



# NEWSLETTER

Jacqueline Lynch, Editor  
Spring 2007

## President's Report

**Patricia A. Edwards**  
**Michigan State University**

It was a pleasure to see so many of you in sunny California at the 2006 conference, which yielded a terrific \$150,000 plus profit for our organization. We had the opportunity to greet old friends, meet new ones, share and critique research, suggest new ideas and directions for the profession, argue over theory and philosophies, and just 'catch up' with the ongoing pulse of literacy research, policy, and issues. The 2006 conference was also filled with song and laughter with NRC's version of *American Idol*. Some of our esteemed colleagues agreed to participate by playing the part of Simon (Colin Harrison, *University of Nottingham*), Paula (Diane Lapp, *San Diego State University*), Randy (Jennifer D. Turner, *University of Maryland—College Park*), and Ryan (Doug Hartman, *University of Connecticut*). Patricia Edwards and a group of graduate students from Michigan State University also organized a *Karaoke Night*. A huge "thank you" to Jaime Myers (*Pennsylvania State University*) and Mark Condon (*University of Louisville*) for encouraging members to participate in *American Idol* and *Karaoke Night*. Festivities continued late into the evening with NRC's rendition of *Literacy Jeopardy*, organized by Jane Hansen (*University of Virginia*). We also had the opportunity to dance the night away, and boogie down with sounds from the band "Out of the Blues." Members included: Frank Serafini, *Professor, UNLV* (lead guitar and lead singer), Tom Bean, *Professor, UNLV* (rhythm guitar and vocals), Tommy Girard, *Elementary Teacher/Tennis Instructor* (drums), and Jose Sandoval, *District Art Teacher* (bass).

The 1120 attendees at the 2006 conference experienced outstanding plenary speakers (P. David Pearson, Annemarie S. Palincsar, Pedro Noguera, Barbara Rogoff). There were intellectually stimulating invited sessions by senior scholars on where we have been, what challenges we are confronting, and how we are moving to action in the areas of *Adolescent Literacy* (Mark Conley, Kathleen Hinchman, Alfred Tatum, Elizabeth Moje, Cathy Roller, Tim Rasinski), *Early Literacy* (Lesley Morrow, Lea McGee, Tim Shanahan, Patricia Edwards, Jennifer Turner), *Adult Literacy* (Larry Mikulecky, David Rosen, Steve Reder), *Literacy Instruction* (Barbara Taylor, Georgia Garcia, Taffy Raphael), *Teacher Education* (Jim Hoffman, Richard Allington, Sheila Valencia, Gerald Duffy, P. David Pearson), *Literacy Assessment* (Peter Afflerbach, Peter Johnston), *Digital Literacy* (Mary Lundeberg, Rand Spiro, Yong Zhao) and *Struggling Readers* (Patricia Cunningham, Richard Allington). We benefited from greater participation and involvement of graduate students. Colleagues presented rigorous research papers, and we gained new insights on key topics such as

race, teacher education, social class, instructional interventions, out-of-school literacies, and technologies from the popular methodology series organized by Nell K. Duke (*Michigan State University*) and Marla Mallette (*University of Nevada—Las Vegas*). Everyone was willing to help out, assisting one another in various venues—from the Newcomer's and Graduate Student Pizza luncheon, hosted by Field Council Chair Rachel Karchmer-Klein (*University of Delaware*), and the Student Research Award Committee, chaired by Rebecca Rogers (*Washington University—St. Louis*). The Annual Town Meeting was graciously facilitated by Lee Gunderson (*University of British Columbia*) and Taffy Raphael (*University of Illinois—Chicago*).

As the 2006 Program Chair, I want to personally thank the many people who worked behind scenes to make the annual meeting an overwhelming and unqualified success, including the wonderful team of Area Chairs: Elizabeth Duto, *University of Colorado-Boulder*, Althier Lazar, *Saint Joseph's University*, Jamie Myers, *Pennsylvania State University*, and Julie Pennington, *University of Nevada—Reno* (Area 1); Theresa A. Deeney, *University of Rhode Island*, Douglas Fisher, *San Diego State University*, Dolores Gaunty-Porter, *Vanguard University* (Area 2); Elizabeth Baker, *University of Missouri—Columbia*, Beth Maloch, *University of Texas—Austin*, Rebecca Rogers, *Washington State University, St. Louis* (Area 3); Dana Grisham, *San Diego State University*, Sharon Walpole, *University of Delaware*, Diane Tracey, *Kean University* (Area 4); Andrea DeBruin-Parecki, *High Scope Early Childhood Reading Institute*, Denise Johnson, *The College of William & Mary*, Elizabeth Noll, *University of New Mexico*, Jeanne Swafford, *Mississippi State University* (Area 5); Leigh Hall, *University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill*, Amy Johnson, *University of Georgia*, Theresa Rogers, *University of British Columbia*, Alfred Tatum, *University of Northern Illinois* (Area 6); Maria Luiza Dantas, *University of San Diego*, Cynthia Greenleaf, *WestEd*, Lori Helman, *University of Minnesota*, Loukia K. Sarroub, *University of Nebraska* (Area 7); Millie Gort, *University of Miami*, Guofang Li, *Michigan State University*, Mary McVee *SUNY—Buffalo*, Jennifer Dandridge Turner, *University of Maryland—College Park* (Area 8); Sarah Beck, *New York University*, Wanda Brooks, *Temple University*, Susan Browne, *Rowan University* (Area 9); KaiLonnice Dunsmore-Englesman, *Calvin College*, Rick Ferdig, *University of Florida*, Barbara Guzzetti, *Arizona State University*, Linda Labbo, *University of Georgia* (Area 10); Susan Cantrell, *University of Kentucky*, Julie Coiro, *University of Connecticut*, Margaret Hagood, *College of Charleston*, Catherine Kurkjian, *Central Connecticut State University* (Area 11); and Dana Cammack, *Monclair State University*, Nancy Knapp, *University of Georgia*, Rachael G. Salas, *University of North Carolina—Greensboro* (Area 12). These colleagues worked tirelessly to process submissions and organize the reviews. I want to thank Roy

Smith of TEI who worked closely with me and a group of doctoral students at Michigan State University (*Alison Billman, Katie Hilden, Annah Molosiwa, Annie Moses, Kathi Moxley, Kristen Perry, Rebecca Shankland, Angela Tanis, Mary Tomczyk, Kimberly Wolbers, Shenglan Zhang, Han Park*) to improve the online submission process. I also express my thanks to Nancy Short, our Association Manager at TEI, for her professional and competent handling of the conference details in Los Angeles. Lastly, to all of you who brought your enthusiasm and your energy to Los Angeles, thank you for helping us create yet another incredible experience.

Once the conference ends, the Executive Board members find themselves faced with ongoing business of NRC, and we have been tackling several issues for the membership in the last few months. First, we conducted an online conversation calling for a decision as to whether or not to change the name of our organization. Some of our members believe that our name is beginning to seem somewhat distant from the true nature of our research community today. They noted that we are international in our membership, not national; we report research on a range of literacy issues, not simply reading issues; and we are much more of a permanent organization, not simply a one-week conference. I agree with one of our past presidents—Don Leu—who shared that “Names, though, carry so many important meanings and such important history with them. To consider a name change is not an easy matter” (NRC Newsletter, Spring 2005). Many thanks to those of you who pressed for this change and who provided excellent arguments for it. This matter will be further considered by the Board of Directors. At the Annual Business Meeting a request was made by a member that a task force be created to be more pro-active on issues relative to NCLB. The Executive Board followed up with a request for a written proposal which would outline the need and the specific work of such a task force. We will soon be voting for new NRC officers and Board of Directors members online, and I urge each of you to lend your voice and support by logging on, reading the statements of the candidates, and casting your ballot.

The Executive Board met in late February to continue its work. On the agenda were ongoing discussions around the need for sponsorship and ways to do this. Stay tuned. Norm Stahl, 2007 Program Chair and NRC President-Elect, shared with us the unfolding plans for the 2007 Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas.

I would like to invite all NRC members to send concerns or ideas on ways to improve our policies and procedures to me or to any member of the Board of Directors. You will find our names and email addresses posted on the NRC website. My primary goal as your President this year is to continue to open up the operations of the organization in ways that reflect the diversity and range of our entire membership and to make transparent the decisions and actions of the Board of Directors.

As always I welcome your sage advice. NRC is a very special home. We need to carefully nurture this special community where so many give so much to our organization, helping us to learn new lessons about NRC, about life, and about research. I wish you a productive and peaceful 2007.

## President-Elect's Report

**Norman A. Stahl**  
Northern Illinois University

Hey there scouts—It's one of those delightful below zero evenings here in the upper, lower Midwest. Hence, I might as well crank out the President-Elect's Report for the spring newsletter. I know that this is the one column you have been waiting to read for the past six months. Yes indeed, the columns in *Reading Today* pale in comparison to the President-Elect's columns that have appeared in the *NRC Newsletter* across the past half-dozen years.

I know that this is true as I sat down and read them all. Did I mention that it is below zero outside? In undertaking this task I learned something very important. There is a macrostructure to be followed. Hence, I have one or two options available to me at this time. I can go back four newsletters and simply treat it as a cloze exercise of sorts where I change a few names, substitute a few dates, invent a few activities, and ship this puppy off to the newsletter editor (all the while realizing that nobody will remember a newsletter column from four years ago). On the other hand, I can crank new verbiage (yes, it is the correct term) and shamelessly call the column an invited publication. Hey, I'm an administrator! I need all the help I can get in that respect.

So let's start. The historical macrostructure says that first and foremost, I should thank Pat Edwards for putting on a bang-up conference in Los Angeles. That's easy to do. Didn't she do a great job? We are accustomed to having wonderful NRC annual meetings, and the Los Angeles conference ranks right up there. There were great keynoters, wonderful sessions, extra curricular activities galore, and even the Tom Bean heavy-metal band singing their one hit wonder “I Want to Get My Picture on the Cover of the JLR.” Pat, you did a great job!!!!!!!

Now the macrostructure leads me to talk about the upcoming annual meeting of the National Reading Conference. That's also easy. Take out your Palm-Pilots or an acceptable clone machine and lock in the following dates: **November 28th—December 1, 2007**. (For those of you who are technology threatened—take out your date book, and for those of you who are organizationally challenged—write this information on the back of your hand.) Next go out to your car and program **Austin, Texas** into your 12 parallel-channel GPS unit. If you cannot do so, it's time to trade-in that 1966 Buick Skylark (it's not a classic and eight-track stereo systems will never come back).

We will be meeting at the **Hyatt Regency Austin on Town Lake**. It's not really a lake, but in Texas they tell tall tales (you know like the Texas miracle in education). Still it's a great venue. For those of you who have been at past NRC meetings at the Hyatt Regency Austin, you'll remember a fine hotel with great meeting rooms. You'll remember a great lobby bar (actually a few of you will only remember the lobby bar) with a water feature running through it. It's a great place to talk about the sessions you attend over a cold glass of Lone Star. Should the hotel sell out, we already have a block of rooms on reserve at the Embassy Suites Hotel on the other side of the parking lot.

Austin is also known as one of the great venues for music, rockin' clubs, and wild times. Within walking distance of the hotel there are three distinct areas where the partying never stops: the trendy West 4th Street area, the established East 6th Street area, and the newer, slightly seedy, South Congress Avenue area. I'm told that if NRC members go into any club in town you simply need to tell the bouncer that you are up close and personal friends with members of the UT literacy faculty, and you'll then get VIP seating along with a pitcher of your favorite poison. As for getting back to the hotel, it's a cheap cab ride from all three areas. We realize the old NRC tradition will hold true—walk out with the sunset, crawl back with the sunrise (in time for your 8:00 am presentation). I plan to finish my sampling of the rums of the world at the Cuba Libre.

The theme for the conference is **“Reclaiming Our Legacies, Conceiving Our Futures: The Spirit of Sankofa for Literacy Research and Pedagogy.”** The spirit of Sankofa is very powerful, and it says ever so much to the literacy profession in our interesting times. Plug the term into your browser to get an idea of where the theme will be taking us.

Our keynoters are top of the line—I swear it's true. You are all familiar with the high impact text *The Manufactured Crisis*. Now you'll get to hear its author. Our first keynoter is **David Berliner**, Regent's Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Arizona State University. Dr. Berliner is known for holding politicians, policy police, and assorted opportunists accountable for their actions as they put our children at-risk. Any day now his new text, *Collateral Damage: How High-Stakes Testing Corrupts America's Schools* (co-authored with Sharon Nichols) will be available for purchase. David's other well known texts include *Educational Psychology*, *Putting Research to Work in Your School*, and *The Handbook of Educational Psychology*. I really look forward to this presentation, and so should you.

Then it only gets better—I swear it's true. You've read *School's Out! Bridging Out-of-School Literacies with Classroom Practice* or the text *Changing Work, Changing Workers: Critical Perspectives on Language, Literacy, and Skills* by **Glynda Hull**, Professor of Language and Literacy, Society and Culture from the University of California. Now you'll get the opportunity to hear Professor Hull address our membership on her scholarly work which crosses boundaries of writing in and out-of schools, multi-media technology and new literacies, adult learning and work, and community, school, and university collaborations. Do plan to attend this session on Friday.

With our research presentation, **we bring back the dead**—I swear it's true. Have I ever lied to you? All I can say at this point is don't schedule an early flight home. We are going places never before attempted by NRC. Other groups, IRA, CRA, CRLA, ARF, NCTE, and even SSSR, will never top this one. While it is true that bringing the dead back to life is a difficult task—but nothing is impossible for literacy researchers. Be there for this session.

It is also true that we have our traditions. Our esteemed President of the National Reading Conference, **Pat Edwards**, will keep our long tradition of presidential addresses alive. Dr. Edwards has a history of “telling it like it is,” and this address will be no less. Of course,

following the address there is the other long-held tradition of the President's reception.

Finally, it is a highpoint of the annual meeting when the winner of the Oscar Causey Award from the previous year addresses the membership. **Michael Kamil** was rightly honored in 2006, and he will be center stage in Austin. I do not know the exact topic as I write, but it is Michael, and he always makes you think. I know for sure his presentation will be a barnburner, and he will look forward to chatting with all NRCers during the nightly Vital Issues session about his research or the best restaurants in Austin.

Next the macrostructure from past columns suggests that I provide you with a set of **important dates**. Pay attention now—these dates are important.

March 1, 2007—Proposals for the 2007 conference program must be submitted electronically at <http://www.nrconline.org> by midnight EST.

July 1, 2007—Notification of all proposal review decisions will be sent out via email, but only to the person who submitted the proposal electronically. This person must notify all other individuals.

September 23, 2007—Applications for the Student Research Award and the J. Michael Parker Award must be received by the Chairs of these committees.

Let me point out that each year our proposal submission and evaluation process becomes more sophisticated. Each year we learn things from the previous year's endeavors. The folks at NRC HQ are on top of things. The Area Chairs are there to make sure the whole process runs smoothly.

Finally, the historical macrostructure now tells me that I should point out to you that you'll find within this edition of the *NRC Newsletter* a list of those individuals who won the various **NRC awards** given to both storied professionals and up-and-coming scholars alike in 2006. These folks are the best our field has to offer, and we should be proud of them. Secondly, you'll find a list of those individuals who have stepped forth to stand for **election for NRC offices**. Our NRC feels great gratitude to those willing to take on the roles of leadership. There is no more important role that one can play in the promotion and preservation of a great profession than to serve.

I close this column by stating that we will do everything in our power to bring you a quality conference with the best of research and the best of camaraderie. Additional information will be sent out via the listserv and the NRC membership blasts in the months ahead.

## Vice President's Report

**Kathleen A. Hinchman**  
Syracuse University

One of my first tasks as a newly elected Board member is to work with our management firm's Nancy Short to visit hotels for our 2009 conference. At both Board and Business Meetings last year, we discussed

going to the central U.S. every other year, where our attendance has been the highest. This would leave us with a rotation that would move from west to central to east to central to west, etc.

Interestingly, despite these extensive discussions, we discovered that we never asked our Board to ratify the appropriate changes in our Policies and Procedures Handbook. These currently say we should go west. As a result, we are checking sites in Scottsdale/Phoenix, Albuquerque, and San Diego for a decision to be made at our May Board meeting. And we are checking our most recent conference attendance to see whether such changes in our location rotation remain justified.

As most of you know, one of my other assigned tasks involves planning our 2008 meeting in Orlando. Like all the program coordinators with whom I've worked over the years, I am committed to getting as many members with high quality proposals onto the program as possible. I am also looking for keynoter suggestions. Email your ideas to me at kahinchm@syr.edu.

## Early Career Achievement Award Committee

**Mark Dressman, Chair**  
University of Illinois—Urbana-Champaign

### *NRC Early Career Achievement Award Call For Nominations*

Nominations are now being requested for the NRC Early Career Achievement Award for 2007. The Early Career Achievement Award is designed to recognize the new members of the NRC community who have been actively involved in research, teaching, and service for approximately three to seven years and who have demonstrated outstanding commitment and accomplishment.

Nominees for the NRC Early Career Achievement Award can be of any rank. However, nominees must: (1) be members of NRC (for at least three years, but not necessarily consecutively); (2) possess a terminal doctoral degree; and (3) have worked in the field for seven years or less from the conferral date of their degree to the posted deadline for this competition—that is, to have received their degree no earlier than mid-April of 2000.

Application for the Award is through nomination. NRC members may nominate candidates by sending a recommendation letter outlining the candidate's contributions to the field of literacy research and the nominee's participation to NRC. The preferred format for this letter is electronic. Please send your nominating letter by e-mail to the chair, Mark Dressman, at mdressma@uiuc.edu, or, if this is not possible, by regular mail at the address below. The deadline for nomination for this year's competition is **Monday, April 16, 2007**.

Nominees for the Award will be contacted by the chair and asked to submit: (1) a current curriculum vita, including affiliations, degrees, research honors and awards, publications, and service on editorial boards of research journals; (2) a statement delineating professional growth and research agenda; and (3) a letter of support from the candidate's current institution (e.g., teaching/research colleague, department chair). Members of the Committee will review all nominee materials and rank each candidate.

For further details regarding the selection process and regulations for the Award, please consult the NRC Policies and Procedures Handbook at <https://www.nrconline.org/information/2006PolicyandProcedures.pdf> or e-mail Mark Dressman directly at mdressma@uiuc.edu.

Mark Dressman  
311 Education Building, MC 708  
University of Illinois  
1310 S. Sixth St.  
Champaign, IL 61821

## Ethics Innovative Community Group (ICG)

**Cynthia B. Leung, Co-chair**  
University of South Florida St. Petersburg

**Karen Feathers, Co-chair**  
Wayne State University

Janet Richards and Alan Berger have completed their terms as co-chairs of the Ethics ICG. The new co-chairs are Cynthia Leung and Karen Feathers. The Ethics ICG met on November 30, 2006 at NRC. Discussion centered on the role of the Ethics ICG. The group concluded that its role is twofold: 1) to provide information on ethical issues to NRC members and 2) to provide a forum for NRC members to discuss ethical issues. NRC members are reminded of the link on the NRC website to the mission statement of the Ethics ICG.

Janet Richards and Virginia Shipman are presenting on ethical dimensions of working with young children at an invited session for the Eastern Educational Research Association. Karen Feathers will submit a paper proposal to NRC 2007 for the Ethics ICG. In the future, other members of the Ethics ICG would like to present at NRC, IRA, and AERA on ethical issues related to conducting literacy research.

The Ethics ICG will soon be setting up a ListServ for members. If you would like to join the ListServ, please contact Cynthia Leung at leung@stpt.usf.edu.

## Ethnicity, Race and Multilingualism Committee

**Jennifer Danridge Turner, Co-chair**  
University of Maryland at College Park

**Karla Möller, Co-chair**  
University of Illinois—Urbana-Champaign

We are pleased to announce there has been a change in the designation of our group. We are now a Standing Committee rather than an Innovative Community Group. We wish to thank the NRC Board for their support and look forward to our continued work together.

At our 2006 conference meeting we announced the Ethnicity, Racism, and Multilingualism Committee Travel Awards for Emerging Minority Scholars competition for the 2006 National Reading Conference. In alphabetical order, the winners were as follows:

- 📖 Wanda Brooks, Assistant Professor of Elementary Education and Reading at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- 📖 Rochelle Dail, Assistant Professor of Literacy Education at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, AL
- 📖 Rebecca Hunt, Assistant Professor of Education at Mary Grove College in Detroit, Michigan
- 📖 Jonda McNair, Assistant Professor of Reading Education at Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina

Our announcement with information about applying for this award for the upcoming 2007 conference will be sent over the NRC listserv later this summer.

The main work of the meeting centered on developing an agenda for future conferences that speaks to our mission to increase participation of scholars of color at NRC, to provide a safe space to discuss issues related to diversity, and to create a network for students and faculty. We established three key foci for the future. The first is to continue conversations around critical race theory at NRC and within our committee. Also, we are committed to issues related to second language learners, and we plan to develop proposals highlighting language issues for upcoming conferences. Finally, we see as part of our mission is to support colleagues in the early stages of their careers. Along that line we wish to continue our work holding regular symposia on various aspects of the tenure process.

We invite any interested members of and visitors to the NRC 2007 conference to join our committee! Contact Jen Turner (jturner17@aol.com) or Karla Möller (kjmoller@uiuc.edu).

## International Innovative Community Group (ICG)

**Sam Miller, Co-chair**  
University of North Carolina, Greensboro

**Jiening Ruan, Co-chair**  
University of Oklahoma

The number of people attending the International Committee's presentations, meetings, and breakfast continues to increase. We welcome anyone who is interested in cross-cultural or international research to attend our functions and to get placed on our mailing lists. Members from all countries, including the U.S., are encouraged to participate. Additionally, funds are available to international presenters who need financial assistance to attend the yearly meeting. If you are interested in participating, please contact either co-chair, Sam Miller (sdmille2@gmail.com) or Jiening Ruan (jruan@ou.edu).

## J. Michael Parker Award Committee

**Erik Jacobson, Chair**  
Montclair State University

The National Reading Conference awards the J. Michael Parker Award to encourage research in adult literacy. The award is given to graduate students and untenured professors who present research on adult learning or education at the annual conference. Recipients of the award will receive \$300 towards their conference expenses and will be recognized during a general session of the conference. The award was established in 2001 in honor of J. Michael Parker, winner of the National Reading Conference's Student Research Award.

Applicants are required to submit their full paper (25 pages or less) electronically by September 23rd, 2007 to erikjacobson@comcast.net. Committee members will rate the submissions on the following criteria:

1. The research is capable of making a significant contribution to the theory and/or practice of adult learning 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.

## Oscar Causey Award Committee

**David Moore, Chair**  
Arizona State University

Oscar S. Causey helped create the National Reading Conference and served for many years as Chair of the Executive Committee. The Oscar S. Causey Award is conferred each year for outstanding contributions to reading research. Michael Kamil received this prestigious award in 2006.

Any NRC member may nominate recipients for the Oscar S. Causey Award. If you wish to nominate a candidate for the 2007 award, please email a letter of nomination and the candidate's current vita by August 15, 2007 to David Moore <David.Moore@ASU.Edu>, the chair of the selection committee. Candidates are assessed according to the following five criteria:

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

## Publications Committee

**Shelley Hong Xu, Chair**  
**California State University, Long Beach**

The new Vanderbilt-based editorial team for the NRC Yearbook is now in the process of reviewing manuscripts for publication of the 56th Yearbook representing the 2006 NRC Conference. As of the deadline for submission, which fell on Saturday February 10th, we counted 85 manuscripts. Deborah Wells Rowe and Robert T. Jiménez are serving as lead editors for this Yearbook, with the help and collaboration of an editorial team composed of Donald Compton, David Dickinson, Youb Kim, Kevin Leander, and Victoria Risko. Each member of the editorial team is working in conjunction with a doctoral student in Peabody College to expedite review of the manuscripts. We are working to continue the tradition of providing a unique forum for the exchange of ideas related to literacy practice, learning, and instruction. We believe the Yearbook should include papers that reflect the diverse theoretical frames, research interests, and research methodologies that are the hallmark of our annual conference. Around 105 of you agreed to be reviewers for this year's NRC Yearbook. We are now in the process of matching reviewers with the manuscripts and we will send each of those who did agree to participate between 1 and 3 manuscripts. We expect to publish between 20 to 25 of these manuscripts based on the reviewers' feedback and the input from our editorial team. We would like to thank the membership both for your hard work in writing up your presentations for possible publication and for your assistance with the review process.

## Student Outstanding Research Award Committee

**Bridget Dalton, Chair**  
**CAST Resources, Inc**

*2007 National Reading Conference Student Outstanding Research Award*

### History of the Award

The Annual NRC Student Outstanding Research Award was initiated in 1985 to encourage greater participation of students in NRC meetings and to honor excellent scholarship efforts. The award is given for an outstanding student conference paper, which may or may not be based on a dissertation. All forms of research, including conceptual papers, are welcomed. Please see the NRC website for more information.

### Criteria for Consideration for the Award

1. The paper must be solely student-authored. It may be co-authored with other students, but *cannot be co-authored with a faculty member, either as presented or in its published form.*
2. The research must have been conducted, at least in part, **after August 1, 2005.**
3. The proposal must have been accepted for presentation at the conference.
4. The application for the award (obtain this from the committee chair or the website) must be accompanied by a sponsorship

form (included with Award application materials) in which a faculty member at the home institution affirms that the applicant conducted the research.

5. Application materials, including the application form signed by sponsoring faculty person, a cover sheet, **one hard copy** of the paper, and **one electronic** version of the paper must be received **by September 23, 2007** by the Student Award Committee Chair:

Bridget Dalton, Ph.D.  
 CAST Resources, Inc.  
 40 Harvard Mills Square  
 Suite 3  
 Wakefield, MA 01880-3233  
 bdalton@cast.org

## 2007 NRC Election

The 2007 NRC election will occur online again this March. The candidates who have been nominated for Vice President and the Board of Directors are (in alphabetical order):

### Vice President:

Tim Rasinski  
 David Reinking

### Board of Directors:

Theresa Deeney  
 Dana Grisham  
 Kris Gutierrez  
 Josephine Marsh  
 Gwen McMillon  
 Rebecca Rogers

Each candidate's position statement appears below and will be available on the NRC website [<http://nrconline.org>].

## CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

### Vice President-Elect

#### Timothy Rasinski

My name is Timothy Rasinski and I am currently a professor in literacy education at Kent State University in Ohio. I have been a member of the National Reading Conference for over 25 years, attending for the first time as a doctoral student in the early 1980s. One of my earliest and fondest memories of NRC is the privilege of sitting in on sessions and listening to Drs. Richard Anderson, Jerry Harste, David Pearson, Jay Samuels, Keith Stanovich, and many other noted scholars present at memorable locations such as the Don Cesar in Saint Petersburg Beach, Florida. One of the great thrills for myself, and I think anyone involved in NRC, has been the opportunity to meet in person and interact with the scholars we have read about in our graduate studies.

I have been actively involved in NRC in a number of ways through my years of membership—through a variety of action committees, as a reviewer of conference proposals, as a presenter at the annual conference, as a contributor to the organization's publications, and as a member of the editorial review board for both the *NRC Yearbook* and the *Journal of Literacy Research*. Most recently, I have served as a co-editor of *JLR* for the past six years. Significantly, it was through the encouragement of one of my dearest friends, Dr. David Reinking, the past editor of the *JLR* and currently my fellow candidate for vice president, that my own colleagues and I submitted a proposal for the editorship of the *Journal of Literacy Research*. Our proposal was accepted and we embarked on a six year odyssey in *JLR*. Our editorial tenure ends with the final issue of the current volume year.

As with many of you, I consider the National Reading Conference a professional home, but more importantly the premiere professional organization in literacy for research, scholarship, and collegiality. I look to NRC for leadership in promoting the highest and broadest levels of scholarship in literacy and in expanding the vision of legitimate areas and methods for scholarship in literacy and literacy education. Moreover, I look to NRC as a source for professional and social relationships with other members of my profession. And, most recently, I have come to embrace and respect the role that NRC has taken on as an advocate for literacy scholars, teachers, and learners.

When I was approached about running for vice president of NRC, I was extremely flattered that my NRC colleagues would support me in this nomination. It is an honor and professional duty that I felt I could not refuse.

And thus, if elected to fill the post of vice president, I pledge to you to do my very best to continue the noble tradition of scholarship, collegiality, and advocacy that has characterized NRC throughout my membership.

Other presidents have worked to expand the vision and reach of NRC. I would like to use my presidency to work to expand the body of literacy scholars in our field. In particular, I would work to continue making bridges to the practitioner community and encourage greater participation of and partnerships with practitioners in scholarly endeavors and participation in our meetings and publications. I would especially work to encourage the collaborative efforts of those who see themselves as literacy researchers and scholars with those professionals who see themselves as literacy practitioners in developing deeper understandings of our field and optimal ways of sharing the gift of literacy with others.

I am humbled and honored to be nominated for the post of vice president of NRC. If elected, please know that I will do my best to serve you, my colleagues, with humility, a deep appreciation for the work that you do, and of course with the good sense not to take ourselves too seriously.

### David Reinking

Following seven years of teaching in the elementary and middle grades, I received my doctorate from the University of Minnesota

in 1983, which was also the first year I attended NRC and made it a touchstone for my professional activities. My first position was at Rutgers University, followed by 18 years at the University of Georgia, where I served for 10 years as Head of the Department of Reading Education. Currently I hold the Eugene T. Moore Professorship in Teacher Education at Clemson University.

During the previous 11 years, I have been privileged to serve as an editor of our field's two leading research journals. I served two terms as editor of NRC's *Journal of Literacy Research (JLR)*, and currently I am near the end of a five-year term as co-editor of *Reading Research Quarterly (RRQ)*.

My research revolves around the relation between digital technologies and literacy. I have published on that topic in the field's leading journals. For example, I am first author on three research studies published in *Reading Research Quarterly*. I have authored reviews of the literature on literacy and technology in several handbooks of research including the second volume of the *Handbook of Reading Research* (Longman). The first volume of the *Handbook of Literacy and Technology* (Erlbaum), for which I served as lead editor, was selected for NRC's Edward B. Fry book award in 1999, and it also received recognition from the American Library Association.

Some of my research has received funding from agencies of the U.S. Department of Education. For example, I was a principal investigator for five years at the National Reading Research Center. I am currently a co-principal investigator on a three-year project investigating reading comprehension on the Internet, funded through the Institute of Education Sciences.

For the previous 10 years, I have been keenly interested in research methodologies that bridge the often-lamented gap between research and practice. Specifically, my research has employed the methodology of formative and design experiments. I have several publications in that area, including two that appear in NRC Yearbooks.

My involvement in NRC activities and leadership has been ongoing and diverse, including the following: first-appointed Chair of the NRC Technology Committee (late 1980s); invited NRC plenary research address (1994); editor of *JLR* (1996-2001); moderator for the town meeting (1998); and member of the NRC Board of Directors (2003-2005), which included serving as the Board's liaison to the Policy and Legislative Committee (now an ICG), of which I am a current member. Currently, I chair the NRC Ad Hoc Committee on Accessing Literacy Scholarship Online.

### Position Statement

There are two reasons that I am motivated to be a candidate for Vice President-Elect and, if elected, to assume the responsibilities in succeeding years of Vice-President, President, and Past-President. First, it is an opportunity for service to an organization that has substantively nurtured and enriched my professional life for almost a quarter century. Although I am involved in other organizations such as IRA and AERA, I consider NRC to be my primary professional home. Serving as President would be an opportunity to repay a debt owed to

a long line of distinguished mentors and colleagues who have made a large space in their professional lives to serve NRC. A distinguishing characteristic of NRC is members' unselfish commitment to sustaining each other as they sustain the organization as a whole. I agreed to be a candidate in that vein.

Second, with the obligations and responsibilities of leadership, comes the privilege of putting one's own stamp on the larger goals and directions of the organization. As with other leadership roles I have assumed, it is appealing to consider advancing agendas and promoting initiatives that I believe are in the best interest of the organization. However, I approach that privilege with a deep awareness of and respect for the bedrock of NRC's commitment to high quality research; to democratic, inclusive dialogue that creates a special sense of community; to diversity and social justice; to nurturing the next generation of scholars; and to affordability and fiscal responsibility.

I believe that NRC is currently on firm footing in each of these areas. Yet, NRC faces several unresolved issues and some interesting but important opportunities and challenges that are on the horizon. For example, there has been a perennial concern during the past decade about how NRC can effectively address the frustrating, politicized distortions of research and practice in the policy arena. Based primarily on a series of invited policy pieces in *JLR* under my editorship, in the 2004 NRC Yearbook I published an analysis of why literacy researchers have little effect on policy makers, and I made specific proposals for how NRC could increase its effect. Those proposals would influence my leadership in that area. Likewise, NRC has struggled to expand its identity meaningfully to embrace the international community, which I believe is important and is informed by my efforts as co-editor of *RRQ* to promote a more international perspective.

Opportunities and challenges on the horizon include issues external and internal to NRC. External issues include capitalizing on digital media to broaden the dissemination and impact of our scholarship while resisting the forces of commercialization that undermine NRC's core values. I believe that NRC is well positioned to address these issues and, as in other areas, should play a leadership role among other professional organizations in literacy and in the field of education. Internal issues include enhancing and shifting our revenue stream through bequests and endowments; consolidating and expanding the gains we have made in services to members, particularly in web-based services; and maintaining and enhancing organizational continuity across leadership teams.

I believe my longstanding, active association with NRC and my experience as a researcher, as a department head, and as an editor qualify me for this position. I am willing and eager to serve. However, my colleague and close personal friend Tim Rasinski is also well prepared for this role. NRC cannot lose in this election.

## Board of Directors

### Theresa Deeney

I am an assistant professor in the School of Education at the University of Rhode Island, where I teach undergraduate and graduate

courses in literacy and coordinate the graduate program in reading education. My focus in literacy stems from my experiences in urban education as an elementary and special needs teacher, reading specialist, and principal. It was my inability to teach all of my students to read that prompted me to seek to learn about literacy, consider culture, and create salient learning opportunities for children and families who are marginalized or disenfranchised. Through my experiences I have become more cognizant of the role of culture in literacy learning, which has helped me re-view my own literacy teaching and learning and that of teachers and students in the classrooms and schools in which I work.

I received my doctorate in reading, language, and learning disabilities from Harvard Graduate School of Education. Since entering academe as a profession in 2001, I have worked to help teachers who are challenged by the many and diverse needs of their students. I believe it is easier to promote change from within systems, so am committed to collaborating with public schools toward the goal of improving literacy teaching and student learning. Since coming to URI, I have established partnerships with school districts to offer after-school literacy programs for struggling readers and professional development opportunities for teachers. My latest undertaking was to establish a partnership with Providence Public Schools to provide an embedded graduate reading program specifically designed to meet the unique needs of Providence teachers and coaches who work with a predominantly English language learning population. I also have developed relationships with state agencies and serve on numerous panels and committees so that the University has a voice in literacy reform that affects all teachers and students in the state.

I continue to be interested in the intersection of reading with the fields of special education and learning disabilities. I have presented numerous papers, symposia, and alternative sessions at conferences of the National Reading Conference, International Reading Association, International Dyslexia Association, Society for the Scientific Study of Reading, Biennial Memphis Research Symposium on African-American students, and the American Educational Research Association. I have published manuscripts in the *Journal of Special Education*, publications of the International Dyslexia Association, and *Intervention in School and Clinic*. I am a former member of the editorial board of Reading Online, am currently on the editorial board of the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, and am an ad hoc reviewer for *The Reading Teacher*.

I have been a member of NRC since the early 1990s. I presented my first paper in 1999 and have been involved in organizational activities since that time. I served for two years as field representative, for three years on the Ed Fry Book Award committee, and am in my third term as Co-Chair for Area 2 (In-service Teacher Education). For the past five years, I have also participated in the Reading Clinic study group, which has been a wonderful opportunity for me to collaborate with colleagues who share my interest.

### Position Statement

I have been involved in NRC a relatively short time compared to others. Within that time, I have found a place for myself. With each new



opportunity to be a part of the functioning of NRC, I have grown professionally and personally. I am truly honored to be nominated to the Board of Directors. As a Board member I would like to work toward continuing and expanding NRC's commitment to promoting literacy research and scholarship through three key areas: making NRC more accessible, increasing the number of NRC members who contribute to the functioning of NRC, and expanding NRC's voice in policy issues that affect literacy teaching and learning in schools across the country.

In recent years, NRC has made strides in becoming more accessible to others. The annual conference programs alone show the efforts that have been made to invite outside speakers to share their expertise. Additionally, the availability of conference plenary addresses online is an extraordinary resource. My students, who would not have the opportunity to attend the NRC conference, were thrilled to learn from Don Leu, Vicki Purcell-Gates, Brian Street, and Ernest Morell. NRC has also begun to work toward communicating and collaborating with other organizations to share and disseminate information. I would like to see these efforts continue and expand. I realize that NRC is first and foremost a research organization. However, its mission includes "advocat[ing] research-informed improvements in education." As a Board member, I would like to explore how NRC might take a more active role in making research more readable and accessible to practitioners.

There are many NRC members who would be willing to participate in organizational activities but don't seem to know how. As a board member, I would like to explore ways to involve a greater number of members in the functioning of NRC, outside of attending and presenting at the annual conference. NRC has already put into place wonderful opportunities for newcomers and emerging scholars. We now need to make opportunities for involvement more transparent, and harness the power of members who are willing to become more involved.

NRC has been at the forefront of research meant to impact literacy teaching and learning. However, political climates exert great influence over the kinds of research allowed to affect what does go on in the real world of public education. NRC has been moving toward making its voice heard in political decisions that affect literacy. As a Board member, I would like to explore how NRC can exert more influence on the broader issues of public policy. Together with other organizations, NRC can play a vital role in ensuring that decision makers understand the variety of research available to address issues of teaching and learning.

### **Dana L. Grisham**

Since attending my first NRC annual meeting in 1991, I am proud to say that I have had an unbroken record of attendance and participation. The annual meeting is an exhilarating experience—a place to meet new colleagues and to reconnect with people you come to treasure. It is a scholarly place, where new ideas and research can galvanize you and create new meaning for your own work. It is town meetings, business meetings, study groups, vital issues, comic relief, and fellowship. However, much goes on behind the scenes—the hard work that so many people undertake to keep the organization going, direct its

outreach to the public, protect its assets, make the conference program vital and timely, provide a process for the award of grants and honors to outstanding new scholars and meritorious established scholars, and review and edit the *Journal of Literacy Research* and the *Yearbook*. In short, NRC is an organization that flourishes because its members are dedicated to the tasks that maintain and extend its vision. A heavy responsibility rests with those who are elected to the governing board and even though it was an honor to be asked, it was with full knowledge of the extent of this commitment that I made the decision to run for the Board.

Over the years, I have served NRC in many capacities. My first commitment to NRC was on the student research award committee; for three years I was privileged to discover new scholars by reading and ranking dissertations on literacy topics—the committee was a model of the democratic decision process. I also served on the Field Council, first as one of two members from California, then as Chair. As Chair, I served in an "ex officio" role on the Board during Peter Mosenthal's presidency. For two years, I coordinated "Birds of a Feather," a feature of the conference that allowed further discussion over selected sessions. Most recently—for the past three years—I have served on the conference committee as area co-chair for Area 4, Public Policy and Evaluation.

NRC means a great deal to me. It is an organization that has always welcomed me and continues to nurture me intellectually. It was my association with NRC colleagues Don Leu and Bridget Dalton that led to my co-editorship of *Reading Online*. These relationships remain strong and the technological changes that have come to NRC are ones that I embrace and would continue and expand.

For the past decade, I have belonged to the Teacher Education Research Study Group (TERSG), which I have twice chaired. Several research projects resulted from association with like-minded colleagues at TERSG, resulting in presentations at NRC, published articles, and an edited book. My research has been published in the *Yearbook* and in *JLR* and I continue on the editorial review board of both.

Over the years it has been my pleasure to bring new colleagues to NRC, which I have always characterized as my intellectual home.

These are just a few of the reasons why I feel I'd like to make a fresh contribution to NRC. I am committed both to a continuation of the excellent leadership of past and present Boards and to working with the current Board members. In addition, I wish to be part of the new leadership team that strengthens and extends the organization in exciting and productive directions. If elected, I promise to serve to the best of my ability for the benefit of all our members.

### **Kris D. Gutiérrez**

I am Professor of Social Research Methodology in the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, and I am currently a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford. I also serve as the Director of the Center for the Study of Urban Literacies, as well as the Director of the Education Studies Minor. I take an interdisciplin-

ary approach to the study of literacy and, thus, participate actively as an affiliated faculty member in the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition at UC San Diego, as a founding faculty member in the Center for Language, Interaction and Culture at UCLA, and as CO-PI of the UCLA Sloan Center for the Study of the Everyday Lives of Middleclass Families in Anthropology. My graduate work at the University of Colorado, Boulder was in Rhetoric and Composition, Research Methodology, and in English and Reading Education. My earlier training was in secondary English/Reading. I teach a range of courses at UCLA at both the graduate and undergraduate level: the Reading Seminar, Sociocultural Theories of Literacy, Qualitative Research Methods, Cultural-historical Activity Theory, and an undergraduate course series on Literacy, Culture, and Human Development. This interest in the relationship between literacy, culture, and learning is evident across my work. My research is best described as problem-oriented research in that it seeks to improve the educational experiences of students, especially students from non-dominant groups. It is my practice to use my work to inform scholarship in my field and also to stimulate change in literacy policies and practices (K-12 and university levels). Based on my research, I also design robust learning environments for students from non-dominant communities. Examples include an after-school computer-mediated learning club in a port-of-entry elementary school and the UCLA Statewide Migrant Student Leadership Institute, an academic residential program for high school students from migrant farm-worker backgrounds.

My scholarly work has appeared in over 25 journals including *Educational Researcher*, *Human Development*, *Mind*, *Culture, and Activity*, *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Harvard Educational Review*, *Linguistics and Education*, *Language Arts*, *International Journal of Learning*, *Bilingual Review Journal*, and the NRC Yearbook. I have also written numerous book chapters. I currently serve on a number of editorial boards such as the *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Research in the Teaching of English*, *Mind*, *Culture, and Activity*, *Cultura y educacion* (Spain), the *New Educator*, and have served on the editorial boards for *American Educational Research Journal*, *Written Communication*, *Linguistics and Education*, *Language Arts* (field editor), *Teachers College Record*, the National Reading Conference Yearbook Editorial Advisory Board, the *Bilingual Research Journal*, *Review of Educational Research* (consulting editor), and *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. I have held various elected and appointed offices in a number of professional/scholarly organizations including AERA NRC, AAA, and NCTE, and have served as both a regular presenter and invited speaker to professional organizations, both nationally and internationally.

### Position Statement

I am honored to be nominated as a candidate for the NRC Board of Directors. NRC is uniquely positioned to assume a leading role in encouraging and disseminating rigorous and timely literacy research and influencing policy and practice. I am concerned that literacy researchers have been ineffective in using their work to influence current policy and practice.

We need empirical work that examines how current literacy and educational reforms influence the teaching and learning of literacy and, in

particular, how these policies influence access to rigorous and meaningful literacy practices for students. For example, the current federal literacy framework promotes a 'sameness as fairness' framework to implement normative views of language and literacy instruction. What are the material effects of the resulting policies and practices on poor children, especially English learners? I believe that NRC conferences and NRC publications must include work that addresses the literacy issues of non-dominant communities if our collective work is going to have any meaningful impact in the policy arena, as well as in the Learning Sciences.

We need to take what we've learned from quality research and make it more meaningful and accessible to policy-makers, practitioners, and parents. Several years ago I had the opportunity to write a regular column on Reading for the *LA Times*; this humbling activity forced me to make my work and my understanding of literacy more meaningful and accessible to the public. What role will NRC have in shaping the public discourse around literacy?

As many NRC leaders have argued, how literacy is defined has implications for research, practice, and opportunity to learn. The narrowing definitions of reading and rigorous research, as well as reductive notions of culture and cultural communities, make it increasingly difficult to study literacy learning and practice in all their complexity. I believe that NRC should support research that reflects multiple perspectives and methods to study literacy and I would argue against any kind of orthodoxy that constrains good research and practice. I am also deeply concerned with the current ways members of our profession study literacy in communities that are different from our own. We need to examine the methods and constructs we use to study literacy in non-dominant communities, including the way we represent these communities in our work. I have written extensively on this issue in recent publications.

NRC needs a diverse membership to address literacy issues influenced by globalization, immigration, technology, and educational policy. What can be done to attract newcomers, including graduate students and junior faculty? How do we sustain interest and participation from senior, influential scholars? Researchers who study the issues of students from non-dominant groups? Researchers who represent a wide range of theoretical perspectives and methodologies? NRC should be concerned with what kind of community it fosters and sustains. I am deeply committed to mentoring graduate students and junior faculty and would encourage more focused attention to mentorship opportunities.

I would push for a new vision for NRC that builds on the strengths of its historical practices, as well as addresses the pressing problems and issues of literacy research, policy, and practice today.

### Josephine Peyton Marsh (formerly Young)

I am an associate professor in the Division of Curriculum and Instruction at Arizona State University where I teach undergraduate and graduate courses related to adolescent literacy, content literacy, and literacy assessment and instruction. Before arriving at ASU in 1998, I taught reading and language arts in Virginia and Florida to elementary

and middle school students. I earned a Master's degree in Reading Education at the University of West Florida where I worked at the Wilson Reading Clinic. Armed with a new Master's degree, I taught reading at an alternative high school for 5 years. At the alternative high school, I learned much about the complexity of adolescent literacy and developed questions about the social, emotional, and economic issues that had an impact on adolescents' participation in school literacy practices. I attended my first NRC in 1992 as an alternative education literacy teacher full of questions; I hoped to gain new knowledge about adolescent literacy and find a doctoral program that would help me gain the tools I needed to answer my questions. I found both and more. I found conversations about adolescent literacy that were thought-provoking and exciting. I found a doctoral program at the University of Georgia. And I found my professional home. I was greeted warmly by NRC members, some whose work I had read and some whose work I had not. The first session I attended was an alternative session on adolescent literacy. I left that session very much aware that I was in the right place. Participants at the session and throughout the week engaged me in conversations about adolescent literacy and many offered advice about doctoral programs. I left my first NRC impressed by the people, the research presented, and the community of scholars. I was motivated, excited, challenged, and exhausted. The next fall, I enrolled at the University of Georgia as a Reading Education doctoral student and graduate research assistant for the National Reading Research Center and have attended NRC ever since.

My research has focused on issues related to adolescent literacy, especially those that deal with how literacy informs and is informed by adolescents' identities. I have authored and co-authored chapters in books, such as the *NRC Yearbook*, *Reconceptualizing the Literacies in Adolescents' Lives*, and *An Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis in Education*. I have also authored and co-authored articles in journals, including the *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, and *American Educational Research Journal*. More recently, I have begun to explore ways to engage teachers and adolescents in literacy practices that facilitate and extend content knowledge and literacy learning.

As an active member of NRC, I have made over 20 presentations at our annual meetings and was honored by receiving the NRC Student Outstanding Research Award in 1998. I advocated for the right of graduate students to vote in NRC elections and have worked to find ways to promote the participation of graduate students at NRC. To that end, I was chair of the Student Research Award Committee for 4 years. As chair, I increased the number of graduate student paper submissions for the award and initiated a luncheon for graduate students. I also served as an area co-chair for the 2004 NRC program.

### Position Statement

I am honored to be nominated to stand for election to the National Reading Conference Board of Directors. I have been part of NRC for 14 years. During each phase of my professional development, NRC members were there to support, encourage, and expand my thinking. The kind of support and motivation that I received and still get from NRC is central to the mission of NRC. As the organization grows, it is especially important to continue NRC's formal

and informal traditions to nurture and mentor graduate students and early career faculty. In addition to the existing support structures, such as the research and publication workshops, I would like to see NRC develop a more formal mentoring program for new assistant professors. Mentors could be paired with new assistant professors based upon common research interests and institutional responsibilities. A program such as this could serve to enhance both the mentor's and the mentee's research productivity and scholarship. It could also increase the retention of individuals as they move from being graduate students to being professors.

Even during my relatively short time as a member of NRC, I have witnessed the organization grow and change. I applaud the efforts of NRC to seek out diverse scholars to attend and present at NRC and hope that NRC continues these efforts. As a board member, I would encourage discussion about how to recruit a more diverse membership and leadership. We need to consider race, gender, age, language, nationality, and institutional affiliations in these discussions, as well as issues of power associated with diversity. These discussions should focus on ways to make NRC relevant and welcoming to all sorts of literacy researchers and research consumers.

Another change I have witnessed is the type of literacy research presented and the focus of this research. NRC continues to have high standards for research, while at the same time, it remains open to multiple research methods and topics. The conference, *JLR*, and the *NRC Yearbook* are products of these high standards. My concern is that the audience for our research is primarily limited to fellow researchers. I believe it is our professional responsibility to get literacy research into the hands of a broader audience, including practitioners and policy makers. It is time for NRC to consider publishing a research-to-practice journal. As a board member, I would advocate for finding ways to get our research into the hands of these important stakeholders.

### Gwendolyn Thompson McMillon

I am an assistant professor of literacy in the Department of Reading & Language Arts at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan. My pathway to academia is quite different than most. My motivation to become an academician was driven by a passionate desire to find ways to reach and teach the children from my old neighborhood—an impoverished, inner-city area with crack houses on every block, where gang violence is common, and hopelessness has overshadowed childhood dreams of success. Growing up in the 'ghetto' and attending inner-city schools, I have seen firsthand the endless cycles of poverty that many researchers write about. However, as unlikely as it may seem, the inner-city was also the place where I learned to set goals that seemed unattainable, rise above the pressures of everyday life, and exercise faith in a power much greater than my own.

As the daughter of a Baptist preacher and primary Sunday school teacher, I was taught that attaining a good education was the means to liberation—it was the only way out of the ghetto. After becoming liberated, it was my responsibility to *reach back and help others* succeed. Although I was successful in the school and church learning environments, I often wondered why many of my friends did not do well at school, but seemed quite successful at church.

These early childhood “intricate thoughts” and experiences were the impetus that propelled me into an area of uncharted territory in the field of literacy. Initially, my research focused on identifying sources of incongruence and points of connection between the African American Church, a viable learning environment where African American students have historically learned successfully, and their school classroom environments where they are often considered “at-risk.” During my doctoral studies at Michigan State University, I was awarded the Spencer Foundation Research Training Grant for two years, and the distinguished Spencer Dissertation Fellowship for Research Related to Education, to conduct research studies that closely examined the church and school environments of African American students.

After graduating from MSU in 2001, I continued to pursue my research agenda at Oakland University. My research has expanded to include examining the literacy experiences of African American students in various learning environments; and developing ways to help students, parents, and teachers become “border crossers”—successfully negotiating cultural boundaries. My goal is to find solutions to problems, rather than simply doing research for research’s sake. Recently, I was awarded the Michigan Department of Education Title II Improving Teacher Quality Grant for a project entitled, *Whom are we serving? Building on students’ out-of-school literacy experiences to improve literacy teaching and learning in urban schools*. I am especially proud that one of the project’s sites is the elementary school that I attended. Additionally, I secured federal funding through a Family Youth Initiative grant for the St. Paul Baptist Church—a “safe house” two blocks from the school. At St. Paul, where my husband, Rev. Vincent McMillon, is pastor, students from the community can receive tutoring, mentoring, and participate in wholesome activities in a drug-free, violence-free environment.

I have presented my work at numerous conferences, facilitated workshops for various audiences, and published in books and journals including *Language Arts*, *The Reading Teacher* and the *National Reading Conference Annual Yearbook*. My work has brought much personal gratification and fulfillment; however, I realize that much of my success has been the result of exceptional mentoring from several scholars, including my advisor (Patricia A. Edwards) and committee members (P. David Pearson, Victoria Purcell-Gates, David Labaree, and Ken Frank).

### Position Statement

I began attending the National Reading Conference seven years ago, and have developed relationships resulting in opportunities to collaborate on projects, presentations, and publications. Although I still consider myself a newcomer in comparison to many, I have attempted to make valuable contributions beneficial to the organization. Several years ago, I volunteered to serve as a proposal reviewer for Area 8: Literacy Learning & Practice in Multilingual and Multicultural Settings. As a member of the Multicultural Committee, I organized a symposium entitled “Life for me ain’t been no crystal stair” after participating in a discussion about the difficulties several new minority scholars were experiencing. Kathy Au and Patricia Edwards graciously interacted with members of the audience by discussing their pathways to success, candidly making the world of academia cultur-

ally transparent. During my tenure as co-chairperson of the Ethnicity, Race & Multilingualism Committee, our committee sponsored several symposia that provided vital information on topics such as successful female scholars living balanced lives as wives and mothers, and how to successfully negotiate the tenure and promotion process as a minority and/or female scholar. Jennifer D. Turner, Doris Walker-Dahlhouse, and I co-authored the tenure symposium report in the *Yearbook* (2005). In 2006, I spearheaded the process to change the Ethnicity, Race & Multilingualism ICG to a standing committee; and many NRC members witnessed my “moment of fame” during my rendition of Whitney Houston’s *The Greatest Love of All*, earning me the title of NRC’s first “American Idol.”

My experiences with NRC have been especially valuable and I feel compelled to help others reap similar benefits. As the premiere reading research organization, NRC members are leaders in the field of literacy. I would like to assist NRC in continuing the legacy of producing leaders in the field by developing a formalized way to offer more opportunities for newer scholars to interact with experienced scholars concerning such important topics as critical issues regarding research on poor and minority children, securing funding through grant opportunities, tenure and promotion, publishing, and teaching undergraduate and graduate literacy courses. Finally, I have a B.A. in Economics from the University of Michigan and worked as a financial consultant for 8 years at Merrill Lynch. I would like to use my financial background and experience with foundations/fundraising to benefit NRC by participating in planning activities and programs that would help NRC become more financially stable by providing additional funds to support the mission of the organization.

### Rebecca Rogers

I am an Associate Professor of Literacy Education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. I teach courses in the literacy specialist program and direct the Reading Clinic. I earned my doctorate from the Reading Department at the University of Albany. Before becoming a professor of literacy education, I was a reading specialist in an elementary school and literacy teacher in a community-based adult education program. My research program contributes to a lifespan perspective of critical literacy development. In St. Louis, I am the co-founder of a teacher group called The Literacy for Social Justice Teacher Research Group. I serve on the Board of The Literacy Roundtable and the Worker’s Rights Board with Jobs with Justice.

NRC has been my professional home since 1998. I have had the opportunity to serve the organization as the Chair of the Student Research Award committee (2004-2006). I served as a committee member for the Edward Fry Book Award (2004-2006). I co-founded the Critical Discourse Analysis study group with Cynthia Lewis. I served as a co-area chair for Area 3 and reviewed conference proposals for several areas over the years. I have also reviewed manuscripts for the *National Reading Conference Yearbook* and the *Journal of Literacy Research*. With each opportunity to serve the organization, I have deepened my understanding of the policies and procedures of the organization.

I have been honored to receive several awards for my research from the NRC community including the *Student Research Award*, the *Early*

*Career Award*, and the *Ed Fry Book Award*. My scholarship owes a grand debt to the NRC community for their feedback and inspiration. It is within this community of researchers that I learned to respect intellectual diversity and theoretical and methodological rigor. I have written several books and have had articles published in journals such as *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *Language Arts*, *National Reading Conference Yearbook*, and *Review of Educational Research*. I have served on the editorial boards of *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *Teachers College Record*, and *The Reading Teacher*.

### Position Statement

I am honored to have my name put forward for the NRC Board. If elected, I will work with the Board to further the mission and values of NRC. From our collective research, we know more about effective literacy teaching and learning than ever before, but are continually confronted with the challenge of turning this knowledge into educational, social, economic and political change. I support NRC taking public positions on important issues such as high stakes testing and federal laws governing education. I think we also need to address the ongoing privatization of public education connected to such mandates. As we continue to face the challenges of our times, we need to turn to colleagues in allied disciplines to carry out interdisciplinary research/practice with us. I would encourage the membership to stay active at local and national levels with literacy education issues.

Over the past five years, NRC has made many substantive changes with technology. I am impressed with the electronic proposal submission and review process. The newly updated website and listserv allow members to communicate and stay informed in unprecedented ways. There are still changes that could be made to encourage ongoing collaboration and information sharing. For example, several study groups have expressed an interest in having online Blackboards and discussion groups embedded within the NRC website. Each study group could have a space where they post readings, announcements, agendas for their study group and a listserv for their study group. We should

also work toward having an online submission and review process for all of the NRC awards.

One of the great strengths of NRC is the diversity of ideas and perspectives that are represented in the organization. Over the years, I have observed more attention being paid to issues of race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, and linguistic variation both in research and how researchers position themselves within their research. This is important, but I believe as an organization we can be more aggressive in our commitment to diversity. As a Board member, I will strive to make decisions that work toward greater representation of diversity across all levels of NRC—from membership, to committees to the leadership. I believe the Board should continue to work closely with the Ethnicity, Race & Multilingualism Committee to further the agenda of this committee. I will also support extending invitations to scholars of color who are working in allied fields such as urban education, educational policy, linguistics and English to share their research in plenary sessions and invited sessions. I will encourage recruiting colleagues in innovative ways.

I have heard graduate students and assistant professors wonder, “How do you become a reviewer for the NRC Yearbook?” or “How do I become an Area Chair?” For many people, the procedures and governance structure of our professional organization are not clear. I would advocate for a FAQ section on the website that addresses such questions and an introductory session at the Newcomers Luncheon each year to demystify the numerous ways to become involved in the organization. I would encourage all of the Committee Chairs to brainstorm with their committee members ways of mentoring new members of NRC and recruiting diverse members to their committee.

Finally, as a member of the Board of Directors, I will work with fellow Board members to make sure that the rules and processes of NRC are transparent and democratic. I will advocate for decisions that encourage the membership to see NRC as more than a conference but as an organization that relies on the hard work of many people throughout the year for carrying out the mission of the organization. I would welcome the challenge and excitement of serving on the National Reading Conference Board of Directors.