THRESHOLDS IN EDUCATION

& Inspiration *in Action*

Learning from Experience

Thresholds in Education:
Vol. XXXIV
No. 3
Fall 2008

Issue Editor:
Linda O'Neill

THRESHOLDS

www.cedu.niu.edu/lepf/thresholds

Aim and Scope: The *Thresholds in Education Journal* is dedicated to the exploration of new education inquiries, theories, viewpoints, and program innovation. Our intent is to explore fresh ideas and viewpoints that may become the pathways to the future. We intend for *Thresholds in Education* to provide a forum for new ideas and practices.

Subscription Information: Subscription rates are as follows: For individuals one year, $30.00; two years, $55.00. For libraries one year $45.00; two years $80.00. For foreign subscriptions, add $6.00 per year. Send to Editor, *Thresholds in Education*, LEPF Dept., Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115. Telephone 815/753-9359 or fax 815/753-8750.

Advertising Rates: 1 page $200; half-page $110; classified ads: up to 50 words $8.00, 51-100 words $15.00. Address: Managing Editor, *Thresholds in Education*, LEPF Dept., Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115. *Thresholds* is entered as Third Class Mail at the Post Office in DeKalb, Illinois under permit number 120.

 Thresholds is a refereed journal published quarterly in Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. ISBN 0196 9541.

Views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors or the editorial board of Thresholds or the College of Education, Northern Illinois University.


Printed on recycled paper.

Table of Contents

Vol. XXXIV, No. 3
Fall 2008

ISSUE EDITOR
LINDA O'NEILL

Inspiration in Action: Learning from Experience

About Thresholds

In the summer of 1973, several professors from the former Department of Secondary Education at Northern Illinois University discussed the possibility for an education journal that united secondary school practitioners and university professors in dialog. They talked about problems, experiments, research, and new developments. This group, under the leadership of Dr. Leonard Pourchot, proceeded to elect a board of directors, establish a non-profit foundation, solicit charter members, elect a managerial staff, and set the wheels in motion for a long range goal of publishing the first issue of *Thresholds in Secondary Education* in February, 1975.

The word "thresholds" best represented the intention to explore ideas and share viewpoints that could lead to new educational advances while respecting achieved values and knowledge bases. The *Thresholds in Secondary Education* journal would stimulate thinking, influence education practices, inform, and inspire.

Over the years, *Thresholds* has broadened its focus beyond secondary education to include dialogue between educational theorists and practitioners from diverse locations. In 1977, the journal was retitled *Thresholds in Education*. Today it remains dedicated to the examination and exploration of new educational inquiries, theories, viewpoints, and program innovations. The title of the journal was well chosen and more than ever is relevant to the needed forum among educators in these complex times. The threshold is a structure familiar to all cultures from ancient times. Taken literally, it is the traverse beam of a doorframe. But it also stands as a metaphor for moving through time, place, and process. Thresholds are crossing-over places where we venture from the securely known to the uncharted spaces.

The publication of the *Thresholds in Education* Journal is a cooperative effort between the Thresholds in Education Foundation, the Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations, and the College of Education.

Visit our website and browse the Archives at
http://www.cedu.niu.edu/lepf/thresholds

Thresholds in Education
LEPF Department
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115

Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
Chair: Charles Howell

College of Education
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
Dean: Lemuel Watson

Notice of Subscription Rate Change

THRESHOLDS IN EDUCATION JOURNAL
ISBN 0196 9541

Effective January 1, 2009
(for publication year beginning January 2009, Vol. 35)

- Individual Rate
  1/yr $30
  2/yr $55

- Library Rate
  1/yr $45
  2/yr $80

- Special Access (pending availability)
  1/yr (up to 100 staff) $75
  1/yr (101-200 staff) $95
  1/yr (over 200 staff) $125
  Note: This is a new subscription option that may begin in 2009. Special access subscriptions are intended for educational institutions. They will receive one bound copy of the journal and special on-line access to current journal articles for duration of subscription.

- Bulk rates for multiple subscriptions within an institution, or purchased by single party:
  2-5 $25/1-yr.
  6-10 $20/1-yr.
  Over 10: Negotiated per request.

- Bulk rates on per issue basis.
  Single issue: $10 plus $3/shipping/handling
  2-10 copies: $8/copy plus shipping
  10-50 copies $6/copy plus shipping
  Over 50 copies $5/copy plus shipping
  Issue editors and authors rate: $5/copy if order placed before production.

- Rates for preproduction of individual articles negotiated per request.

To order a subscription or to renew your subscription, see form in back of this issue or on-line at www.cedu.niu.edu/epf/foundations/thresholds/index.html

Questions regarding subscription rates should be directed to:

Janice L. Woodhouse
Managing Editor
Thresholds in Education Journal
LEPF/GH 225
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
thresh@niu.edu

Editor's Note

Linda O'Neill
Northern Illinois University

The Summer/Fall 2007 issue of *Thresholds in Education* offered a collection of essays honoring "intellectual allies." In this companion issue, novice and seasoned educators describe significant experiences that have shaped their perceptions, practices, and convictions. They acknowledge the wisdom gained through deliberative action.

John Dewey (1938/1997) felt so strongly about the centrality of experience that he called for a "philosophy of education based upon a philosophy of experience" (p. 29). He described "experience as a moving force" to be judged "only on the ground of what it moves toward and into" (p. 38). The first three essays in this issue of *Thresholds* chronicle the experiences of pre-service counselors and teachers as they "move toward" their chosen careers. Michael G. Johns and DuJuan Smith reflect upon opportunities outside the classroom that have helped them develop their leadership skills and commitments to community service. Branson S. Lawrence describes the pre-service insights he gained from his work with the Illinois Math and Science Academy's (IMSA) Excellence 2000+ program. Joe Kowlaski offers a glimpse into life as a substitute as he confirms his decision to become a public school teacher.

In *Experience and Education*, Dewey claimed that "fully integrated personality" exists only by combining successive experiences "in an ever-present process" (pp. 44, 50). Three seasoned educators, all deeply involved in professional development exemplify this kind of integration and sustained effort. Kathy Brady-Sztelle and Val Pientka, Master Teachers and district mentors, describe the lasting impact of their experiences with the National Board Certification process. Gwynne Kell connects results from her doctoral research with her ongoing support for professional development that systematically fosters teacher reflection and collaboration.

Seventy years ago, Dewey observed that "What we want and need is education pure and simple, and we shall make surer and faster progress when we devote ourselves to finding out just what education is and what conditions have to be satisfied in order that education may be a reality and not a name or a slogan" (p. 91). The final four essays offer examples of education broadly defined and richly experienced as a reality, not a slogan. Denise Hatcher describes Spanish language and culture classes designed to create a new sense of campus community among college students and *nuestros amigos*. Donna S. Larson plants seeds of resilience as she finds innovative ways to teach and learn from the students with special needs who flourish under her care. Joyce Laben integrates insights from her experiences as an administrator and school psychologist to support her call for policy changes in the education of young children. Sarah Militz-Frielink gives feminist scholarship the "test of experience," comparing historical and social research with perspectives from three generations of women in her own family.

Despite strong and consistent criticism, John Dewey remained "confident of the potentialities of education when it is treated as intelligently directed development of the possibilities inherent in ordinary experience" (p. 89). Regardless of their professional paths and levels of expertise, the authors of these essays all transform the "ordinary" in their reflections on the power of experience to expand horizons and deepen commitments. They all direct the "development of possibilities" to face with integrity the challenges before them.

Reference

Dewey, J. (1938/1997). *Experience and education.* The Kappa Delta Pi Lecture Series. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Linda O'Neill is an Associate Professor in the Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology, and Foundations at Northern Illinois University. She teaches philosophy of education and educational policy.

Outside the Classroom: The Power of Extracurricular Activities

Michael G. Johns
DuJuan E. Smith
Northern Illinois University

Many people come to college to get an education and to increase their abilities to find a good job upon completion of school. The college experience is also geared to prepare students for the next level of their respective academic studies. Through rigorous coursework, students are taught various disciplines related to their own interests. Though college is known for academic demands, many students learn from their out-of-the-classroom experiences. Being involved in organizations, participating in community service projects, and establishing social networks can be every bit as profound as classroom experiences. Before describing out-of-the-classroom experiences that have profoundly impacted our lives, we will provide some information about our pre-college backgrounds.

Being involved in organizations, participating in community service projects, and establishing social networks can be every bit as profound as classroom experiences.

Michael's Journey to Leadership

When I entered to college, I joined many of my close friends who were already students at NIU. I was drawn to the social scene at Northern Illinois University, and although I tried to keep a balance between school work and my party life, I began to lose the battle. I was involved in a very popular and somewhat elite promotion organization on campus, but I was not involved in other extracurricular activities. One day, my life at NIU took a tragic turn when I was put on academic probation and subsequently released from school. I was devastated as reality began to set in hard. How could I have allowed this to happen to me? What was I going to do?

I decided to stay in DeKalb while I worked and continued my studies at the local community college. I was determined to do well enough to get re-admitted to NIU. Through diligence and persistence, I earned another chance at the university and this time, I was not going to take it for granted. I began networking and getting involved in different aspects of campus life. I joined my fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. I became the Student Association Vice President as well as a member of Men against Sexual and Interpersonal Violence (MASIV). I was a charter member for Leaders in the Fight to Eradicate AIDS (L.I.F.E. AIDS) and began mentoring others. Being a mentor allowed me to work with college freshmen and sophomores who were in need of guidance. I was able to use my story to inspire them to choose a different path.

Today, I am pursuing a M.S. Ed. in Community Counseling and will be graduating in a year. I have been elected President of the Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA) and I am a member of Northern Illinois University Counseling Association (NIUCA). I will be focusing the next year on professional development and exploring other leadership opportunities within my chosen field. It is through involvement that one gains experience. Experience sets the tone for achievement and success. Achievement and success are two words I plan to make synonymous with Michael Johns.

DuJuan's Journey to Leadership

When I opened my eyes, I realized that I was still lying down in the back of the van. Where was I? As I took a moment to collect my thoughts, the vision of my mother's face full of tears immediately flashed before

me. The final words she uttered to me before the van pulled off were, "Make Mommy proud down there in college. I am so proud of you. I love you!" There were so many things going through my mind as I arrived at Tennessee State University (TSU) in Nashville, Tennessee. Could I handle college life? I was the first person on my father's and my mother's sides of our family to even enter a college campus, let alone graduate from one. I felt very nervous and excited all at the same time. I wondered if I could adapt to this new environment without having anyone I knew close by for support..

During my first year in college I focused mainly on academics and did not get involved with any student organizations. While I was at TSU, I met a lot of amazing people and had a chance to participate in many social activities; however, I never really felt connected to the people I met and the places I visited. They were acquaintances rather than a network of support and understanding. I felt disconnected from the campus and ultimately decided to leave TSU after my first year there.

After TSU, I decided to come to Northern Illinois University (NIU). I made the decision to come to NIU and to become actively involved on campus. I yearned to feel connected. At NIU I became a member of the Black Student Union (BSU) and a Student Association (SA) senator. Throughout my undergraduate years, I worked my way to the top of those organizations. By the time I was a senior, I had been the president and treasurer of the BSU and the SA. Being involved allowed me the opportunity to study abroad for two consecutive summers in Ghana, West Africa. I became a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated, the first intercollegiate fraternity for African Americans. I was a charter member of Leaders in the Fight to Eradicate AIDS (L.I.F.E. AIDS), an organization geared towards educating college student on the impact of HIV/AIDS. Each of these accomplishments taught me something different and allowed me to contribute to my community.

The concept of being involved in extracurricular activities has followed me to my graduate career. I was elected in March of 2008 to become the 2008-2009 Student Trustee, serving on the Board of Trustees at NIU. I was elected Treasurer of the Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA) for 2008-2009 and was appointed as the Midwestern Regional Historian of my fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha. These positions will help me to grow and develop professionally and socially while allowing me to contribute to the greater good of our campus and society.

Learning from Leadership

Michael: One of the main things I learned through leadership was how many leadership concepts and themes were directly connected to my personal experiences. As things would come up, I began to notice how many skills and strategies I already possessed. Therefore, I was able to translate goals into action in order to become successful. Being a leader refined my natural abilities and allowed me to help others become more defined and deliberate in their everyday lives.

Another important aspect of leadership on campus was learning who I am, as a leader and as a person. I am a reserved and collected individual. I have worked hard to learn to effectively communicate with people and still remain myself. Communication is one of the tools that must be utilized – no matter the form. Keeping the lines of communication open avoids many potential problems. I am comfortable now in my own skin, and I am not afraid to be in the forefront, if necessary. I understand the importance of collaborating with others and pooling resources with other organizations in order to be more efficient and to increase the number of people who participate. I have learned through my fraternity that "excuses are tools of incompetence" and the end goal is always success.

I have contributed to making a good college campus great! I have learned to keep learning, growing, and taking chances with leadership.

I am humble enough to recognize that God puts people and things in my life for a specific reason. In my journey to leadership, I had the pleasure of being perfectly aligned with all of the right people at the right time. In retrospect, I realize that we all helped each other to become successful. With a simple pact to succeed (or as we coined it, "to save whales,"), we have all managed to be there for each other. I have contributed to making a good college campus great!

I have learned to keep learning, growing, and taking chances with leadership. All of these things I learned through my participation in extracurricular activities.

DuJuan: Some of the challenges that college posed for me were lack of family support, feelings of isolation, loss of confidence in my abilities to succeed, and learning to be independent. My family did not understand nor could they relate to most of the things I was going through in college. They tried to support me as much as possible, but I felt like there was a huge barrier between us due to their inexperience with college culture. I often times felt isolated and alone when I was not involved on campus. I credit becoming actively involved on campus as the defining moment in college that changed my life.

The most valuable lesson I learned through it all was the art of being intentional about my life and my decisions instead of waiting for things to happen.

Being involved allowed me to work with people on various tasks and events, which allowed me to get to know them on a social and a professional level. I learned how to network and to be an effective communicator. Becoming the president of two major organizations allowed me the opportunity to establish a personal leadership style and to become a mentor to others along the way. My out-of-the-classroom experiences taught me to think creatively, to be open to diversity in experiences and perceptions, and to learn to see experiences outside the classroom as opportunities to better understand the class concepts and theories. I was able to polish my natural abilities and make them work for me in a positive way. The most valuable lesson I learned through it all was the art of being intentional about my life and my decisions instead of waiting for things to happen. I channeled my resilience and strengths, and I focused on using them to make me unique and powerful in mind, body, and soul.

Conclusion

Our collective experiences have taught us a variety of things. First of all, the college experience is what you make it. The more you invest in your college experience and are intentional about the types of experiences you want to have, the more you will gain from these choices. Secondly, out-of-the-classroom experiences help make the theories learned in class more practical and tangible. Learning concepts in the classroom is only half of the battle. Today's college student need to be successful in and out of the classroom. Extracurricular activities not only make students more marketable, they help students learn more about who they are. By being involved, students are able to develop their strengths and to examine areas of challenge. Students who have a clear sense of self will be better prepared to transition from the college experience to the next stage of their lives.

Michael G. Johns has served as Northern Illinois University Student Association Vice President and has been elected president of the Black Graduate Student Association. He is currently completing an M. S. Ed. in Community Counseling and is a member of the Northern Illinois University Counseling Association (NIUCA).

DuJuan E. Smith is the 2008-2009 Student Trustee, serving on the Board of Trustees at Northern Illinois University. He is treasurer of the Black Graduate Student Association and Midwestern Regional Historian for Alpha Phi Alpha. DuJuan is currently completing an M.S. Ed. in Counseling at Northern Illinois University.

Preparing for the Classroom: Pre-Service Professional Development

Branson S. Lawrence
Illinois Math and Science Academy (IMSA)

Two years ago, while completing my undergraduate degree in education, I accepted a position as Materials Coordinator for the Illinois Math and Science Academy's Excellence 2000+ program. Several faculty and staff members at the Illinois Math and Science Academy (IMSA) in Aurora, Illinois, contributed their time and expertise to develop Excellence 2000+, a program that works to develop interest in the fields of math, science, and technology throughout the state. My position required me to inventory and package materials that were used for after-school enrichment lessons. These units were designed to integrate math and science concepts in a wide range of hands-on activities for gifted students grades six through eight. While a majority of the materials needed to complete these activities were easy to obtain, the Excellence 2000+ program provided selected items in kits for student use. The program not only developed curriculum and provided materials to schools that participated, but also conducted two-session professional development courses for each unit to fully prepare educators to teach the lessons. Schools involved with the Excellence 2000+ program typically participated in two units each school year, completing one unit per semester.

My involvement with different aspects of the program grew as I became more familiar with each unit and the program as a whole. With a strong background in math, science, and technology, and a developing background in education, I became part of a team that was making a difference in math and science education across the state. I was able to participate in professional development for each unit and even had the opportunity to see units being taught during the summer camp programs at IMSA.

As I began my second year with the program, I was able to help develop curriculum for a forensic science unit that was entering the field test stage. The field test units were offered to teachers in schools that had been involved with the program for several years. These experienced teachers felt comfortable providing constructive feedback for improvement. My work with this unit allowed me to test the outcomes of the experiments, develop scenarios for the fictional crimes involved in the lesson, and guide professional development. I was even able to present one of the lessons at the 2008 Illinois Science Teachers Association conference in Peoria.

With a strong background in math, science, and technology, and a developing background in education, I became part of a team that was making a difference in math and science education across the state.

As a pre-service teacher, this was absolutely the best experience I could have had before entering the classroom. Working with a group of the brightest and most creative minds in education helped me develop as a teacher in so many ways. Being involved in the Excellence 2000+ program also provided a great networking opportunity with talented middle school teachers throughout the state who either coordinated or taught the units at their schools. While my contact with teachers was sometimes limited to picking up or dropping off materials, I was able to meet many educators during the professional development sessions throughout the year.

The IMSA Excellence 2000+ program is entering its eighth year and participation has grown steadily. Currently, more than 40 schools across the state

participate in Excellence 2000+, the program has expanded to include a regional coordinator in Springfield for schools located downstate, and new curriculum has been developed for grades four and five. While the program continues to grow and interest spreads across the state, the number of staff members remains the same. This aspect benefits the teachers involved with the program because they can have direct contact with the curriculum writers who lead the professional development effort. The small number of staff members also means long hours and hard work for those involved. It is clear they truly love the work they do, and they continue to look for new opportunities to expand.

I hope to eliminate the comment, "I just don't get math and science."

One of the new projects on the horizon for IMSA's Excellence 2000+ program includes working with Golden Apple to help prepare pre-service teachers to work with gifted students. Another project includes future expansion in central and southern Illinois. With most staff and resources located at the IMSA site in Aurora, Illinois, about 30 miles west of Chicago, the team is currently addressing the challenge of making geographic expansion feasible. Involving teachers and students downstate is not only a goal of the Excellence 2000+ program, but also the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. IMSA's new President, Dr. Max McGee, has made several trips to southern Illinois to spread interest and encourage further involvement with these schools.

As an IMSA alumni, former Excellence 2000+ employee, and current educator in the East St. Louis area, I have a strong interest in this possible expansion. I believe IMSA and the Excellence 2000+ program have a great deal to offer students in this area. Math and science are subjects that I have always found fascinating and exciting. I am confident that many students will feel more comfortable and even become excited about subjects taught using integrated, inquiry-based approaches developed by IMSA and the Excellence 2000+ program (IMSA, 2008).

My work with the Excellence 2000+ program has provided me with invaluable experience integrating math and science in creative ways. It has also helped me understand the need for enrichment programs in districts with students who are historically underrepresented. I was surprised to see saw many similarities between the Chicago classrooms I visited and the middle school I attended in a rural district in northern Illinois. My experience with the program helped me realize that rural and urban schools face some of the same obstacles when attempting to integrate math and science in dynamic ways. There may be many more students in the Chicago schools, but these schools struggle with out-of-date science materials and technology just like the schools in my rural district.

This experience has inspired me to make a positive change in science and math education. There are so many creative ways to engage students. I hope to eliminate the comment, "I just don't get math and science." With creative educators and programs like Excellence 2000+, I believe that math and science can become practical tools that my students will use throughout their lives.

Reference

Illinois Math and Science Academy. (2008). *The IMSA excellence 2000+ program*. Retrieved July 9, 2008, from http://www.imsa.edu/programs/e2k/program.php.

Branson S. Lawrence is currently substitute-teaching in central Illinois near East St. Louis. He is seeking a full time position in middle school math and science and plans to pursue graduate studies in gifted education.

Affirming a Career Change: Adventures in Substitute Teaching

Joe Kowalski
Aurora University

In memory of my mother who attended Lindbloom Public High School in Chicago's Back of the Yards neighborhood. She taught me the love of the written word and ignited my purpose.

I was never an honor's student. Attending the second largest high school in Illinois, I graduated in the 20th percentile of my class. While I did quite well in a community college, when I transferred to Eastern Illinois University I hit a wall. For many years after I left the university I used my building trade skills to frame houses. I discovered that what I enjoyed most was teaching apprentices. When someone told me I should teach carpentry, the compliment stayed with me. I always yearned to return to school to complete my degree.

As I had promised myself and others, I returned to university life at age 40. I found taking classes rewarding and loved the intellectual fulfillment. Getting a good grade was the equivalent of getting a raise on my check; I saw grades as payment for my effort in class. I decided to go for the degree and continued until I graduated nine years later. In that nine-year time span, hope rose within me.

My journey to become an educator began in 2002 when I did a "good turn" for DeKalb High School. After collecting a substantial amount of finish-grade lumber, I donated it to DeKalb High School. George Koch, the Woodworking instructor, thanked me and asked, "Have you ever thought of being a teacher?" This moment was pivotal.

I began substitute teaching extensively in Elgin School District U-46, Illinois' second largest school district. My experiences at elementary, middle school, and high school coupled with bilingual and special education experiences ignited my desire to teach. By substitute teaching while taking coursework, I was able to connect my work in the field with the theory and intellectual insights I gained in the classes. The Elgin school system became my window into the American public education system with its many roles, strengths, shortfalls, and controversies.

Diversity in the Elgin school system contrasted with the lack of diversity I encountered in the rural Burlington and Sycamore school districts. The "big city" flavor I got from Elgin showed me that a school system operates best with dedicated teachers who reach out to students. I promised myself I would try to be the best substitute teacher Elgin students would have. My best experience was working with fifth graders at Hawk Hollow Elementary for two consecutive days. This assignment allowed me to work with elementary school students for the first time. Instead of meeting with four to five classes of students for 50 minutes a day as in high school, I worked with the class throughout the day. Several students volunteered eagerly to help me. The time flew by as I taught math and language arts, worked on reading, went to gym class, ate with other teachers in the lounge, and dismissed the children at the end of the day. When I was called to return about six weeks later, several students remembered me and "high fived" me as we passed in the hallway. Being remembered in a positive light drew me further into education as a career.

The Woodworking instructor asked, "Have you ever thought of being a teacher?" This moment was pivotal.

I was accustomed to speaking Spanish with co-workers on construction sites. This became an asset as I took bilingual substitute assignments and encountered students who used Spanish as their primary language with little or no skill in speaking English. I relied heavily on my past experience working with

Spanish speakers in the building trades. Many of them reminded me of my own three grandparents who immigrated to the United States from Eastern Europe with the clothes on the backs, the will to work regardless of conditions faced, and an unshakable belief that the generations to follow would have better lives.

I am proud of the fact that in the 60 plus times I've substitute taught, never once have I needed to send a student to the Dean's office. This past September at Larkin High School in Elgin a student adopted the role of "class clown" one sunny Friday afternoon during last period English class. In my estimation, not even the principal wanted to be in school on such a beautiful day. After the student insisted on telling a joke with me as the stooge in the situation, I questioned him, forcing his hand. When he tried to leave, saying he wasn't even enrolled in the class, I blocked the door with my arm,

Instead of focusing on discipline, I shared some of my experiences growing up in Chicago's tough Irish south side.

and had him sit in the front of the class next to me.

In contrast, elementary Physical Education was always a treat. One bright warm early September morning, the children begged me to play with them and I acquiesced, playing football, soccer, and other sports. One assignment had me splitting my day between a predominately Euro-American elementary school and an elementary school with a Spanish speaking majority. The teachers were surprised I could speak Spanish, as I led the kids in outdoor soccer for kindergarten and first grade Physical Education classes.

Physical Education at the secondary level also had its rewards. After years of back breaking work in construction, it was delightful to be paid for leading freshman playing coed basketball in the pool at Streamwood High School. The water temperature was 85 degrees and I did laps between classes just to exercise. A few of the students marveled at the size 14 running shoes I left on the pool deck.

One gray February morning I found myself in the sophomore/junior level French and Spanish classes at Larkin High School in Elgin. I complimented the students on their efforts, especially the ones who were becoming trilingual. When the Language Chair asked me to take two of her Spanish classes for extra pay, I jumped at the opportunity to use my Spanish. It was gratifying to know enough subject matter to assist the students.

In addition to these positive experiences, I have also had many challenges. When I was assigned to substitute teach during two study halls for students with behavior disorders and learning disorders, I was warned to bring in slips for discipline referrals to the Dean's office. Instead of focusing on discipline, I shared some of my experiences growing up in Chicago's tough Irish south side. I described the fate of one "tough" now serving out a sentence for arranging a "hit" on a competitor in his business. I described his sister who died of a drug overdose. Then I explained that both of these children were raised by a Chicago policeman. After I told the students about my background and my life's path, discipline was not an issue. In fact, some students shared their life stories and their life goals with me.

Since I wasn't always a model student, I can identify with the struggles young people experience; I will never forget my own struggles. The experiences I have had as a substitute teacher have primed my heart for becoming a teacher. I have decided to pursue a Masters of Arts in Teaching with Certification. I have entered the graduate program at Aurora University, and I have reapplied for a position teaching Woodworking and Technology in a northern Illinois middle school. As an educator in training, I have a desire to not only teach, but also to contribute to American public education. I value individual students as "active critical citizenry" in the making (West, 1993, p. 183). As a teacher, I will demonstrate and foster respect for others as individuals regardless of their strengths, weaknesses, and perspectives. I agree with John Dewey (1900) that "a society which is mobile, full of channels for distribution of change occurring anywhere, must see fit that its members are educated to personal initiative and adaptability" (p. 88). My life's ambition is to provide this kind of education and to further opportunities for all my students.

References

Dewey, J. (1916/2008). Democracy and education. In R. F. Reed & T. W. Johnson (Eds.), *Philosophical documents*

in education (3rd ed.) (pp. 100-105). New York: Addison-Wesley Longman.

West, C. (1993/2008). Prophetic thought in postmodern times: Beyond eurocentrism and multiculturalism. In R. F. Reed & T. W. Johnson (Eds.), *Philosophical documents in education* (3rd ed.) (pp. 175-184). New York: Addison-Wesley Longman.

Joe Kowalski is pursuing a Masters of Arts in Teaching with Certification at Aurora University. He plans to teach at the elementary or middle school level upon graduation. Joe is also a substitute teacher in Elgin District U-46.

Through Our Eyes: The Lasting Impact of the National Board Certification Process

Kathy Brady-Sztelle
North Barrington Elementary School

Val Pientka
Barrington Middle School, Station Campus

National Board Certification for Teachers has come under scrutiny in recent years. Data is inconclusive as to the effectiveness of the long-range outcomes of the process. In this reflection, we look at National Board Certification through the eyes of two teachers who have undergone the process. After providing background for this process, we each critically view the gains we have seen in our own teaching, the new opportunities offered to us, and the shortcomings we find in the process. As teachers we are quite different from one another. Val is a middle school art teacher, Kathy a multiage primary classroom teacher. We both teach in the same school district which is in an upper-middle class area with pockets of financially distressed families. Unlike many school districts in the United States, resources for education are readily available, making the classrooms rich in materials to address learning needs.

We each critically view the gains we have seen in our own teaching, the new opportunities offered to us, and the shortcomings we find in the process.

What is National Board Certification?

In 1983, as a result of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative of Educational Reform,* the Carnegie Foundation established a Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, with the goal of recognizing teachers as having the central role in the educational process. In 1986, the Carnegie Foundation completed its findings and published *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century.* A foremost recommendation was to establish a national teacher standards and evaluation board. In 1987, The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was founded and established high standards for board certification. According to the National Board website, the mission of the National Board is three-fold: to establish high and rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do; to develop and operate a national voluntary system to assess and certify teachers who meet these standards; and to advance related education reforms for the purpose of improving student learning in America's schools. A vision for accomplished teaching was constructed based upon five core propositions:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
2. Teachers know the subjects that they teach and how to teach those subjects to students. 3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

Upon successful completion of the National Board Certification process whereby teachers undergo rigorous and valid assessments, they attain subject area certification. The certification process requires submission of a teaching portfolio consisting of four entries

and an online assessment exercise component. The portfolio entries are as follows: one classroom-based entry which usually includes student exemplars, two classroom based entries that require video recording of teacher-student interactions, and one documented accomplishment entry which allows the candidates to highlight their professional accomplishments outside of the classroom. The underlying focus of each entry is how the teaching practice impacts student learning. The online assessment portion allows the candidate to demonstrate in-depth content knowledge in six different exercises developed by other practitioners in the same certificate area.

What is the Illinois National Board Policy?

In 1997, the Illinois State Board of Education revamped the certification system, creating a three-tier teacher certification system with Initial, Standard, and Master Certificates. Initial teaching certificates are issued to teachers who have less than four years of teaching. An Illinois standard certificate is issued to initial certificate holders who have accrued four years of teaching experience and have met the professional development requirements. Master certificates are issued to teachers who successfully complete National Board Certification and are good for 10 years, renewable through completing the National Board Certification renewal process. State appropriations provide Illinois teachers with an annual $3,000 stipend set forth by the Illinois Teaching Excellence Act statute. Illinois National Board Certified Teachers are eligible to receive an additional $1,000 if they provide 60 hours of mentoring and/or $3,000 to assist candidates teaching in academically at-risk schools or schools located in economically disadvantaged communities. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has limited funding to provide assistance to candidates for fee subsidy for the National Board Certification process.

Why did you go for National Board Certification?

Val: During the late 90s, it appeared as though the public via the media placed much blame for poor student achievement solely upon public school teachers and their lack of an effective teaching practice. This caused me to think deeply about what constitutes accomplished teaching. During my 20-year tenure as a visual arts educator, I felt that administrative feedback on my teaching practice provided me with feedback that was less than what I had hoped for as a teacher striving to continually improve my practice. What I really was searching for was feedback specific to visual arts educators. It was during this time that I read an article about the National Board Certification process. I researched NBPTS and was impressed with the idea that teachers created the National Board for teachers, and the process is ultimately reviewed and evaluated by teachers. After reading the standards for Early Adolescent Young Adult (EAYA) Art, I took the National Board professional challenge and have not regretted one minute of the very rigorous and challenging process since.

Administrative feedback on my teaching practice provided me with feedback that was less than what I had hoped for as a teacher striving to continually improve my practice.

Kathy: For me, the reasons were slightly different. I was at a point in my career where I had been in a teaching position for some time, enjoying the experience, but not really sure that I was the best teacher I could be. National Board Certification offered a way for me to assess my own teaching ability, to refine my teaching, and raise my awareness of areas I could improve upon. I viewed this as a very personal look at my own teaching quality.

What did you notice about the struggles or growth while undergoing the process?

Val: The first thing that I noticed was that one of the entries required students to discuss aesthetics. Since I had little student discussion of aesthetics in my art program, I had to design and implement an activity to meet the entry requirements. Reflecting back upon the process, I learned a tremendous amount about the depth of discussion that middle school students could have while discussing art and aesthetics. I had previously underestimated the ability of middle school

students to discuss personal and emotional responses to works of art. What seemed like a very scary endeavor turned out to have a very positive outcome for my practice and my conceptual understanding of the level of student engagement in aesthetic discourse. Eight years later, I still draw upon this experience when constructing units of instruction that relate to student understanding of the purposes of art.

In addition, I was struck by the comprehensiveness of the National Board Certification process. Combining the entry exercises along with the assessment center exercises gave me an opportunity to, not only provide evidence of an accomplished professional practice both in and outside of the classroom, but also to highlight my art content knowledge.

Kathy: The process was far more challenging than I had realized from merely reading the requirements. Matching the instructional situations to the requirements caused me to scrutinize the items I teach, looking at each concept through a far more critical lens. I found myself questioning each item I taught, looking to see if it was the most effective way to teach the concept, if there was a way to integrate the concept into other areas, and if I was reaching each of the learners in my classroom. My planning began to shift its focus as the process caused me to take a much closer look at each individual child and less at the classroom as a whole. The struggle became one of finding the middle ground between the whole classroom and the needs of the individuals. Through the process a greater balance between whole group, small group, and individual instruction began to develop within my classroom. These clusters had always existed in my room; however, National Board standards helped me to articulate for myself the specific reasons and benefits for each and develop more purposeful strategies for every moment of my day. Small strategic reading groups had been an everyday occurrence to meet the variety of reading skill levels. Now I came to recognize the strength of small groups in math both for skill levels and as cooperative learning communities whereby students are able to reinforce their own knowledge by instructing others. Science and social studies problem solving groups where students researched and shared information with each other also became regular activities during my week.

How has undergoing this process changed you as a teacher?

Val: Going through the National Board Certification process has definitely changed me as a teacher. As a result of this professional development experience, I now continuously focus on the question, "What is it I want my students to know as a result of this lesson?" The National Board Certification process helped me to focus on the interrelatedness of national standards, state standards, our district curriculum map, units of instruction, daily lessons, and how they all align, scaffold, and support one another.

Another significant outcome of this process for me was to realize that teaching art is very much like teaching academic content areas. I had the misconception that teaching art was very different from other content areas. While undergoing the process and unpacking the art standards, I was able to compare teaching art with academic areas based upon the five-core proposition of accomplished teaching. All National Board Certification candidates, regardless of their certificate area, are required to prepare their portfolios by videotaping their teaching, gathering student learning exemplars and other teaching artifacts, and providing detailed analysis of their teaching. Teachers also provide commentaries on the goals and purposes of instruction and the effectiveness of each practice. They include reflections on observations and rationales for the professional judgments they made. This portfolio allows teachers to document their accomplishments in contributing to the advancement of the profession and the improvement of schooling. The portfolio also documents the teachers' ability to work constructively with their students' families. The art certification process required me to provide evidence of

I had previously underestimated the ability of middle school students to discuss personal and emotional responses to works of art.

accomplished teaching in ways that are very similar to all of the other certification areas. Undergoing this process in the same manner as my colleagues who teach in academic areas helped to reaffirm for me the integrity of art within the core curriculum.

The most important change that I have made as a result of this process is that of realizing how reflection is the cornerstone of an effective practice. I have made analyzing and evaluating my practice a daily occurrence in an attempt to not only strengthen my practice but to also improve the quality of student learning. This helps me to not only refine and strengthen my practice but also to evaluate my program through study and systematic self-examination.

Kathy: The National Board Certification process forces you to constantly reflect on your practice. I found that the depth of reflection increased as I continued with the process; superficial reflection was replaced by a scrutiny that truly changed the way I looked at my teaching situation. National Board Certification has made my instruction more focused on the significant information students need to learn. By setting my sights firmly on these goals I feel my instruction is more clearly articulated to students. My view on assessment shifted from assessing what the students had learned to assessing how my teaching strategies had been effective in creating an environment where learning was taking place. I came to recognize the power of various teaching strategies. Empowering students to be self-learners may be a longer process, but in the end it is far more valuable than merely "teaching" them to memorize a concept which they then quickly forget. I believe I changed from a teacher "for the moment" to a teacher "for a lifetime."

What new opportunities have come as a result of National Board Certification?

As a result of becoming National Board Certified Teachers, many opportunities have opened for us as teachers, learners, and teacher leaders. With National Board Certification, the state in which we teach offers a 10 year certification as a Master Teacher. Beyond this, we have both found many opportunities which have expanded our roles in the teaching profession. Neither of us has aspirations of taking on the role of school principal or other administrative positions of similar nature. However, both of us are committed to furthering the teaching profession. Val has the distinction of being the first teacher in our school district to become a National Board Certified Teacher. Kathy was the second person. Together we have helped to create a support network within our district to encourage other teachers to pursue this certification. This support currently consists of a bi-weekly cohort group which we lead, acting as mentors. We are able to encourage other teachers to use the National Board Certification process to assess and refine their own practice in a collaborative forum in which they review each other's work and seek suggestions from us on how to proceed. Over the past six years, we have assisted over 70 teachers pursuing National Board Certification. In addition, we have worked with the district to put in place financial assistance for five teachers yearly to undertake the process.

Opportunities at the university level have also opened for both of us. Initially we both worked with one university, offering a course which acted as a mentoring and support class for teachers pursuing National Board Certification. Through this university we also had the opportunity to work with teachers in under-resourced areas who were repeating portions of the certification process. This was a rare, very personal look at the struggles that extremely qualified inner city teachers face on a daily basis. Both of us found this experience to be one of the most rewarding instructional opportunities of our lives. It has caused both of us to pause and reflect on teaching in the United States with a new vision of the systemic problems facing urban areas.

I have made analyzing and evaluating my practice a daily occurrence in an attempt to not only strengthen my practice but to also improve the quality of student learning.

Currently, in addition to the mentoring class within our own district, we act as instructors at a state university, offering a class which acts as a precursor for teachers curious about National Board Certification and how it can change their teaching practice by purposefully connecting practice to national standards. This opportunity has enabled us to share our National Board Certification experiences with other teachers from a wide spectrum of school districts throughout the state. It has also expanded our knowledge as these teachers share their expertise with us and with each other. Through all these experiences we have constantly grown in our appreciation of the diverse strategies that can be employed to reach learners of all ages. Our National Board Certification has placed us in a wonderful position to continue to hone our teaching skills through our contact with other very highly qualified teachers. This certification has empowered us to take leadership risks and reach out beyond our personal classrooms to help other teachers realize the potential they have to transform their classrooms into more effective learning environments.

My view on assessment shifted from assessing what the students had learned to assessing how my teaching strategies had been effective in creating an environment where learning was taking place.

What are the shortcomings of the process?

The National Board Certification process is not without flaws. As we have wended our way through the certification process and beyond we have noted several seemingly inherent flaws in the system. While undergoing the process we often found ourselves writing redundantly in an effort to fully address each of the prompts provided. Those we have mentored also notice this same redundancy and question why it is necessary. We also found that in some situations we needed to make changes to teaching situations simply to comply with the requirements rather than to enhance the quality of our teaching practices. Although these adjustments still led to a quality experience for students, other options may have made the experiences more educationally rich. We recognize the need for uniformity in order to more consistently score responses; however, these questions and concerns have been raised by many teachers with whom we have worked.

As we have mentored a larger range of teachers from various subject areas ranging from early childhood to subject specific high school teachers, we have noticed a possible flaw in the scoring process, wherein the process appears to overlook some highly qualified teachers and praise the work of some teachers whose daily efforts are not as noteworthy. As with any work sample, it is often difficult to obtain a truly representative picture and uniformly score responses over a vast variety of areas. We have no simple recommendations for correcting these perceived flaws, nor do we have firm data to confirm our suspicions that these imperfections occur on a scale larger than those entries with which we have personal knowledge.

What are your conclusions?

For both of us the National Board Certification process provided a self-directed, professional development process with a rigor that no other professional development has provided us up to this point in our careers. No other professional development has so clearly brought to light both the strengths and weaknesses of our daily teaching practices. Nor has any other class or professional development opportunity had such far reaching effects, transforming how we view educational practices for all students, not only within our own classrooms, but also education for students in all classrooms across the United States. Due to the fact that the process has teachers use their own teaching environment to assess their practice, the application of newly developed skills and strategies is immediate. With this immediate application comes awareness of other areas in which similar shifts in practice will strengthen instruction. With the certification has come, for us, a sense of responsibility to consistently teach at a level of high quality, to deeply reflect on improvements we can always make to our instruction, and to work to improve the profession so all students will reap the benefits of effective teaching strategies. Perhaps the greatest gift from National Board Certification has been an increased awareness that we need to continue to reflect

deeply about what we do and why. This reflective practice has moved all aspects of our professional lives forward in very positive directions.

References

Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy. (1986). *A nation prepared: Teachers for the 21st century.* New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York.

National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform.* Retrieved July 8, 2008, from http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/index.html.

Kathy Brady-Sztelle is a multiage primary teacher who has been in education for 24 years. She became a National Board Certified Teacher in 2002. She currently teaches first and second grade at North Barrington School.

Val Pientka is a middle school art teacher with 28 years experience in public education. She became a National Board Certified Teacher in 2001 and looks forward to recertifying in 2010. Val teaches sixth, seventh, and eighth grade art at Barrington Middle School.

Reflective and Collaborative Teaching: Confirmations from the Research and from the Field

Gwynne Kell
Round Lake Area School District #116

If we try to recall those pivotal moments when we truly connected to school as a child, most of us would probably remember a moment we were actively engaged. We might recall a painting we created, a talent we discovered, or a gadget we invented, inspiring us to think about future possibilities. But it's unlikely we'd recall a time when the teacher was pacing to and fro at the front of the room lecturing to us in preparation for a test. A teacher's main goal should be to create enthusiasm about school and learning on a daily basis so that their students will also have those pivotal moments to remember (Wolk, 2007). Creating opportunities for all students to be successful is the challenge teachers face daily. They have the power to instill in each student the gift of confidence. What we believe about each student's capacity to learn is as important as what we teach them.

Teachers must keep asking themselves, "How does this child learn?" and striving to learn the answer.

It is a fact that teachers are challenged in today's schools as they attempt to address the needs of students with disabilities and students whose first language is not English. Knowing and accepting such challenges is a critical first step in creating inclusive learning environments. There are a variety of strategies that teachers can employ to assist them, but closing the door and teaching autonomously is not one of them. To fully embrace these challenges, teachers must be committed to ongoing professional development and reflection about their practice. Teachers must keep asking themselves, "How does this child learn?" and striving to learn the answer. Not only must they have core competency skills, but they must accept that today's classrooms are made up of students with a wide range of learning abilities. To be highly effective, teachers must be able to meet a myriad of students' needs.

Marzano's analysis of the research in *The Art and Science of Teaching* (2007) emphasizes the achievement gains students make when placed in classrooms with highly effective teachers. Studies indicate gains of as much as 13 percentile points to 18 percentile points in reading and math. To be a highly effective teacher requires that educators have the capacity to create an inclusive learning environment for all.

Developing skills to collaborate with colleagues is a key component in creating an inclusive learning environment (Idol, 2002). Collaboration includes working together in supportive and mutually beneficial relationships. It is the conceptual umbrella under which problems, resources, and solutions are shared in an atmosphere that promotes interactive problem solving to reach common goals. Friend and Cook (2003) have extensively researched models of inclusive education using collaborative practices such as co-teaching, parallel teaching, and teaming. As a district administrator, I've introduced co-teaching in two districts and the initial response from staff was what I expected. The newer teachers to the field were more receptive to the concept first introduced to them during their teacher preparation programs while the veteran teachers were more resistant to the concept as they had been trained in more traditional, autonomous methods.

Whatever the nature of each teacher's initial preparation, it is critical that the collaborative process be introduced thoughtfully so that all parties involved will buy into it. Participation must be voluntary if it's going to work at all. When a teacher says to me, "I'll go to the training, but that doesn't mean I'm committing to co-teach," I understand that teacher may not adopt the collaborative process. But when a

general education and special education high school teacher ask me what they need to know to co-teach in the upcoming school year, a successful collaboration is more likely.

The collaborative-consultative model merges general and special education in order to increase classroom efficacy. General and special educators must be flexible when implementing co-teaching experiences. They must also establish effective communication skills, cooperation, and mutual respect. Successful integration is more likely to occur when participants share beliefs and have mutual understandings about the issues they face. For instance, when mainstreaming a student with disabilities into a general education classroom, the teacher most likely to be considered is one who believes in creating more inclusive classrooms. The special education student is not as likely to be successful if the general education teacher doesn't implement those strategies identified in the student's IEP. Recently, a first grade teacher said to me, "I don't like to read the IEP before a student comes into my class because I want them to have a clean slate like the others." While the teacher may have been well intentioned, she did not share my belief about inclusive best practices. Teachers must plan and implement accommodations identified in IEPs to effectively meet the needs of special education students.

In addition to understanding some of the components that are key to successful collaboration, it is also important to note some of the barriers, including lack of planning, lack of training, lack of time, lack of common

As a district administrator, I've introduced co-teaching in two districts and the initial response from staff was what I expected.

knowledge base, lack of funding, lack of ownership for all students, teacher overload, and hierarchical relationships. Given the nature of these barriers, only with administrative support can their impact be minimized.

In a series of case studies, Hatch, White, and Faigenbaum (2005) demonstrate the ways teachers can use their expertise and informal authority to improve student performance through action research. Establishing credibility through their own research and exemplary practice, educators can find creative ways to influence policy and implement change. Hatch et al. demonstrated the ways in which four teachers' interests and passion for teaching provided the foundation for their own discovery and unique contributions. Their roles as teachers did not stop them from pursuing an ideal of changing policy and practice in their own

Reflection on practice, while essential for professional growth, is not universally practiced.

districts and beyond. It is an activism not often seen in the profession today. I hope it represents a wave of change in teaching. Teachers can make great strides when they realize the power they have to positively influence change by sharing their practice, reflections and findings through example and networking. Teachers who open up their classrooms for other teachers to observe, ask questions, and offer advice provide examples of the kind of openness, collegiality, and collaborative practice that should naturally occur in schools across the country. Reflection on practice, while essential for professional growth, is not universally practiced. Reflective teaching is exemplified when teachers can willingly give and receive feedback without reprisal. However, when I offered a group of four teachers the opportunity to be wired so a consultant could provide immediate feedback in their ears while they were teaching, not one volunteered.

Since the 1980s, changes in federal and state education mandates have required significant changes in the roles of both educators and special educators (Reynolds, Wang & Wahlberg, 1987). As a result, special educators and general educators must work more cooperatively within the context of ongoing educational reform. We need to ask ourselves if the inservice and preservice education of current and future teachers is providing them with the competencies they need in this ever-changing field. With the administrators' support, school districts must provide accessible and ongoing professional development that responds to the specific needs of individual schools. Staff development requires continuous support and encouragement from school leaders as well as school

boards. It is essential that teachers' and administrators' professional development occur simultaneously, as it is through the actions of administrators as continuous learners that teachers will become motivated to participate in ongoing professional development.

By opening up and collaborating with our colleagues, we become better practitioners. Creating "lifelong learners" should not just be a mantra for every school district's mission statement; it should be a guiding principle. Growth, inclusiveness, collaboration, achievement: these are not just words with empty meanings. They are words that define education at its best. I hope all those entering the teaching field will remain open to learning, continue to ask questions, and welcome all students into their classrooms. To those in the field who may have lost some of the spark of teaching, remember what you felt when you first made a difference in a child's life and let that feeling guide your daily practice.

References

Friend, M. & Cook, L. (2003). *Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Idol, L. (2002). *Creating collaborative and inclusive schools*. Austin, TX: Pro-ed.

Marzano, R. (2007). *The art and science of teaching.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision of Curriculum Development.

Reynolds, M. C., Wang, M. C., & Wahlberg, H. J. (1987). The necessary restructuring of special and regular education. *Exceptional Children, 53,* 391-398.

Hatch, T., White, M. E., & Faigenbaum, D. (2005). Expertise, credibility, and influence: How teachers can influence policy, advance research, and improve performance. *Teachers College Record, 107*(5), 1004-1035. Retrieved July 8, 2008, from http://www.tcrecord.org ID Number 11848.

Wolk, S. (2007). Why go to school? *Phi Delta Kappan, 88*(9), 648-657.

Gwynne Kell, Ph.D. is Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Support Services at Round Lake Area School District #116, Round Lake, Illinois. Her areas of interest include collaboration, co-teaching, and inclusive best practices. Her dissertation analyzed the relationship between school leadership and effective inclusion in five urban elementary schools.

Community and Language Immersion: Actively Using Spanish in Our Community

Denise L. Hatcher
Aurora University

Languages have multifaceted, complicated reasons for existence. At times, language can serve as a bridge, promoting positive interactions. Other times, language can create a barrier that sets some individuals apart to the extent that those who don't speak a certain language are never granted the rights or privileges of those who do. A well-known behaviorist, B. F. Skinner, noted, "learning a language is like learning anything else; we are rewarded when we do it right and that causes us to learn" (as cited in Van Patten, 2003, p. 2). As one who has worked hard to learn a second language, I have always felt a deep compassion for those who want to learn a second language but are never granted that opportunity.

I know that the location of my birth allowed me educational privileges not bestowed upon others. I attended schools where second languages were offered in middle school, long after I mastered my first language. As Krashen (1996) notes, literacy in one language does allow a language learner to transfer those learned skills to a second language. Literacy in my first language combined with an amazing second language teacher ignited my passion for language instruction. This exemplary teacher made the novelty of learning Spanish such an enjoyable experience that I have not lost interest in the language since my first introduction to it in a formal educational environment. Time that I spent outside of the United States and in newly discovered communities within my own country strengthened my love of and interest in my chosen second language. The experiences I had and the people that I met as a speaker of a second language have left strong impressions on me that greatly impacted the person I have become.

My own background has allowed me to spend the last seventeen years encouraging others to learn a second language. I have used my role as a Spanish educator to challenge others while challenging myself to use my knowledge of a second language to bring about positive change. Two of my longest lasting efforts to promote second-language learning have included a literacy outreach program in my community and a Spanish Club at a local elementary school. While these two endeavors are very important to me, I recently initiated a new project that could have even greater impact on the lives of individuals who are frequently not seen and not heard.

I teach at a small college where the majority of those in charge of the physical appearance of the institution do not speak English. During the fall semester, their supervisor approached me to ask about teaching his staff English. Knowing and having talked to these individuals, I knew that they had not had positive experiences in a traditional formal educational environment and so this new learning experience with me had to be unlike any they had experienced before. As Tennant and Pogson (1995) note, sometimes in education, "there is a move away from what might be called academic problem solving and toward everyday problem solving" (p. 28). Having taught English as a second language as well as English as a foreign language, I was well aware of the fact that there are a variety of agendas that push second language learning (McKay, 1993). I designed a course with these considerations in mind and I believe that my original goal of having Spanish-students actively involved in their own learning is leaving a strong impression on more people than I ever imagined.

Literacy in my first language combined with an amazing second language teacher ignited my passion for language instruction.

The Project

There are a variety of students enrolled in a Community and Language course where I teach. A few of them are Spanish majors who, for one reason or another, cannot participate in an immersion experience outside of the United States. Some are in this course to complete upper-level Spanish credit to earn a minor in the language. And, others are enrolled to earn upper-level credits they can use towards graduation. All of the students enrolled in the course are seeking the same outcome: to become more comfortable reading, writing, speaking, and listening to Spanish by practicing the language inside and outside of the classroom.

The course met on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week. In order to measure the students' progress, on Mondays students attended a traditional Spanish class where vocabulary development was emphasized. For class on Wednesdays, the students chose to be placed within various sectors of the nearby Spanish-speaking community to use their Spanish in authentic settings. Then, on Fridays, native Spanish-speaking employees of the college attended class with the traditionally enrolled students to create a truly bilingual experience.

I emphasized the value of creating a positive, welcoming atmosphere where all participants would feel valued and comfortable working cooperatively.

The goals were very consistent with those of other Spanish courses, the most important of which would be to increase language skills. Working in small groups would encourage the active use of the target language and promote more authentic pronunciation and speaking skills. Additionally, the Spanish students would improve their reading and writing skills through weekly written reflections.

An additional goal was to create the most positive learning environment possible. Before *nuestros amigos* (our friends) arrived on that first Friday, I explained to the college students that many Spanish speaking employees had had negative educational experiences in the past, so we needed to create a very nurturing environment. Consistent with the philosophy of social psychologist Aronson (2000), I emphasized the value of creating a positive, welcoming atmosphere where all participants would feel valued and comfortable working cooperatively.

The first Friday, no one really knew what to expect. The students arrived early and waited for the custodial staff to arrive after their shift which had started at 5 a.m. and ended at 1:15 p.m. Five male students, two in the college course and three wanting to learn English, were grouped together. The females divided themselves into small groups of two to four individuals. They spent some time introducing themselves in broken English and Spanish before I conducted a large group session that concentrated on their reasons for wanting to know two languages. All the participants had different reasons for wanting to improve their language skills. Whether they were learning English or Spanish, everyone agreed that the second language would lead to greater success at work. After some friendly chatter, the participants worked in small groups to create lists of what they most needed to practice in the language they were trying to perfect. Overall, I felt this was an extremely important meeting in that the learners were able to help identify what the purpose of the course should be with regards to their needs and interests (Krashen & Terrell, 1988). After the first session, some of the students shared tidbits of information they had learned about *nuestros amigos*, helping to establish a positive and respectful tone for future meetings.

Since the individuals themselves were coming from such a vast array of backgrounds, I decided that a mixture of activities and skills would be taught. Some weeks I created grammar packages that emphasized things such as parts of speech, the placement of adjectives, and possession. To best ensure that all understood, it was very helpful to compare and contrast English and Spanish grammar. To give a more immediate sense of acquisition, I also decided to include vocabulary. Aside from trying to find pictures of work-related vocabulary, I created bilingual lists of sentences and questions that would be helpful in a workplace setting.

As a Spanish teacher, I have many "tricks" that I use to keep my students engaged in the content area. Traditional students often arrive wondering how college will be different from high school. For me, this is an advantage and a disadvantage. Since we cover our

content in fewer class sessions, students must come to realize that they have to work more independently. But, many of the students arrive in my classroom having had teachers who employed a variety of teaching strategies and techniques. This is not the same for *nuestros amigos* since many of them have not been enrolled in a formal educational setting before or have

One of* nuestros amigos *explained that no one had ever made her a card before.

not been successful in one. Hence, many of the activities that I employ needed to be taught. This included, but was not limited to, filling in a crossword puzzle, completing a matching assignment, standing up until a correct answer was supplied, and having the students draw on the board in front of their peers.

One of the most memorable class activities was a celebration of Valentine's Day. Before Valentine's Day I handed out red and pink construction paper to each Spanish student. As they began to ask questions, I also handed out a bilingual sheet containing words and phrases that might be appropriate to place on a card. I asked them to create the best bilingual valentines they could. I told the students they had one week to be as creative as possible. Their work amazed me! One student created a heart basket with various bilingual arrows. Another made color photo-copies from the "lotería" game and glued his copies, with a bean as the space marker, onto the front of each card. One student-athlete made cards that proclaimed, "Para ser mi valentín, hay que tener el corazón de los Chivas." And, another student completed her valentines early and purchased two dozen king-size candy bars. As *nuestros amigos* left that Friday afternoon, it was quite touching to seem them so excited about something that the Spanish students had done. Several of the Spanish students were especially touched when one of *nuestros amigos* explained that no one had ever made her a card before.

Interestingly enough, the winter of 2008 in the region where our school is located was one of the coldest and snowiest on record. I remember one Friday in particular when an especially heavy snowfall continued as the day went on. Listening to local elementary, middle and high schools decide to send students home, our college administration decided to cancel all afternoon classes. Just as I was walking to my classroom to make the announcement that they had permission to leave, some of *nuestros amigos* began to appear. As the students promised me they would drive home carefully, I assured them that I could teach *nuestros amigos* without them for that day. After the Spanish students left, we had a very productive class session which focused on the apostrophe mark, a form of punctuation that does not exist in Spanish. We were all having so much fun deciding if the apostrophe in different sentences was showing possession or shortening words that this class went well beyond the scheduled fifty minutes.

Class with *nuestros amigos* was still held during our scheduled spring break since they had expressed disappointment the week before upon learning that there would not be regularly scheduled classes. The fact that *nuestros amigos* started work at 5a.m. and never complained about staying after work to learn English seemed to motivate many of us to give them every opportunity we could to learn.

Again, there was a social component as well as an academic intent. The women were especially excited about inviting me to lunch with them one day. For special occasions as well as monthly luncheons, the women prepared by far the best Mexican food I have ever eaten. The day they invited me they did not let me know that it was Lorena's baby shower, but they each smiled as they explained to me in English what

Some of the Spanish students began to express anger as they heard politicians promising to mandate the forced use of English.

they had prepared to bring to the luncheon. When I complimented one woman on her flan, she promised to make me some. And, María, followed her lead by promising to make me my own chicken salad for me some day.

This new course grouped students learning Spanish with those learning English as conversational partners.

The language skills that were developed combined with the friendships that were formed left stronger impressions and more important life lessons than any lecture I could have prepared. As Tennant and Pogson note (1995) academic problem solving and everyday problem solving can both have important roles in a classroom. All of the participants have learned that language acquisition is a much more complicated process than many realize. This project involved a real-life experience that allowed its participants to:

> learn to respect one another and to feel empathy and compassion for one another—even for those who, on the surface, might seem very different from us in race, ethnicity, interests, athleticism, appearance, style of dress, and so on. (Aronson, 2000, p. 170)

During the process of this course, some of the Spanish students began to express anger as they heard politicians promising to mandate the forced use of English. They came to acknowledge that such laws requiring all of the people within the United States to use "English only" are ways to further alienate and discard an already largely voiceless group of individuals.

As these two very different groups of individuals, traditional college students learning Spanish and native Spanish-speaking custodial workers, worked together to attempt to master two languages, everyone began to witness Freire's idea that "World and human beings do not exist apart from each other, they exist in constant interaction" (1997, p. 32).

Conclusion

As English and Spanish language learners worked together to learn language skills as well as valuable life lessons, they witnessed the many ways language skills, or a lack thereof, can create restrictions. This experience, regardless of first language, created transformed learners with newly reconstructed views about language and its role in society. Everyone involved gained new appreciation for and understanding of the process of learning a second language. With regards to language, the participants in this project witnessed different routes to learning. They discovered that

> development can and will take different routes. The nature, timing and processes of development will vary according to the experiences and opportunities of individuals and the circumstances of their lives. What this means for teaching, in the first instance, is that one should not have a singular conception of the proper or most effective route to development. (Tennant & Pogson, 1995, p. 197)

So, in education where we are so accustomed to numerical values defining achievement, how did I measure who was learning and what was being learned? The Community and Language Immersion students were graded on weekly reflections, in-class activities, homework, and numerous vocabulary building activities and quizzes. But, those learning English were not officially enrolled in a program where they must receive a grade. So, was success defined by the fact that everyone seemed more comfortable speaking English and Spanish? What did the e-mails from the traditional students expressing sadness over not meeting due to a snow day say? What about the fact that our friends began to make eye contact with us outside of class? As we worked on Spanish on Mondays and Wednesdays, I believed that my students were more comfortable speaking and using their Spanish. It was great to receive an e-mail from the boss of *nuestros amigos* noting that they were making an effort to speak English at times, when they never did before. It was rewarding to read my students' reflection papers each Monday. And, it was wonderful to have lengthy conversations in English with *nuestros amigos* with whom I feel closer than ever.

This experience, regardless of first language, created transformed learners with newly reconstructed views about language and its role in society.

The participants learned not only language skills, but many other important lessons that have transformed their lives and their appreciation for and understanding of second language learning. Some of the Spanish language students have expressed interest in seeking out positions teaching English as a second language. Others plan to continue their newly formed friendships.

It is my dream that those who participated in this course will continue to improve their own second language skills, and they will help others find the road to bilingualism a little less steep than those before them.

References

Aronson, E. (2000). *Nobody left to hate*: *Teaching compassion after Columbine*. New York: Worth Publishers.

Freire, P. (1997). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (20th anniversary ed.). New York: Continuum.

Krashen, S. D. (1996). *Under attack*: *The case against bilingual education*. Culver City, CA: Language Education Associates.

Krashen, S. D. & Terrell, T. D. (1988). *The natural approach*: *Language acquisition in the classroom*. Essex, England: Pearson Education.

McKay, S. L. (1993). *Agendas for second language literacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tennant, M & Pogson, P. (1995). *Learning and change in the adult years: A developmental perspective*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

VanPatten, B. (2003). *From input to output: A teacher's guide to second language acquisition*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Denise Hatcher is an Associate Professor of Spanish at Aurora University where she has taught for the last twelve years. She researched and wrote both the minor and major areas of study for Spanish for Aurora University. Besides teaching a variety of Spanish courses, Dr. Hatcher also enjoys teaching the general education course: Culture, Diversity and Expression. Her interests include first and second language acquisition, bilingual education, English as a second language, English as a foreign language, qualitative research, and traveling to any Spanish speaking country possible.

Planting Seeds of Resilience: Counseling Students with Special Needs

Donna S. Larson
Kishwaukee Education Consortium (KEC)

It's the day before Thanksgiving. There are 35 people coming to my house in the morning. As I'm leaving school, I get a call from the caseworker of a former student. He's been on the run for two weeks, committed a series of crimes, and is probably desperate. The caseworker thinks he may be back in our community and asks if I can help look for him. Within just a few minutes, I find him walking down the street. I sit and talk with him in my car while the caseworker is calling my cell phone to warn me that he might be dangerous. He's angry, scared, tired, hungry, and cold. I hug him and tell him I love him. Then I give him eight dollars in change, all I have, and drop him off at McDonald's. I call the caseworker who notifies the police and he is picked up. At least he'll get Thanksgiving dinner and a warm bed.

I'm old and I'm tired. My caseload is more than 120 students ages twelve to twenty. I've been doing this since Ronald Reagan was president. I haven't sat down for lunch, had a planning period, or used a faculty bathroom since 1990. My college friends make six figures, wear designer clothes and go on international business trips. What was I thinking?

I'm old and I'm tired. My caseload is more than 120 students ages twelve to twenty. I've been doing this since Ronald Reagan was president.

I am the counselor, nurse, mother, teacher at a regional, optional, alternative education program. I go to bed at night worrying about kids and get up in the morning to help them learn. Metaphorically I frame my work as that of a gardener. I plant the seeds of resilience all day long and hope they grow. I learn as much from the plants in my garden as I teach them. Where some see weeds, I see wildflowers.

I always wanted to be a teacher. I loved books and learning, and thought the crazy, nerdy kids at school were interesting. I also have a big mouth. In junior high I got into so much trouble at school that they put me in the Special Education Room. I helped the seriously overloaded teacher, who also happened to have severe cerebral palsy. She trusted me to do the right thing. We didn't suspend naughty students then; we found different things for them to do. And a long time ago someone took a chance on me.

I became a teacher in the 1970s about the time PL 94-142 (*Education of All Handicapped Children Act* also known as the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* or *IDEA*) was enacted. I studied Exceptional Child Education because I cringed at the thought of teaching out of basic readers. I hated the idea that every student would learn the same thing at the same pace from the same book. I liked making my own materials and disliked the smell of mimeograph fluid. I was intrigued by the student the other teachers talked about in the teacher's lounge. *That* was the kid I wanted in my class. I wanted to take a chance on *that* kid. I loved the challenge of tilling the soil and watering the ground those kids walked on. As a naïve gardener, I believed if I did my job right, those wild seeds could grow into healthy, productive flowers that could make the world a better place.

And I still believe that.

I feel like a Las Vegas showgirl. I put the glitz and the glamour in the subjects I teach. I use gimmicks and I bribe. I stand up, I pace, I jump up and down, and I make a fool of myself. I offer opportunities to talk out loud, try new ideas, and explore the boundaries of a subject. I run home at night and do my research based

on the questions my students ask. I help them connect the dots until the content of my lesson reaches a place that makes sense in their lives.

I read lesson plans from seasoned teachers who can't tell me one thing about the students they are teaching. They have no Plan B for the student who doesn't learn by Plan A. If I put cardboard cutouts in the seats of their classrooms, the lessons wouldn't change. They passed the competency exam, got their certificates, interviewed for jobs, and got hired at good schools led by good people, but they don't get it. As a society, we spend billions of dollars on education. They are hard-earned dollars from former children. We are entrusted with the task of creating an environment where everyone can learn. Despite all the government programs, experts, fancy computer systems and interventions, it appears we have forgotten the biggest lesson of all. William Butler Yeats once said, "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." Education is an occupation of the heart. The relationship between the student and teacher is what changes lives.

Storms come and go often in the lives of at-risk youth. Like plants without solid root systems, they blow around all over the place.

When teachers do their jobs day after day and demonstrate by example that they are learners themselves—they can screw up and laugh at themselves—students begin to believe they are human. When they politely but consistently draw the line, establish the boundary, and create a learning environment that is safe and secure; students will feel safe enough to concentrate on learning new ideas. When at-risk youth understand that teachers aren't going to embarrass them, abandon them, abuse them or exploit them, they will try new behaviors. One of the advantages of alternative education is that it is possible to have a student every day for many years. Imagine the difference teachers can make in a student's life when they can spend every school day with him or her for six or seven years!

It takes patience to tend my garden of wildflowers. Storms come and go often in the lives of at-risk youth. Like plants without solid root systems, they blow around all over the place. As with anything worth having, success doesn't happen overnight. At-risk students may struggle, but they will also work hard, especially when appropriately praised and appreciated.

There are so many children that are at risk of failing in America's classrooms. Often these children have not had good role models. Good behavior and self-control have to be taught, but also modeled by the school family. When we encounter adolescents who are not motivated by duty to community, family, or themselves, we recognize that they need guidance in order to control themselves and deal with other people. They need assistance in creating a support network for times when the storms come. While we can argue that these are the responsibilities of the family and not public education, it is a moot point because we ***are*** family. By offering opportunities for independence and by getting our students involved in neighborhood and community, we encourage the value of social relationships. We show our students that connecting to other people makes us all better citizens and happier people.

When a seedling germinates in a polluted environment, it has difficulty thriving. Many at-risk teens believe substance abuse is normal and acceptable behavior.

When a seedling germinates in a polluted environment, it has difficulty thriving. Many at-risk teens believe substance abuse is normal and acceptable behavior. They think money is important because it will buy "stuff," and "stuff" will make them happy. They are wildly ambitious, but not highly motivated. They watch a lot of TV that focuses on exorbitant lifestyles. We've recently seen Britney Spears go from Mickey Mouse Club to tabloid joke. My students see a rich chick with a cool life, lots of attention, and a big house. I see a talented, yet ill-equipped young mother who has lost her way.

I believe I have a responsibility to help my students put things in perspective. By teaching them to try to combat depression naturally, to limit their exposure to

violence in its many forms, to cultivate realistic expectations, and to accept criticism, I help foster healthy growth. By providing career counseling, I affirm that we can work together to provide the nutrients necessary for sustained development in the future. Without any fancy budget, specific curriculum, needs assessment, or government survey, I can simply relate what my former students tell me: "Thanks for not giving up on me. Thanks for telling me the truth. Thanks for saying 'No' and meaning it. Thanks for seeing the part of me that I couldn't see myself. Thanks for showing me the way."

I have buried too many students, and I've lost way too many to the street, to gangs, to the violence of their families, to drugs, to hopelessness, depression, and the kind of despair that is almost impossible to recover from.

Don't get me wrong. I have buried too many students, and I've lost way too many to the street, to gangs, to the violence of their families, to drugs, to hopelessness, depression, and the kind of despair that is almost impossible to recover from. I see their faces in my sleep. I wonder if there was something else I should have tried or could have done. And I have become cynical about the system; but I have not become cynical about the learner. While too many teens find themselves on a path that is not a healthy one, there is always hope. In a drought or the dead of winter, seeds may go dormant, but the potential for new growth is available each spring. It's never too late for a little mulch.

I am a counselor and a teacher. I am also a wife, a mother, a friend, a volunteer, and a businesswoman. I choose to work with at-risk kids. Often, it's not very pretty. My friend, who is a nun, describes my job as an "apostolic adventure." She is correct. It has been an adventure and a privilege.

Donna S. Larson is a graduate of the University of South Florida and Northern Illinois University. She has been the Special Needs Counselor and Head Teacher at the Kishwaukee Education Consortium (KEC) in DeKalb, Illinois since 1991. The Kishwaukee Education Consortium is an association of area high schools whose activities provide vocational-technical training as well as alternative education programs for at-risk youth.

Call for Action: Educating Our Young Children

Joyce Laben
Keeneyville District #20

"Grand Theft Auto." That was one parent's response on a kindergarten registration survey when asked about his child's favorite video game. Another disconcerting answer was "Never" in response to the question: "How often do you read to your child?" This child's brain is developing, and he will be expected to perform, behaviorally and academically, at the same level as his peers. By third grade he will be expected to read at grade level and will be tested to ensure that he is not left behind. Is age five too late to begin formal education? My response is "Yes." Our educational system is reaching a crisis point, and we need to act now to start formal quality education for all children at age three, not age five.

By three years of age, a child from a privileged home has heard 30 million more words than a child from an underprivileged home.

Early education provides both individual and societal benefits. I can personally attest to the benefits to an individual child. Billy came to our early childhood program with social, linguistic, and cognitive developmental delays. He did not play or interact in any way with the other children. He spoke one word consistently: "Thomas." His cognitive development could not be assessed because he would not cooperate with the evaluator. During his first days in the program he took off his shoes and socks, lay under the table, lifted the table with his feet, screamed and cried. He was still in a diaper and fought when his diaper needed changing. By the time Billy entered kindergarten, he was cooperating, interacting, and communicating. He was happy. He no longer needed special education services. If you walked into his classroom today, you would not be able to identify Billy because he is a fully functioning learner.

Children entering kindergarten are expected to have emergent literacy skills including oral language, vocabulary, and phonemic awareness. Children develop these skills when they converse with others and when individuals read to them. All children are expected to enter school with these skills already developed. With the current pressure to read at grade level by third grade, all children need to have the prerequisite skills to progress in their literacy development to meet standard expectations. As I review our local survey data at kindergarten registration, I observe that many children enter with delayed oral language and vocabulary skills as assessed by picture naming as well as delayed phonemic awareness as assessed by rhyming. By three years of age, a child from a privileged home has heard 30 million more words than a child from an underprivileged home (Hart & Risley, 2003). The question arises: Do we have the literacy development resources needed to ensure that all children become successful grade-level readers by third grade? Is it already too late? Have they been left behind before they begin?

On a societal level, the evidence is clear. *The Economic Fact Sheet* published in May 2007 by The Joint Economic Committee, chaired by Senator Charles Schumer, identifies the importance of high quality preschool education:

> Future fiscal challenges, global economic competition, and shifting demographic trends all highlight the need for policies to improve the skills and productivity of American workers and thereby increase future living standards. A promising strategy for achieving these aims is expanding the government investment in

high-quality preschool education. (p. 1)

As in political races, the economy is the bottom line when justifying government spending. The Joint Economic Committee supports an investment in early education in order to address the future economic needs of the country.

One may wonder how teaching a three year old can strengthen the economy of a country the size of the United States. The Economic Fact Sheet indicates that the children attending high quality preschools are more likely to graduate from high school and attend college. These individuals have higher projected earnings and employment rates. On the other hand, children who do not have the opportunity to attend high quality pre-schools are more likely to participate in risky behavior, need special education, engage in criminal behavior and become pregnant. In other words, children who attend high quality preschools are more likely to become

I found a call for high quality preschool education in a most unlikely place: the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.

contributors to society while those who do not are more likely to become noncontributors.

What is the cost? As a society, we can not afford *not* to invest in early education. In a longitudinal study of preschool programs, Belfield, Nores, Barnett, and Schweinhart (2006) found that every $1 invested in high quality preschool education yielded a $12.90 return. This is one of the best financial investments this country can make. Investors in the stock market would scramble to get such a return. In addition, reduced crime by males was a major gain. This study indicates that with pre-school education, we not only have a country that is growing stronger economically but a country with less crime, and therefore, an improved quality of life.

Recently, I found a call for high quality preschool education in a most unlikely place: the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. The bank cited Tolnick and Grunewald (2008) in concluding that "the economic benefits of ensuring good early childhood development" are so compelling that it is time to "design and implement a system to do it." According to Tolnick and Grunewald, high quality preschool provided a return of $3 to $17 for every $1 invested. After adjusting for inflation, this translated into an annual rate of return of 7 to 18 percent.

***Formal education should begin at age three, not as* preschool *but as* school.**

Given this cost-benefit information, what are federal and state governments doing? The National Institute for Early Education Research found that only 3.2% of three year olds were enrolled in state preK, state special education, and Head Start programs. Illinois ranked first with 18.5% enrollment while 24 states had 0% participation (2007). The enrollment for four year olds was better at 21.8%. Florida was ranked first with 56.7% while eight states had 0% enrolled. Since 2002, the average for three-year-old enrollment has been flat at around 3% while four-year-old enrollment has increased from 14% to the current 21.8%. The average state funding in 2002 was $4,342 per child per year, declining in 2006 to $3,610, and increasing slightly in 2007 to $3,642 per child.

If the average state funding is $3,642 per student and the return rate is between $3 and $17, the return on investment in preschool education ranges from $10,926 to $61,914. Where else in the government is it possible to get a return of $61,914 on a $3,642 investment? This is the projected return in terms of cold hard cash. As a society, we will be accountable to our children for the quality of their lives as well.

I recommend that we replace the descriptor *preschool education* with *education*, plain and simple. Formal education should begin at age three, not as *preschool* but as *school.* With this paradigm shift, both the attitude toward early education and the quality will improve. Since the positive research results cited above involved effective programs and qualified teachers, trained professional educators will be needed to teach the nation's three and four year olds.

In the state of Illinois, the mandatory age for attending school is seven. When the laws for manda-

tory education were created, our culture and society were very different. Research on brain development was in the Stone Age when these laws were enacted. With research and technological advances, our knowledge of the brain has increased significantly. We can apply these new insights to educational processes. It is time to change the age of mandatory education in light of these advances. As a society, we need to encourage our children to reach beyond the immediate gratifications of Grand Theft Auto. We need to offer the youngest members of our society a wide array of noble pursuits rather than a steady diet of entertainment based on stealing cars and wreaking havoc. The future is our children's present, and education is our gift to them.

References

Belfield, C. R., Nores, M., Barnett, S., & Schweinhart, L. (2006). The high/scope Perry Preschool Program: Cost-benefit analysis using data from age-40 followup. *Journal of Human Resources 41*(1), 162-190.

Hart, B., & Risley, T. (2003). The early catastrophe: The 30 million word gap. *American Educator. 27*(1), 4.

Joint Economic Committee (2007). The economic benefits of investing in high quality preschools. Retrieved July 9, 2008, from http://jec.senate.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Reports.Reports&ContentRecord_id=C7201D3B-7E9C-9AF9-760D-7BCEF9F1CE8E

National Institute for Early Education Research (2007). The state of preschool 2007. Retrieved July 9, 2008, from http://nieer.org/yearbook/pdf/yearbook.pdf#page=6

Tolnick, A., & Gruenwald, R. (2008). Early intervention on a large scale: The economic benefits of ensuring a good early childhood education development is clear. Now is the time to design and implement a system to do it. Retrieved July 9, 2008, from http://www.minneapolisfed.org/research/studies/earlychild/early_intervention.cfm?js=0

Joyce Laben is a doctoral candidate in educational psychology at Northern Illinois University and a school psychologist at Keeneyville District 20. Her professional experience also includes administration as a principal and assistant principal at the elementary and middle school levels. Her research has focused on parental involvement in schools and on emergent literacy skills of English language learners and monolingual students. She is a recipient of the 2007 Winn Research Award of the Illinois ASCD.

Finding Our Place in a Man's World: Three Generations of Women on Education, Family, and Careers

Sarah Militz-Frielink
Northern Illinois University

"It's a man's world, Sarah. It always has been and it always will be. You go ahead and pursue your dreams, but never forget that you live in a man's world." My father's words, often repeated, came from the old proverb "It's a man's world: a woman's place is in the home" (Lewis, 1974, p. 86). Although my father encouraged me to pursue a Ph.D., become a doctor or lawyer, he firmly believed that men would always rule the world.

You go ahead and pursue your dreams, but never forget that you live in a man's world.

Perhaps this proverb helped fuel my curiosity about my familial and vocational decisions. I wondered how gender might have influenced my life choices. I also started to question the decisions my mother and grandmother had made. Did my grandmother stay at home with her children because she felt she had no other options? Did my mother drop out of college because she could not balance her many roles as a student, wife, and mother?

The Gender Question

In my search to uncover answers about my paternal grandmother, my mother, and myself, I discovered a ghost that haunted all of us—one Betty Friedan defined in *The Feminine Mystique* (1963): "Over and over women heard in voices of tradition and of Freudian sophistication that they could desire no greater destiny than to glory in their own femininity" (p. 15). This mystique encouraged women to find their place in the home and discouraged women from questioning their gender-based identities. Did my mother and grandmother have a chance to answer the question "Who am I?" outside the realm of the mystique?

Historical Roots of the Women's Movement

The three generations of women in my family cannot be understood outside the context of the women's movement. When American women first demanded equality with men in 1848, they confronted two primary social prejudices: "[First] the belief that females were intellectually inferior to males and therefore, rightfully kept in a subordinate position; and [Second] That respectable women should not work outside the home, an idea central to the Victorian cult of domesticity" (Harris, 1978, p. 3). The first feminist wave began in 1848 with the Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention and concluded around 1920 when women gained the right to vote. The second wave began with John F. Kennedy's appointment of the President's Commission on the Status of Women. During this wave, the feminist movement accomplished: The Equal Pay Act in 1963, the establishment of the

The three generations of women in my family cannot be understood outside the context of the women's movement.

National Organization of Women in 1966, and the National Women's Political Conference in 1971. During the third wave of feminism beginning in the 1980s, critics who disagreed with the political goals of the second wave argued about the purpose of the women's movement (St. Pierre, 1999). For example, conservative feminists who grew up during the second

wave of feminism accused their mothers and aunts of going too far, and the term *Feminazi* emerged.

Despite much progress, counterassaults on feminism have hampered all three movements. Right after women won the right to vote, the U.S. War Department incited a campaign against women's rights leaders. As Susan Faludi (1991) notes, "Feminists like Charlotte Perkins Gilman suddenly found they couldn't get their writings published; Jane Addams was labeled a communist and a serious threat to national security;

In the 1980s, the Reagan Administration unleashed an attack on feminism, attempting to abolish the Women's Educational Equity Act of 1974.

and Emma Goldman was exiled" (p. 50). In the 1980s, the Reagan Administration unleashed an attack on feminism, attempting to abolish the Women's Educational Equity Act of 1974 (WEEA), which helped open career paths for women. When Reagan did not succeed in abolishing the WEEA, he tried to cut the funding. When he did not succeed at cutting the funding, he appointed anti-feminist officials to run the advisory council for the WEEA (Tyack & Hansot, 1990). When the U.S. Census Bureau demographers found themselves under increasing pressure to generate data for the government's war against women's independence, the media helped the effort through the publication of anti-feminist data and "fictional accounts of women 'cocooning,' a so-called new social trend in which *Good Housekeeping* created [the] 'New Traditionalist' [who] gladly retreats to her domestic shell" (Faludi, 1991, p. 56).

Schnittker, Freese & Powell, (2002) have examined generational differences in women's responses to the many variations of feminism. My grandmother fits into the first group of respondents because she experienced her political coming of age before the mid 1960s. My mother, who "came of age" during the mid 1960s through early 1970s, fits into the second group of respondents. Coming of age after the second wave of feminism, I fit into the third group. In what ways might this research apply to my own family's experiences?

Feminism

In the excerpts below, I compare responses to interview questions I posed to my grandmother Evelyn Militz, my mother Christine Militz, and myself. In each section—Feminism, Education, Family and Careers—I connect our responses to feminist scholarship.

Question: *Do you consider yourself a feminist (that is someone who believes in improving women's situations and experiences)?*

Grandmother: Yes, I consider myself a feminist. I believe that women should improve their situations and experiences.

Mother: No, I consider myself a woman who has equal rights as a man, nothing more or less than a man. I believe that feminists are too pushy. My friends and I always thought that they were man-hating lesbians.

Self: I consider myself a feminist. I believe in social justice and equal rights for all women. I believe in the empowerment of all women regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and social class.

Question: *What influenced your viewpoint on feminism?*

Grandmother: Nothing really influenced my viewpoint on feminism. I saw right through what the government said about the feminists. I realized that feminists were just trying to help women gain equality with men.

Mother: The media influenced my viewpoints on feminism—newscasts about feminists protesting different causes. Basically what turned me off was Gloria Steinem's quote, "A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle." That was a big turnoff to many of the women in my generation. It takes two to have a baby. We all need fathers. After Steinem's protests, she ended up happily married.

Self: Studying the history of higher education and the history of the women's movement strengthened my viewpoints on feminism. I have never let the government or the media influence my feelings on feminism. I have always rejected negative propaganda about feminism from the government or the media. Even as a child growing up in the 1980s, I believed the anti-feminist propaganda was "off".

Question: *Do you think that women have gained equal status with men, or do you think that we are still unequal?*

Grandmother: I say that they are finally equal. Women are in key men's positions. Women have gained equal status with men. Many women have qualified to work a man's job.

Mother: I think we have made great strides toward equality with men; however, we are still underpaid in the work force. No, I do not believe that we have gained equal status with men.

Self: I think that women have not gained equal status with men. In my lifetime, I hope to see women gain equal status with men in this country. I hope to see women in oppressed countries who experience blatant discrimination experience liberation in my lifetime.

In 2003, Pamela Aronson conducted a study of young women's attitudes toward feminism during the four years following high school. Her interviews with women of my generation revealed that most were "fence-sitters" who "embraced a number of feminist principles yet rejected others and failed to classify themselves as either feminists or non-feminists" (p. 912). Only 14.3 percent of the interviewees shared viewpoints on feminism similar to my own, and the majority of these women reported that they developed these views during women's studies classes.

In Schnittker, Freese, & Powell's study, "members of the second-wave generation [my mother's generation] were more likely to self-identify as feminists than were either younger or older respondents" (p. 619). This finding is *not* consistent with my family's experiences. My mother was the only one who did *not* identify herself as a feminist.

Education

How did our educational experiences influence our identifications with feminism? I posed the following questions in attempt to identify similarities and differences in the ways we remembered gender during our years at school.

Question: *What was your most favorite part about school?*

Grandmother: In grade school, my favorite part was recess. I loved my high school. I loved my modern history class and the teacher in the class. I won a prize for answering the correct answers on a test. My teacher inspired interest in me about the state of Washington—which is where I eventually lived for a few years.

Mother: English Class

Self: I loved my advanced placement English class in high school—even though it was challenging. Our teacher taught passionately about literature and poetry. I will never forget his dynamic lessons and the books, plays, and poems we read in class. The class was more challenging than any English class I took in college.

Question: *What was your least favorite part about school?*

Grandmother: I had a very sad grade school experience. When I came to school in first grade, the nun put me in the second grade. I struggled to keep up. I never had the foundations of first grade. The Catholic teachings about God we learned in school were very frightening: If you looked cross-eyed, God would punish you.

Mother: Gym class, they only let us run, and we could not play sports.

Self: I went to two different grade schools and two different junior highs. I had a horrible time adjusting to the changes in schools.

Question*: Did any teacher or any person ever tell you that you could not do something educationally because of your gender? If so, how did you react?*

Grandmother: No, this did not happen to me. In high school, they were encouraging us girls into the subjects like chemistry and heavy math. My high school encouraged us to do whatever we wanted to do.

Mother: Yes, my gym teacher. In junior high, I wanted to join the basketball team. Girls were not allowed to play basketball. I never understood why because I always played basketball at home with my brothers. We could be cheerleaders, but that was it. We should have had our own team. In high school, they let girls play basketball. I never joined the team at that time. I joined the pep club and foreign exchange club instead.

Self: I do not recall anyone from school ever telling me that I could not do something because of my gender. The only teacher with a doctorate in my high school was a woman. She won national teacher awards and set a great example for her students. She encouraged me to do whatever I wanted to do in life.

As the interviews indicate, my grandmother experienced encouragement from her teachers to pursue "chemistry and heavy math" at Wells High School in Chicago. From the years 1935-1950, Wells High School conducted a progressive curriculum experiment to instill successful democratic living in their students (Pierce, 1951). Since my grandmother attended high school from 1939-1943, she participated in this educational experiment. Her teachers encouraged her to "make the experiences purposeful and significant by considering their nature and functions and their relations to other aspects of living" (Pierce, 1951, p. 524, 526). Boys and girls worked together to create a home-furnishing department store, construct a model living room, decorate the room, and evaluate the results. Students, teachers and parents all endorsed this cooperative learning project with student activities outside traditional gender roles. Since my grandmother participated in this experiment, she may have been shielded from the gender discrimination that women in more traditional schools experienced in her era.

My grandmother experienced encouragement from her teachers to pursue "chemistry and heavy math" at Wells High School in Chicago.

My mother was the only one who remembered experiencing gender discrimination during her school years. She attended junior high before the implementation of Title IX helped create female sport teams. Although she never joined a team herself, she did have the satisfaction of watching some of the first female teams compete during her high school years.

I attended high school in the 1990s, and I do not recall experiencing any gender-bias. I do recall the excitement of learning about multiculturalism: celebrating holidays with music and food from other cultures in high school. According to Elizabeth A. St. Pierce (1999), my teachers "struggled to understand, honor, and teach students from a variety of cultural backgrounds" and tried to help students understand gender, race, and social class relationships (p. 32).

Family and Careers

After discussing school experiences, I posed the following questions about gender influences on decisions about raising a family and pursuing a career. Interview excerpts reflect significant similarities in the messages we received despite the differences in our experiences.

Question: *After high school, did you attend a college or work a job? Share a little about your experiences after high school.*

Grandmother: I did not go to college. I worked a job. I went to work as a gift wrapper at Marshall Fields. There I had contact with people and interactions with people. Later I went to work for the civil service as a biller. I had a very pleasant experience with the girls. They formed a group, and we went to a health club. I became very conscious about exercise, athletics, swimming, and physical health.

Mother: After high school, I attended Illinois Weslyan for a month, but I could not handle being away from home. I transferred to a Catholic College in the city—DePaul. I worked as a waitress while I went to school. DePaul worked out better because I could see my parents every weekend. The teachers were very personable. I left because I had trouble staying focused on school and finishing all the papers.

Self: After high school, I went to Northern Illinois University and earned a degree in special education. Since then I have taught both full-time and part-time for the last nine years. I really enjoyed my time teaching GED classes part-time at a community college. I think I initially went into teaching because I thought the job would complement a family. I felt an internal pressure to make sure that I put my family first before a career. I do not regret it, though. I think my life would be extremely difficult if I chose another profession, such as medicine or law.

Question: *Did someone ever tell you that you could not work a certain job or attend a certain school because of your gender? How did you react?*

Grandmother: Never

Mother: I do not remember if this happened. I do remember, however, having to drop out of nursing school because I had no babysitter. I was getting straight As at Lake Forest College. Your father had a handicap (sleep apnea) that we did not know about yet,

and he could not stay awake to watch you while I was at school. It was a sad day when I left school. My nursing instructor told me that family is the most important thing and I could go back to nursing school in the future.

Self: We used to attend an ultra conservative church. The pastor encouraged the women to stay home with their kids. At the time I was only working part-time and was considering going back to work full-time for financial reasons. The Bible study leaders in the church told me I should not go back to work full-time, so I could focus on raising my children. The Bible study leaders said if I obeyed God and stayed home with my children, then God would bless us financially. The women in the church also told me that the man was the head of the house and that I should submit to my husband. My husband and I eventually left the church, and I went back to work full-time.

Question: *Do you feel that you had a choice about staying home with the kids or working full or part-time?*

Grandmother: I felt influenced by Moody Bible Radio Home Program, which encouraged moms to stay home. The program said that moms should have a hot lunch and a hot dinner ready for the kids. When my children went to high school, I went back to work as a nurse's aide in home health care.

Mother: I had no choice, due to finances, so I went back to work part-time to make extra money. I worked various jobs as a day care provider, telemarketer, and sales clerk.

Self: Yes and no: I did feel the pressure to go back to teaching full-time because of the financial situation we experienced after my husband lost his job from corporate downsizing in 2001. He went back to work at a lower paying job. Although I love teaching, my dream is to become a novelist who makes enough money to stay home and write from home. Currently, I have a job as a fitness columnist for *The Midweek*. This is a step in the right direction. I am also working on writing a novel with two other writing partners. First, we wrote a screenplay, and then we decided to change it into a novel. I am making progress toward my dream of becoming a full-time writer.

In summary, all of us received advice to stay home with our children. My mother had to give up nursing school because my father could not take care of me while she went to school. My mother's nursing instructor told her that she had no choice because "her family came first." When I taught at a community college, we distributed information about childcare and family needs. We also referred parents to a college counselor who helped them find family assistance. I wish these types of resources had been available for my mother.

Conclusion

After our interviews, I asked both my mother and grandmother to react to the proverb: "It's a man's world; A woman's place is in the home." My grandmother feels strongly that the world has changed; it is no longer a man's world. My mother and I feel that the world has changed, but not enough. Women still face inequality and discrimination. All of us disagree that "A woman's place is in the home." We believe that a woman should have a choice about her place—whether she chooses to stay at home with her children, work full-time, or combine home and work in her own unique way.

We believe that a woman should have a choice about her place—whether she chooses to stay at home with her children, work full-time, or combine home and work in her own unique way.

Surprisingly, my grandmother considers herself a feminist. Even so, she is content with her choices as a stay-at-home mother and has no regrets. My mother, in comparison, is experiencing a sense of liberation in her career as a licensed mortgage broker. A senior loan officer, she has worked her way to the top. She closes more mortgages and makes more money than most of the men in her company. I am attending graduate school, raising a family, and attempting to launch my professional writing career. Despite our distinctive experiences, three generations of women in my family all share a common optimism about our life choices.

References

Aronson, P. (2003). Feminists or postfeminists? Young

women's attitudes toward feminism and gender relations. *Gender and Society 17*(4), 903-922.
Faludi, S. (1991). *Backlash: The undeclared war against American women.* New York: Crown
Friedan, B. (1963). *The feminine mystique.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
Harris, B. J. (1978). *Women and the professions in American history.* Greenwood, CT: Greenwood Press.
Lewis, M. E. B. (1974). The feminists have done it before: Applied folklore. *Journal of American Folklore, 87*(383), 85-87.
Pierce, P. R. (1951). Extending curriculum theory: A transition experiment. *The School Review 59*(4), 203-211.
St. Pierre, E. A. (1999). A historical perspective on gender. *The English Journal 88*(3), 29-35.
Schnittker, J, Freese, J., & Powell, B. (2003). Who are feminists and what do they believe? The role of generations. *American Sociological Review, 68*(4), 607-622.
Tyack, D., & Hansot, E. (1990). *Learning together: A history of coeducation in American schools.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Sarah Militz-Frielink is a mother first and foremost. The greatest gifts she ever received were her three children: Gabriel, Grace, and Hannah. She is also a graduate student, a teacher, a martial artist, and a freelance writer. Currently she is completing a graduate degree in Foundations of Education and writing a fitness column for The Midweek. *Her articles have appeared in* The Monthly Aspectarian, One Magazine Denver, *and* The Kane County Chronicle.

THRESHOLDS IN EDUCATION JOURNAL

Call for Manuscripts

Submission Deadline is May 1, 2009

Tentative Issue Title: Aargh!!!—Besides Screaming, Other Ways Educators Communicate

The College of Education at Northern Illinois University *Thresholds in Education Journal* (TEJ) invites manuscripts related to topics which address **issues in educational communication for the Fall 2009 (Vol. 35, No. 3)** edition of the Journal. This issue will be edited by Dr. Andrew T. Kemp, Assistant Professor of Curriculum Leadership at Northern Illinois University.

Manuscripts are invited that are related to the multifaceted issues that influence the communication of educational ideas. The focus and central purpose of this issue is to begin a discourse that will expand the concept of what it means to communicate as an educator. This communication can come in the form of research, journalism, speeches, presentations, philosophical treatises, teaching, art, communication with any and all stakeholders (parents, governmental agencies, non-profits), or any other form of communication in which the primary focus is on educational issues. While it might seem that this topic is too broad, it is important to note that the focus should be on the act of communication. The submission can focus on discourse, rhetoric, communication analysis, linguistics, or any of a vast array of communication topics. Some pertinent guiding questions might be:

(1) What is the purpose of the communication?
(2) To whom is the communication directed?
(3) Who is doing the communicating?
(4) Why is the communication important?

Quantitative and qualitative methodologies including case studies, ethnographies, and narratives are encouraged. In addition, best practices models are welcome, as well as articles from any disciplinary, multidisciplinary, or interdisciplinary perspective.

Writer's Guidelines

These guidelines are provided to maintain the integrity of the *Thresholds in Education* Journal and your scholarship. We have included general guidelines as well as specific information related to common errors. (*Note: Issue editor should forward these guidelines to contributing writers. It is the issue editor's responsibility to insure that all submissions comply with these guidelines*.)

Length: Most issues have 6-8 articles of 3,000 – 5,000 words each. Based on the format below, that is 12-15 double-spaced pages. (The *Thresholds in Education* journal is 36-48 finished pages on average.) Journal length is negotiated with the Managing Editor.

Font: Times or New Times Roman; 12 point for all text. Tables or graphs may be enlarged or reduced. Use your judgment; we will notify you if there is a problem.

Spacing: Double space between sentences in the text. Single space block quotes. Insert two spaces between each sentence (between a period or ending punctuation and starting a new sentence). One space after a colon.

Headings: 1st level: Bold, upper and lower case, left justify. 2nd level: No bolding, italics, upper and lower case, left justify. 3rd level: Bullet or number.

Style: APA Fifth Edition. To maintain the journal's integrity and to meet production standards, all materials must adhere to the APA style manual UNLESS previously negotiated with the Managing Editor. Submissions that do not comply may be rejected or returned for revision.

Margins: 1 inch or 1.5 inches on all sides.

Headers/footers: NONE.

Text Editing: The electronic copy MUST NOT have been subjected to electronic text edits.

Page numbering: Number pages beginning with the first page of text.

Graphic elements: Clear, sharp, black and white photos or camera-ready quotes, poetry or other graphics may accompany your submissions. Provide in the text or in separate files clearly marked, and indicate exactly where the element is to be included in your article. All ancillaries must be approved for reproduction quality.

Title page: Attach as the first page of your manuscript in the following format:

Thresholds in Education Journal Submission
Name of Issue Editor
Title of Article
Author's name(s), position, and location. For example: Marcela Jones, Associate Professor, Department of Adult and Continuing Education, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale; or James Black, 5th Grade Teacher, Jackson Middle School, Tempe, Arizona.
Number of pages/number of words.
Address/phone number/email of principal author.

Format: Submit text in standard manuscript style, Microsoft word, APA 5th Edition—unless otherwise directed by your issue editor. Rule of thumb: Keep it simple! We must transfer your file electronically through several systems, and keeping your submission simple will reduce the chance of errors. If you have preferences or ideas for special formatting of your article, attach those after the biographical sketch at the end of your article. Title that section: **Suggestions for Formatting**. If you suggest special formatting, please provide hard copy of that design.

Italics and Underlining: *Use italics for emphasis or to indicate titles within the text.* (Do not use **bolding** or underlining for emphasis.) Underline titles in the references section only and according to APA 5th Edition format.

Hyphens and Dashes: A hyphen is a short line (-) with no spaces between the line and the letters or numbers it separates. A hyphen separates or connects letters of words, not ideas. (Check APA for further clarification.) A dash differs in use and appearance. It is typed as two hyphens (—) or as one longer line (—).

References: References included in text must be cited in the text and fully annotated at the end of the text under a section titled: References. These references list ONLY material cited in the text. This is not a bibliography. Please PROOF references and citations carefully for completeness and accuracy. Common omissions include: page numbers, location of publisher, volume or number for journals or names of editors in edited text. For a quick online reference: http://www.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/res_strategy/citing/apa.html

Note*: Thresholds in Education* journal reserves the right to reject articles that are not properly cited and referenced.

Biographical Sketch: At the end of the article, include a 4-6 sentence biographical sketch. This may be formal or informal. The issue editor may request consistency among the writers. Sometimes there are reasons to give more personal information in the bio to connect the author to the readership.

> Formal: Jose Blackwell is Assistant Professor of Education Administration at Standish University, Boston. He is author of *Making Cents in Schools* (1998). Dr. Blackwell is Chair of the American Association of School Administrators. His research interests are in rural school financing.
>
> Informal: Jose Blackwell is Assistant Professor of Education Administration at Standish University, Boston. He is an author, community activist, and educator; he taught middle school for 10 years before becoming an administrator. His passions are in support of rural school financing and preservation. He is also a husband, father, and avid fisherman.

You may also invite correspondence from the readership. Indicate the preferred format: written, phone, mail, and provide the appropriate number(s)/addresses.

Submission Deadlines and Procedures: The issue editor will arrange these with you.

To Request Copies of the Publication: Authors receive three (3) complementary copies of the issue. If you wish to **pre-order** extra copies at our cost (averages $5/copy), contact your issue editor or e-mail thresh@niu.edu.
Direct questions to your issue editor or to the *Thresholds*' production staff at

Thresholds in Education
LEPF/GH 225
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
Phone: 818.753.9359
Fax: 814.753.8750
E-mail: thresh@niu.edu

Visit our website at:

http://www.cedu.niu.edu/lepf/foundations/thresholds/index.html

Contact: Editor
Thresholds in Education
Phone 815.753.9359
Fax 815.753.8750

Thresholds in Education
LEPF Dept.
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb IL 60115

http://www.cedu.niu.edu/lepf/thresholds

Thresholds In Education

Subscription and Advertising Information

Thresholds in Education is a refereed journal published quarterly in February, May, August, and November.

2009 Subscription: **Check One:**

1-year Individual Rate $30.00 _____ 1-year Library Rate $45.00 _____

2-year Individual Rate $55.00 _____ 2-year Library Rate $80.00 _____

*For foreign subscriptions add $6.00 per year. Make check payable to **THRESHOLDS IN EDUCATION**.*

Name_____

Street or Box Mailing Address_____

City, State, Zip_____

Affiliation/Position_____

Phone_____ Email_____

Advertising: **Check One:**

1 Page $200.00 _____

1/2 Page $110.00 _____

Classified Rates:

up to 50 words $8.00 _____

51-100 words $15.00 _____

Contact THRESHOLDS for advertising layout information or include camera ready artwork and text with this form. (Dot-matrix print not acceptable.)

Name_____

Street or Box Mailing Address_____

City, State, Zip_____

Affiliation/Position_____

Phone_____ Email_____

Thresholds in Education Foundation
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. PERMIT PAID
PERMIT 120
DEKALB, ILLINOIS 60115