helping them to build their knowledge of scholarly writing in their fields.

The DSICG continues to grow with the strength and support of its members. In the coming year, we plan to maintain our mission to seek out ways to support the professional growth of doctoral students within LRA and are interested in information that will help us provide new opportunities for students. We are also always open to new members. If you are interested in joining the DSICG, please contact Leah Saal (lisaal1@su.edu) to join the Doctoral student listserv.

MULTILINGUAL/TRANSCULTURAL LITERACIES INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY GROUP

Eurydice Bauer, University of Illinois Patrick H. Smith, University of Texas at El Paso Aria Razfar, University of Illinois at Chicago

2011 was a busy inaugural year for the Multilingual/Transcultural Literacies ICG. In Jacksonville, ICG members had an opportunity to meet with 2011 plenary speakers Eve Gregory, Juan Guerra, and Donaldo Macedo at a special breakfast co-sponsored with the Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism Committee. Our post-conference survey of participants indicated that members enjoyed the opportunity to dialog in a more informal setting with these outstanding scholars, and we hope to make the ICG breakfast a regular feature of the annual conference.

Our first annual meeting as an independent ICG was well attended, with 30 participants. LRA President-Elect Robert Jiménez outlined key differences between Committees (permanent features of LRA and part of its governing body) and Innovative Community Groups aimed at addressing new areas of literacy research. We identified elements of our ICG's vision, specifically, literacy research that includes dialects and goes beyond L1/L2 binaries; support for critical literacy scholarship in addition to cognitive-

and sociocultural-based research; and a goal of helping LRA membership become familiar with scholarship supporting the development of literacy in home languages and dialects—for their own sake, as well as important resources in developing literacy in majority languages.

We identified short-term and longer-term activities for making multilingual and transcultural literacies research more visible at the annual conference, in LRA publications, and via the revamped LRA website. Members elected Eurydice Bauer (Chair) and Patrick Smith (Co-chair) to serve a second year in the interests of continuity. We voted to change our ICG's election rules. Chairs/co-chairs will now serve a single two-year term, which will be staggered. We also voted to add a third co-chair, Aria Razfar. We encourage LRA members to submit conference proposals for papers and presentations addressing issues of multilingual and transcultural literacies. If you have questions about the ICG or ideas for speakers or activities you would like to see in San Diego, please contact one of the co-chairs at the following addresses:

Eurydice Bauer, eurybauer@gmail.com

Patrick H. Smith, pshsmith@utep.edu

Aria Razfar, arazfar@uic.edu

CANDIDATES' POSITION STATEMENTS

Janice F. Almasi **University of Kentucky** **Position Desired: Vice President**

I am truly honored to be nominated for the position of Vice President of the organization I view as my professional and intellectual "home," and welcome every opportunity to give back to the organization that has given me so much. I have been fortunate to work with gifted mentors, colleagues, and students throughout my career. Those relationships have helped me understand the importance of membership in a research community and the importance of service to the profession as a means of "giving back" to the professional communities that provide intellectual and academic stimulation.

I am currently the Carol Lee Robertson Endowed Professor of Literacy Education at the University of Kentucky, where I teach graduate courses in literacy research and theory. Previously I was on faculty at the State University of New York at Buffalo and was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh. My research has focused on understanding how classroom environments, and the instruction that occurs within them, influence children as they make sense of text.

I was the recipient of LRA's Student Outstanding Research Award and International Reading Association's (IRA's) Outstanding Dissertation Award, and my research has appeared in journals such as *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Educational Psychologist*, *Elementary School Journal*, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, the *LRA Yearbook*, and *Reading Research Quarterly*. I have co-authored or co-edited four books and numerous handbook and book chapters. I have also served on numerous editorial review boards including *JLR* and the *LRA Yearbook*.

Through my service I have come to understand the intricacies of how our organization operates, which has helped me appreciate the hard work that

ensures its smooth operation and creates the research community we value so dearly. I have served on the Student Outstanding Research Award (1994) and Oscar Causey Award Committees (1998-2001), which helped me understand how committees are structured and how they operate. I was then appointed as a Program Area Chair for three years (1998-2000) and oversaw a blind review of proposals submitted to the area, ensured the review process was fair, adjudicated proposals, and made recommendations to the program chair. I was then appointed Secretary for six years (2000-06) and was responsible for maintaining the minutes at meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors. I also maintained the *Policy and Procedures Handbook* and was responsible for all elections. Through this role, and my affinity for detail, I learned (and nearly memorized) the policies and procedures of the organization and made sure they were current and linked to Board actions in the minutes. For the past three years, I served as an elected member of the Board of Directors, where I was a member of the Financial Advisory Committee, and liaison to the Distinguished Scholar Lifetime Achievement Award and Fry Book Award Committees.

Positions

LRA has shaped literacy research, policy, and practice by conducting and disseminating rigorous research and providing leadership related to literacy issues for over 60 years. Three areas are important in sustaining our mission and challenging ourselves: (a) sustaining the intellectual climate of LRA year-round, (b) continuing to increase diversity, and (c) mentoring emerging scholars.

The annual conference continues to be a valued space for scholarly dialogue, debate, and critique. However, we have struggled to maintain that same space beyond the boundaries of the conference. Though we have made great strides in terms of year round electronic communication, the spirit of the conference and the renewal it brings often eludes us throughout the year. Collaboration on pressing literacy issues that evoke passion at the conference often fades quickly. The lack of sustainability makes it difficult to make progress on solutions to long-standing literacy problems, and to respond quickly to new ones. It is important that LRA continue seeking innovative ways to sustain progress on initiatives year round. Technology provides one way to facilitate such progress.

LRA's reflectivity as an organization has led to many changes over the years. The conference, and our membership, is increasingly more diverse. However, these changes did not occur by chance. Many of our past presidents challenged us to reflect, to listen, and to take action. Through their leadership, we are becoming a more diverse organization. This diversity exists in terms of racial, ethnic, gender, cultural, and linguistic diversity, and paradigmatic and intellectual diversity. With greater, and increasingly diverse, membership comes the potential for new ideas; new approaches; and increased visibility, status, and influence nationally and internationally. Through the efforts of many talented people, LRA has increased awareness and knowledge about issues of diversity and equity in literacy research; supported such research; and increased participation of scholars of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. I have assisted in making this goal a reality by inviting, sponsoring, and mentoring diverse doctoral students working on my research projects. However, we must expand our efforts not just by seeking new participants and members, but also by providing a welcoming environment, maintaining and sustaining the connections we make, and seeking ways to increase participation and provide pathways to leadership for diverse members. In 2009 the Ethnicity, Race, and

Multilingualism committee brought a proposal to the Board to develop the STAR mentoring program to provide assistance to scholars of color and/or scholars whose first language is not English, who are in the beginning of their career. The program matches STAR scholars with a mentor for three years and provides a one-day retreat each year prior to the start of the conference. Successful programs such as this are vital in helping to further diversify our organization, and I will continue to advocate for such programs. I will also advocate that LRA expand its efforts to provide mentorship regarding grant writing, writing/reviewing for publication, advanced research methods, and leadership.

I would be honored to have the opportunity to continue serving the organization as your Vice President, where I will work tirelessly to make sure there is a space for everyone and all voices are valued.

Georgia Earnest García (“Joey”)
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Position Desired: Vice President-Elect

It is an honor to be nominated for the position of Vice-President Elect of the Literacy Research Association (LRA), formerly the National Reading Conference (NRC). I first attended NRC in 1988 when I was a Research Associate at the Center for the Study of Reading at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). Since 1988, I have consistently participated in LRA/NRC because it has stimulated my thinking and research, provided an outlet for sharing my work, resulted in thoughtful and caring colleagues, and promoted collaborative efforts. LRA is my primary professional affiliation and my professional “home.”

I obtained my Ph.D. from the Department of Educational Policy Studies at UIUC, with specializations in bilingual/ESL education, second-language reading, and sociolinguistics. Between 1989-present, I have been a professor in the Language and Literacy Division, Department of Curriculum and Instruction at UIUC. I currently hold the rank of professor, and previously served as the Interim Department Head. Earlier in my career, I held appointments at the Center for the Study of Reading.

My research has focused on the literacy development, instruction, and assessment of students from diverse cultural, linguistic, and economic backgrounds, with a special emphasis on English learners/bilingual students. Specific topics include reading assessment biases; cross-linguistic transfer and strategy use in bilingual students’ reading; and qualitative studies of reading and writing instruction, development, and engagement of bilingual students. Recently, I have investigated in-service and pre-service teacher education issues related to the improved instruction of students from diverse backgrounds. One such effort was a quasi-experiment (with B. Taylor, P.D. Pearson, E. Bauer, K. Stahl, and S. Stahl) that investigated teachers’ implementation of cognitive strategy or responsive engagement instruction in low-income schools and compared the improvement in students’ reading comprehension performance. Grants from the U.S. Department of Education (OERI, IES, OELA) and Mellon Foundation have funded my research. I was co-editor of *Multicultural Issues in Literacy Research and Practice* (with A. Willis, V. Harris, & R. Barrera) and contributed a chapter on bilingual reading to the *Handbook of Reading Research (3rd ed.)* and a chapter on assessment (with E. Bauer) to the *Handbook of Research on Literacy and Diversity*. My work has been published in the *Journal of Reading Behavior*/*Journal of Literacy Research*, the *National Reading Conference Yearbook*, *Reading Research Quarterly (RRQ)*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, *Written Communication*, *American Educational Research Journal*

(*AERJ*), *Review of Research in Education*, and *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*.

I have been fortunate to hold appointments within LRA/NRC that have provided me with insights on the work and organization of LRA. I previously was elected to the Board of Directors and was board liaison for the student awards committee and multicultural education committee. I have served on the editorial advisory boards of *JRB/JLR* and the *NRC Yearbook*, on the Publications Committee, and was co-editor (with A. Willis and V. Harris) for the *JLR* guest issue on multicultural literacy research and practice. I have been a member of the Ad Hoc Multicultural Committee, the Committee for Expanding the Influence of Research on Reading Education in the U.S., a program area chair (Literacy and Linguistic Diversity), and a frequent member of the Annual Program Committee. Currently, I am a member of the Multilingualism and Transcultural Literacies ICG and the Research Committee.

I currently serve on the editorial advisory board for *RRQ*, am an Associate Editor for the Teaching, Learning, and Human Development section of *AERJ*, and was previously on the editorial advisory board for *The Reading Teacher*. I have served on the RAND Reading Study Group on Skillful Reading, the National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth, and several IES Reading/Writing Grant Review Panels. I am a member of the Steven Stahl IRA Grants Award Committee, and previously was a member of the IRA Outstanding Dissertation Award Committee.

I view the change in the association’s name to LRA and the revised mission statement as very promising. As Vice-President Elect, my major goal would be to work with the LRA membership and leadership to ensure that the various tenets of the mission statement—the focus on “lifelong literacies in a multicultural and multilingual world;” the use of ethical, rigorous, diverse and socially responsible methods; the dissemination of research to promote “theories, informed practices, and sound policies;” and the support of future literacy researchers—are realized. Some progress in these areas already has been made. When I first attended NRC, the multicultural education sessions were invited and preceded the annual conference. Now, there is a standing committee on Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism, with funding to mentor and support promising doctoral students and assistant professors from underrepresented groups, and an ICG on Multilingualism and Transcultural Literacies. Keynote speakers addressed diversity issues, and a focus on diversity permeated many of the annual presentations. These are laudable efforts that merit continued support. We need to evaluate them as we continue to work on diversifying our membership, our research, and our ability to make a difference in terms of informing practice and policy.

It is in the latter area—the use of our research and expertise to inform educational policies—that we have not made much progress. In the past, not everyone thought this was an appropriate role for the association. It now appears that more members are ready to tackle this issue. With your support, we can address this issue by creating an organizational structure for discussing (even debating) policy issues and disseminating policy briefs. We can make better use of technology to disseminate our research findings, practice implications, and policy recommendations.

Our lack of visibility beyond the confines of the U.S. reading research field is one reason why we have had problems impacting national policies, and leads me to my last initiative. We need to have more presence in the international scene and be part of the global conversations related

to literacy and education. To do this, I encourage us to actively recruit international members, support the publication and presentation of their work, and initiate collaborative research endeavors.

It is with the LRA mission in mind that I have agreed to be nominated for Vice-President Elect. With your support, we should be able to make considerable progress in realizing the LRA mission.

Cynthia Lewis
University of Minnesota
Position Desired: Board of Directors

I am Professor of Literacy Education, Coordinator of English Education, and Director of Graduate Studies for the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Minnesota. I teach seminars on sociocultural theory and critical discourse analysis as well as courses for preservice and practicing teachers of English. I was honored to receive our College's Robert H. Beck Teaching Award in 2009.

My recent research draws on critical sociocultural theory to study the intersection of literacy practices, social identities, classroom discourse, and learning in urban schools. I have conducted studies based on partnerships with schools and teachers in both urban and rural settings. I have published two books, *Literary Practices as Social Acts: Power, Status, and Cultural Norms in the Classroom* (Routledge, 2001) and *Reframing Sociocultural Research on Literacy: Identity, Agency, and Power* (with Patricia Enciso and Elizabeth Moje; Routledge, 2007), both of which have been awarded the Edward B. Fry Book Award. I have published more than 40 articles and chapters, including those in leading literacy journals including *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, and *the Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. I have served leadership roles in National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), including serving as a member of the Standing Committee on Research and Co-Chair of the Assembly for Research, and Chair of the Promising Researcher Award (1997). I have served on the executive board of the National Conference on Research in Language and Literacy and on the editorial advisory boards of eight journals in the areas of literacy, critical discourse studies, and education.

In the last decade I have extended my interest in literacy as social and critical practice to the study of youth engagement in digital media composition. In 2008, I co-founded a program in a high-poverty urban high school—the Digital Media Studies Program (DigMe), which was featured on National Public Radio's *Future Tense*. Currently, colleague Cassie Scharber and I are exploring the role of digital media content creation in learning across school, library, and community settings that support youth voices.

I have been an active member of NRC since my first conference as a graduate student in 1994. At that time, I knew I had found a professional home and have since served various roles in the organization. I have been member and chair of the Fry Book Award committee for three years and Area 1 Co-Chair for two years. I have served on the editorial advisory boards for the *Yearbook* and for *JLR*.

As someone who is active in both LRA and NCTE, I have learned from the strengths of each organization. If elected to the board, I would want to continue to foster our current strengths and work with others to develop strengths that have eluded us but are, without a doubt, within our reach. LRA offers a strong and dynamic focus on research. We are an organization with an unwavering commitment to scholarship and its potential to deepen

our understanding about the most important questions in our field. At a time when there is much pressure to oversimplify research findings, we continue to conduct ethical and socially responsible research that considers contexts in all of their dynamism and complexity. However, whereas NCTE has succeeded in attracting a racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse membership, we have not moved quickly enough in this direction. New initiatives and mentorship programs have been excellent steps in the right direction. However, I believe that we will attract a broader and more diverse membership, and thus enrich our scholarship, if we turn our attention to disseminating our findings as widely as possible in language that is accessible to the public and of service to communities that have been systemically ill-served by education policy and practice. We can do so, in part, by developing position statements, enhancing our online research and policy resources, and never losing sight of the critical and democratic functions of "literacy as a civil right" (Greene, 2008) and as an engine for social justice.

I am interested in expanding our existing research focus on the intergenerational, linguistically diverse practices of varied communities. These communities include large groups of refugee and immigrant families, many with children and adult members who have experienced little formal schooling. Our research in literacy should address the needs of these students and families and explore the transnational literacies they bring and the potential opportunities they offer for what Glynda Hull has called "cosmopolitan understandings" (2010, p. 351) that foster critical global citizenship.

Along with new topics of focus, LRA members have turned their attention to new structures for conference conversations. With the proliferation of study groups in recent years, it has become clear that such groups are a popular format for fostering dialogue. The fact that members have been proposing and attending these sessions in record numbers, despite the early pre-conference schedule, suggests that the format could be integrated into the conference schedule throughout the day. I would welcome the chance to consider ways that the conference can provide more opportunities for exploration and dialogue through study groups and other similar formats.

I deeply appreciate being nominated for the board and would be honored to serve the organization that has provided me with professional sustenance and intellectual growth for the last 19 years.

D. Ray Reutzell
Utah State University – Logan, UT
Position Desired: Board of Directors

I was very pleased to learn of my nomination as a candidate for the LRA Board of Directors. LRA has served an important role in my professional career, and I would welcome the chance to serve as a Director. I am currently the *Emma Eccles Jones Endowed Chair Professor of Early Literacy* at Utah State University. Although the research topics I have pursued during my career have varied, the focus of my work has been on literacy pedagogy, assessment, and literacy teacher education at the Pre-K-6 levels. I have reported research on reading comprehension, reading fluency, oral and round-robin reading, classroom literacy environments, and silent reading. I have co-authored or co-edited 21 professional books and textbooks; 32 chapters in edited books and handbooks, and 105 peer-reviewed articles in *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *The Elementary School Journal*, *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *Journal of Educational Research*, *Reading Psychology*, *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, *Language Arts*, *The Reading Teacher*, and *The Journal of*

Reading and chapters in the *Handbook of Classroom Management: Research, Practice, & Contemporary Issues*; *Handbook of Research, Policy and Practice on Teaching Literacy to Diverse Learners*; and *Handbook of Reading Research, Vol. IV*. I am currently editing the *Handbook of Research-Based Practices in Early Childhood Education*. The Institute of Education Sciences, the U.S. Department of Education, and several private foundations have funded my research.

My teaching career began years ago as a fourth-grade child growing up in California. My mother set up a schoolroom in our garage complete with desks, blackboard, and bookcases. My friends and siblings, who wanted me to show them how to catch and mount the many butterfly varieties available in the apricot and cherry orchards in the California Bay Area, had to endure an hour in my school classroom each day before heading out. As a high school student in Wyoming, I joined the *Future Teachers of America* (FTA) working in summer migrant schools. Later on, living in the shadow of the Berlin Wall, I experienced first-hand the challenges of learning a second language. After returning to the U.S., I completed a B.A. degree in elementary and early childhood education in fall 1976 at the University of Wyoming, Laramie. Following completion of my undergraduate preparation, I interned teaching kindergarten children in a Title I elementary school. After this experience, I taught in the transient trona mine schools of southwestern Wyoming. These experiences taught me that I really didn't know how to teach literacy. As a result, I pursued an MA degree with Dr. Bernard L. Hayes at Utah State University. Soon after, I entered the PhD program in Curriculum and Instruction at UW-Laramie studying with Drs. Edward E. Paradis and Arnie Willems. My 1982 dissertation examined the development and effects of semantic and story mapping on students' reading comprehension. After completing my PhD, I worked for two years as an assistant professor of education at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, TX.

In 1987, I took a leave of absence from my role as Professor of Elementary Education at Brigham Young University to return to full-time teaching in a first-grade classroom. Later, I served as Department Chair of Elementary Education and Associate Dean for Teacher Education in the College of Education at BYU. Over the 30 plus years of my higher education career, I have maintained an active professional teaching license and work at least once a week in the public schools—receiving the *John C. Manning Public School Service Award* from IRA in 2007 in recognition of this commitment. From 1998-2001, I served as Provost and Academic Vice President of Southern Utah University in Cedar City, UT. In 2001, I was appointed to the *Emma Eccles Jones Endowed Chair* in early childhood literacy at Utah State University in Logan, UT.

In December 1983, I attended my first NRC meeting, held in Austin, TX, and presented my dissertation in a session that included other new young scholars—Lea McGee and Don Richgels. Since then I have attended and participated in NRC/LRA annual meetings spanning a period of nearly 30 years, authoring or co-authoring many papers and serving as a chair or discussant on others. In addition to my conference participation, I have served on three NRC/LRA committees and have been a member of the *JRB/JLR* and *Yearbook* editorial advisory boards for more than 15 years. I have served as past co-editor of *The Reading Teacher* and editor of *Literacy Research and Instruction*. I have been fortunate to serve a term on the IRA Board of Directors, as Past President of the *Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers* (ALER), and am a member of the IRA *Reading Hall of Fame*.

I have always viewed NRC/LRA conferences and publications as one of the most desirable outlets for my work, having published 4 articles in *JLR* and presented at many NRC/LRA meetings over the years. LRA is a collegial organization that is supportive of a broad array of research methods and foci. As a result of my lifetime goal to do work that enhances teachers' abilities to teach well and to improve the chances that young children will succeed in learning to read and write, if elected to the LRA Board of Directors, I would be a strong voice supporting a research-into-practice strategic focus while also supporting traditional and emerging theoretical and empirical methods used by literacy researchers. Given my clearly pragmatic and classroom-based research positionality, I would support increased efforts by LRA to extend the visibility and impact of LRA research into the daily practices of teacher educators and classroom teachers using emerging technological, social, and traditional print media to enhance the effectiveness of literacy instruction at all levels of the educational enterprise. I also believe that my past experiences in public education, in academic administration, and in leadership with other professional organizations may offer the LRA Board a broad array of beneficial skills and experiences to expand the impact and reach of LRA.

Misty Sailors, PhD
The University of Texas, San Antonio
Position Desired: Board of Directors

The Literacy Research Association is my scholarly community. During my twelve-year membership, I have seen LRA reach out to scholars of color, women scholars and emergent scholars. I have benefitted personally from these efforts and feel prepared to step into the leadership position that this nomination represents.

I am an associate professor of literacy studies at The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). My position has provided opportunities for the kinds of rich and varied experiences with students, families, teachers, communities, and local and international colleagues that position me to serve on the LRA board. At UTSA, I teach graduate and undergraduate literacy and research courses. I serve as the literacy area facilitator. I also facilitate the work of our department with Haven for Hope, a campus for people who are homeless in San Antonio. I serve on numerous department, college, and university committees. I am the primary investigator for a large-scale, international literacy program that is seeking to improve the literacy achievement of young and beginning readers in Malawi. I conduct research in Tanzania and South Africa and I work closely with classroom teachers in central and south Texas.

I began my teaching career in a rural and diverse school district. As I became involved in my graduate studies, I was captivated by research. I made the difficult decision to leave my classroom and study full time. My decision was affirmed during my doctoral program at The University of Texas at Austin. My faculty introduced me to the community of LRA, which became my centering point for intellectual inspiration. I was honored with the Literacy Research Association's Early Career Achievement Award in 2009, the same year I celebrated my 10th year as a member of the LRA.

My research centers on literacy teaching and teacher education. As a doctoral student, I served as a member of IRA's National Commission on Excellence in Elementary Teacher Preparation for Reading Instruction. I investigate the features of quality teacher preparation programs, the role of early field experiences, and the effects of high-quality professional development of teachers on classroom instruction. I now serve as a

reviewer for IRA's Certificate of Distinction for the Reading Preparation of Elementary and Secondary Teachers. One of the lenses I use in my examination of teaching is the nature and use of texts in classrooms from both theoretical and pragmatic perspectives. For example, I am currently investigating, with a group of doctoral students, the way in which our state assessment has been elevated to the status of "tool of teaching and learning." Additionally, I take a globalized stance to literacy program development. With my colleagues, I have explored the role of mother tongue instruction on literacy development, the role of local language policies in literacy education, and the role of school leaders and communities in supporting literacy innovations in schools in Africa. We have worked to "flood" schools in South Africa and Malawi with over 7.5 million locally authored and illustrated complementary reading books. Our work has demonstrated the value of teachers in the creation of literacy materials, both in breaking gender barriers and in demonstrating that teachers can (and do) act as political change agents in the material development process.

I have published my work in the *Yearbook of the Literacy Research Association*; *Journal of Literacy Research*; *Reading Research Quarterly*; *Bilingual Research Journal*; *Elementary School Journal*; *Qualitative Studies in Education*; and chapters in the *Handbook of Reading Research*; *Handbook of English, Language and Literacy Teaching*; *Handbook of Reading Disability Research*; and the *Handbook of Research on Reading Comprehension*. I have reviewed proposals for the annual meeting of LRA for the past ten years, reviewed papers for the *Yearbook*, and served on the Student Outstanding Research Award and Ethics committees. I am also on the editorial review board of the *Reading Research Quarterly* and the *Reading Teacher*. My work has been recognized locally (UTSA's 2007 President's Distinguished Teaching Award and 2011 Presidential Distinguished Globalization Award) as well as nationally (2007 American Association of University Women Emerging Scholar Award).

Statement of Position. This is an exciting time for LRA as there are many changes that are taking place inside the organization. For example, our recent name change (from "reading" to "literacy" and away from "national") is indicative of a larger movement that must be nurtured. In the spirit of the theme of last year's conference, "Widening the Circle for Literacy Research and Practice" (as set by Robert T. Jimenez) and Patty Anders' Presidential Address, we were encouraged to widen our circles of participation and to be more political in our actions. Part of that widening includes inclusiveness about what "counts" as research—recent politics have marginalized some types of research—many are working to remedy this and expand the notion of what "counts". Research conducted by classroom teachers, for example, can offer insight into effective literacy practices for marginalized communities. Research framed from a critical perspective can also offer insights into the inequities that exist in our educational system. LRA must play a role in the widening of these political lenses.

The expansion of LRA to an international organization is also part of that widening. Currently, international colleagues are underrepresented and international presentations remain sparsely attended at our annual meetings. In light of the many neo-colonial educational activities taking place in our globalized society (many of them emanating from the USA), it becomes imperative that LRA not only actively expand its membership to include scholars from outside the North American context but also attend to issues of globalization and new ways of examining literacy. I have benefitted greatly through my international research efforts and have watched my institution benefit as well. I believe some of these "lessons learned" can be transferred

and contextualized to LRA as a way of realizing the LRA mission. I will work closely with the membership of the LRA, the International ICG and other board members to make this happen.

Loukia K. Sarroub
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Position Desired: Board of Directors

I am a faculty member in the area of literacy, language, and culture in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Teacher Education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The Literacy Research Association—previously known as the National Reading Conference—has been one of my two intellectual homes since my graduate school years in the mid-to-late 1990s. I have served on award committees; I have reviewed proposals and manuscripts for its *Journal* and *Yearbook*; I have mentored new graduate students who attend with me; I was a recipient of the Edward Fry Book Award for distinguished contributions to literacy; and I have continued to learn from and enjoy the varied perspectives of its members. As a thoughtful colleague pointed out to me during the early years of my attendance, LRA is the place that fosters and welcomes a range of intellectual and practice dispositions and areas of expertise devoted to the improvement of reading instruction and our understanding of literac(ies). Hence, the range of methodological perspectives has been an important contribution to what we know about how people engage with print and non-print texts. This is one of the more salient strengths of LRA, which continuously utilizes reflexive spaces during its annual meetings to examine its role, not only within the complex web of the institutional affiliations its members occupy, but also in connection to the latest educational policies in the United States and elsewhere.

As the daughter of immigrants and an immigrant myself, and as the child of one parent who did not learn English until his early 40s, I have always been aware of the inherent underpinnings of language acquisition, the descriptive versus prescriptive notions underlying linguistic and literacy instruction, and the social justice issues pervading these processes and practices. My own research focuses on populations of youth and their families from low socioeconomic backgrounds and highlights the perceived estrangement of school-like language in connection to subject matter and the language-in-use of everyday life. It seems to me that LRA must revisit its intellectual foundations by foregrounding its unique set of expert fields that inform schools and government. At the linguistic core of what we discuss and write about—morphology, phonology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics—these are also coupled with semiotic, psychological, cultural, historical, and social notions of what reading and literacy(ies) mean to those who teach and learn them. Fundamentally, the organization serves three purposes: 1) to contribute to an exciting body of knowledge devoted to the study of reading and literacy more broadly; 2) to improve the teaching and learning of literacy conditions in multiple contexts; and 3) to have a sound and thoughtful impact on U.S. educational policy. As such, it is imperative that we lead with more visibility and more widely readable research in the aftermath of No Child Left Behind. How do we coherently synthesize the amazingly informative research we have conducted to improve conditions in schools and other institutions? How does the research we have already conducted pave the way for more focused and relevant research? How do we involve more literacy researchers and scholars who represent the demographic changes taking place in the United States and other countries? These are three questions LRA might examine during the next 3-5 years, and this is especially important in light of the fact that nearly a third of the conference attendees are graduate students.

My work has centered on the study of literacy from sociolinguistic and sociocultural perspectives. Within these areas, my research focuses more specifically on the following: the literacy practices of youth and their families in and out of school; youth cultures and identities in the U.S. and Europe; education and immigration; gender and education; language and culture; and ethnographic research methods and discourse analysis. A key set of questions that I ask include the following: How do key agents such as youth, their families, and their teachers make sense of institutional expectations in relation to becoming literate and American (or another nationality)? How do they negotiate these expectations and how, in turn, do schools, districts, and governments accommodate youth and their families? I view literacy learning and instruction as a set of practices across the lifespan and have worked with children, young people, and older adults who find meaningful ways to be literate, and in some cases to be non-literate, within their societies. I have published my work in journals such as the *Reading Research Quarterly*, the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, and LRA's *Yearbook*, amongst others. My book, *All American Yemeni Girls: Being Muslim in a Public School*, explores literacy practices within religious and cultural contexts in a high school and Arab community in the U.S. That work continues to inform what it means to teach young people to read in secondary schools as well as how transnationalism influences local practices (the emphasis of my current book manuscript in progress).

As a university instructor, I offer to soon-to-be teachers courses such as Literacy Practices and Processes, Literature for Adolescents, Linguistics for the Classroom Teacher, and School and Society. For graduate students, I have offered on a regular basis Language, Culture & Education, Ethnographic Research Methods, Language and Power, Language and Learning, and Discourse Analysis. Inevitably, given today's complicated geopolitical questions and linking those to students' experiences, I am drawn to sharing with students and colleagues and powerful others how education can serve as an intellectual and moral compass when we chart our way through puzzles such as school reform, U.S. education policy, district organization, reading strategies in the classroom, or the ways in which families negotiate learning at home. If elected to the Board of Directors, my aim would be to find ways to connect and promote tangibly LRA's multifaceted literacy research as the basis for policy change in order to improve learning and teaching conditions locally, nationally, and internationally.

Ileana Seda-Santana
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
Position Desired: Board of Directors

I am a faculty member in the graduate division of the School of Psychology of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) in Mexico City in the area of Psychology of Education. Born and raised in Puerto Rico from a family of educators, the Seda branch, I became a teacher educator serving in Puerto Rico and the United States. At the University of Puerto Rico (PSU) I majored in Psychology, while attaining elementary and special education teacher certificates, thus beginning my teaching career in Puerto Rico. Six years later I completed an M.A. in Education at the College of St. Rose in Albany, NY. Returning to Puerto Rico, I worked in public schools and began a life's journey in teacher education. Enticed by reading processes, I was back in school for a PhD, now at the University of Illinois, Center for the Study of Reading. Before writing my dissertation, I held an Instructor's position at the California State University, Fresno, teaching literacy courses, reading clinic, and supervising teacher practicums. Dissertation completed, I went to Pennsylvania State University's School of Education as an Assistant Professor teaching undergraduate and graduate courses for the next four

years. There, I was able to establish a fruitful working relationship with school districts, particularly the State College Area School District and the Clearfield Intermediate Unit. A fellowship from the Spencer Foundation and grants from the Pennsylvania Academy for the Profession of Teaching facilitated long-term in-service education and strengthened university and school districts relations.

As a Latin American, I felt compelled to serve Latin America as well. The opportunity, stemming from an international event at PSU, became possible through a leave of absence without pay to Mexico. What was intended to be a short-term move is now a 20-year experience of knowing a sister country in depth, where even being a native speaker of the Spanish language has different meanings and social practices vary. Literacy education and research have continued to be central to my work, widened in spectrum by the diverse Mexican population, local and national needs, and closer connections to Central and South America as well as Europe.

NRC/LRA became a mainstay since 1983 when I was as a doctoral student at the University of Illinois. Since then I have attended every year that was possible, given my other commitments. I have served on the Student Outstanding Research Award Committee, the Distinguished Scholar Lifetime Achievement Award, the International ICG, served as proposal reviewer, session chair, and currently Member-at-Large of the *Handbook of Reading Research III* Fund Committee.

The history and present maturity of LRA enables it to become a forum for literacy researchers worldwide. If I were to become a board member, I will stimulate and engage in conversations, hopefully resulting in actions, to foster LRA's global presence in consonance with its mission statement and the goals of **expanding access, knowledge, and participation**. Some issues will need to be considered such as size, languages, and views of research, but the overall gains in generating communities for learning are worthwhile. Global initiatives, which maintain manageable means of learning together and of addressing such issues while maintaining personal contact, are emerging successfully with electronic communication. One of those is *Una*, a global learning initiative on children and ethnic diversity based at Queens University in Belfast, involving researchers and practitioners from five continents. I co-coordinate the Learning Group on Program Development, managing to produce working papers on global perspectives (August 2010; October 2010) <http://www.jliced.org/en/page/reports>.

Memberships in IRA, AERA, The Mexican Council of Educational Research (COMIE), The Puebla Council of Literacy, and *Una*, have afforded me other experiences with program committees, as a subject area coordinator and on thematic state-of-the-art committees. Opportunities to collaborate at international institutions, such as the Center for Cooperation in Adult and Youth Education for Latin America and the Caribbean (CREFAL) in the state of Michoacán in México, allowed me to lead a conceptual study of adult literacy in Latin American countries which was funded and published (2010) by the Organization of Iberoamerican States (OIS) (http://issuu.com/oeibibliotecadigital/docs/estudio_conceptual_alfabetizacion_y_la_educacion).

A sabbatical leave at the Latin American Center at UCLA in 2004 and at the University of Puerto Rico in Cayey (UPR-C) at its Institute of Interdisciplinary Research in 2011 have broadened perspectives and boundaries in research, and in UPR-C, especially on the richness and potential of undergraduate students' research. At UNAM I have been

appointed and served on committees of public service and policy for the Secretariat of Public Education, such as the Advisory Council for the subject matter of Spanish, a consulting body addressing literacy curriculum and instruction for preschool, elementary, and middle schools (2006-2010). Since the year 2005 to the present, I have served on committees of literacy experts for Mexico's National Institute of Educational Evaluation, which is responsible for national assessment of educational achievement.

Publications include 'Literacy research in Latin America' in the *Handbook of Reading Research III, Comprender para Aprender* (Ed., Ediciones Castillo, 2007), 'La formación profesional en el nivel de maestría: contenidos, escenarios y actores' *Revista mexicana de psicología educativa* (2011), 'Entrenamiento en conciencia fonológica: Efectos en niños con retraso lector' *Infancia y Aprendizaje* (2010), 'Las prácticas letradas en comunidad' *Revista interamericana de educación de adultos* (2010), 'Prácticas Alfabetizadoras, ¿Desde la Escuela?' (2009) In: J. Kalman, Street, B. & Barton, D. (Eds.) *Lectura, escritura, matemáticas como prácticas sociales*.

I believe that our work in research and education should be useful to others and that learnings from research should lead our practice. Over the years since my first NRC/LRA, this has been and continues to be the conference I want to attend, I want my students to attend, and an organization I'd like to serve. Literacy education and research is a priority in basic, adult, non-formal, and informal education worldwide. LRA members' significant contributions, past and present, afford moving forward with a more global presence. Shall I have the privilege to serve on LRA's board, I will be keen to participate in fostering these goals.

Bogum Yoon
State University of New York, Binghamton
Position Desired: Board of Directors

It is an honor to be nominated as a candidate for the LRA Board of Directors. I currently work as an associate professor in Literacy Education at the State University of New York at Binghamton (SUNY Binghamton). The courses that I teach are related to critical literacy, literacy theory, and English language learners (ELLs). Before working at SUNY Binghamton, I worked as an assistant professor in the Department of Reading at Texas Woman's University. Since my doctoral study at SUNY Buffalo, LRA became a major intellectual source for literacy research. My first experience at the annual meeting of LRA in San Diego was very positive. This annual event confirmed why the professors at SUNY Buffalo enthusiastically recommended LRA for an academic venue. I was excited to find this professional place that I could connect to and have been actively involved with LRA. As an LRA member, I currently serve on the standing committee of Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism. I also serve as a co-chair of Area 2 In-service Teacher Education/Professional Development in Literacy.

My academic journey from South Korea to the U.S. with my children as immigrant ELLs has profoundly influenced my research agenda. I believe that my contributions to LRA and the literacy field are well shown through my active work as a researcher and teacher educator by providing different perspectives on culturally and linguistically diverse students. Classroom dynamics between teachers and students are my keen interest, and I have conducted numerous studies in the classroom settings as a researcher. The gap between existing literature and the reality in the classroom about ELLs and immigrant students have prompted me to continue to "go to the field." The important findings from these studies are disseminated at various conferences including LRA, NCTE, and AERA. They are also shared through

numerous book chapters and refereed articles in education and literacy journals such as *American Educational Research Journal* (AERJ), *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* (JAAL), and the *Reading Teacher* (RT), among others.

As a teacher educator of literacy education, I am particularly interested in teacher education for the identities of ELLs and immigrants. Critical examination of broader cultural and social issues frames my research on teacher education for underrepresented students in the U.S. context. My dissertation, published in *AERJ*, examined this issue and earned an outstanding dissertation award from AERA SIG Research in Middle Level Education. My research also centers on literacy teacher's cultural inclusivity for ELLs' literacy development and identity. Under the assumption that ELLs mainly need English language instruction, many studies about the students focus on teachers' roles from linguistic perspectives. Based on the findings of the studies that I have conducted in the classroom, I view that this approach disregards that ELLs are *learners* who need access to various literacy opportunities. Rather than linguistic perspectives, I examine the issues from a broader perspective of literacy focusing on how regular classroom teachers' roles and practices influence the students' identity and positioning. The findings of this work have been published in the *Reading Teacher*.

Another one of my research interests is to explore the issue of literacy teachers' use of multicultural literature to help students be engaged in critical discourses of ideology and social action. Cultural authenticity and accuracy have been used as major criteria for selecting multicultural literature over the decades. My study intends to help teachers move beyond these criteria to examine its underlying messages. By using a new lens of ideology, my study examines the issues of assimilation and cultural pluralism. It provides specific application guidelines for selecting multicultural texts and implementing them in the class. This work has been published in the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* (with A. Simpson and C. Haag).

My contribution to LRA and the literacy field is also shown through the links I make between theory and practice. Due to the complex process of acquiring a second language, many researchers have examined the diverse aspects that influence students' language learning. However, there is a paucity of research that explores how the teachers' roles can affect students' second language learning in the classroom context. For this endeavor, I co-edited a book, *Teachers' Roles in Second Language Learning: Classroom Applications of Sociocultural Theory* (with H. K. Kim). By providing specific examples of teachers' roles in the classroom, the book aims to help literacy researchers, teacher educators, and classroom teachers make clear connections between practice and theory in second language and literacy learning.

As shown in the examples of research described earlier, most of my works that contribute to LRA and the literacy field are closely related to teaching and teacher education with the lens of critical literacy and multicultural education. Although I focus on my research in this statement, my service to professional communities has been an integral part and is coherent with my research. My overarching professional goal is to inform practice for teacher education on the underrepresented minority groups in the mainstream culture. As a member of the Board of Directors, I would continue to reframe the existing dialogue to advance the literacy field with new and different perspectives on these students and on the issues of multicultural education. LRA has recently paid more attention to ELLs and multicultural issues, which are clear in the LRA mission statement and the activities

initiated by the Ethnicity, Race, and Multilingualism committee. However, it is also a disappointing reality that sessions that present these diversity topics are full of empty seats. I will continue to work for authentic dialogue on the underserved minority groups of students in the U.S. context and seek a practical way to promote an active engagement with diversity. With LRA's supportive and collegial environment, I look forward to accomplishing these goals with LRA colleagues.