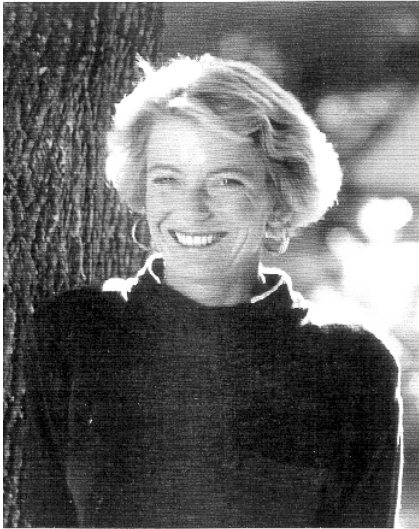


Project Newsletter



*Patricia F. Hunter
1952-1999*

Pat Hunter, a founding Director of the Western Massachusetts Writing Project, died suddenly this past spring. Pat has been a good friend, a co-worker, an inspiration. She leaves an immense gap—in her family, in the Springfield Schools, and in the Western Massachusetts Writing Project.

We can hardly count all the WMWP programs Pat has imagined and carried through: our Retreat, our Summer Institutes, our in-service workshops, our recent activity around the Massachusetts Frameworks, our in-service connections with the Springfield Public Schools, our Fall Reunions.

Pat discovered SmartBoards for us—low-end, affordable computers, and led us into the technological

present. She gave hundreds of in-service workshops; she co-authored articles with us; she gave presentations at NCTE, MTA; she was chosen to participate in NEH institutes. She served on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; she advised the Massachusetts Task Force for Teacher Preparation and the Massachusetts Basic Skills Testing Program.

Pat has been with us since before we began. It was her energy that helped sustain the Five College Writing Committee, which began its fall and spring conferences in 1984. When we decided to apply to become a local site of the National Writing Project, again we did this because we knew we could draw on Pat's expertise and energy. Every summer, Pat led us through the rigorous and exciting six-week Institute; every year she had new and good ideas about where we might go and what we might do.

Pat's family has assured us that she would want us to carry on. Indeed, it was their idea to create the Pat Hunter Memorial Fund for the Western Massachusetts Writing Project, a fund that has so far drawn some \$7,000 in contributions from over 100 people—family, colleagues, teachers and friends. So we do carry on, but with heavy hearts and a sense of personal and professional loss. What we will miss, and what will keep us going, is the image of Pat as she led our meetings: warm, gracious, professional, helping us to do more, to stretch further than we thought we could.

WMWP: 1998-9 Highlights

It is hard to think of the past year without thinking of Pat Hunter and our collective loss, but when I do so I see that we've had yet another remarkable year in our work in the professional development of teachers in our area.

As we go to press, we are working with the new 'class' of Institute alumni, a really talented group of teachers and a substantial addition to our network. Deborah Carlin's summer program on Narrative has just ended, to rave reviews from the teachers who were part of this; Anne Herrington's Teacher as Researcher seminar is in mid-session, and Martín Espada's week-long poetry seminar is about to begin. So it is a full summer.

Highlights of the past year include our Publication Celebration, this year moved to the Campus Center Auditorium to accommodate the crowds that attended; the publication of our first in-service catalog; a lively set of mini-grant projects in the schools; two technology programs in the Springfield schools; and a total of some 12,000 teacher-hours of staff-development programming. And WMWP organized and led a two-day meeting of New England writing projects.

Finally, we're looking forward to the creation of an Executive Board of eight or nine of us, not to replace Pat—that would be impossible—but to bring more of our hard-working alums into leadership positions. We think that Pat would approve.

Student Publication Celebration 1999

Mary-Ann Devita Palmieri

The magic of words filled the University of Massachusetts Campus Center auditorium on June 8 when WMWP celebrated the publication of five new student anthologies. About 600 people—including published authors and editors and their relatives, teachers, and friends—gathered to celebrate the publication of the anthologies and to listen as students read their poems, stories and essays.

The five anthologies, two middle school-level, two elementary-level, and one high school-level, were edited by WMWP teachers Marilyn Pike ('95), Caryl Finn ('95), Mary Benoit

('95), Joanne Wisniewski ('95), Paul McKenna ('98), Susan Fleischman ('96), Paul Oh ('96), Margaret Kelliher, Margaret Ashe, Paula Moran ('97), Dianne Telicki ('96) and Tom Telicki ('96), and showcase the work of students from kindergarten through grade 12 in western Massachusetts.

The anthologies include pieces chosen from over 800 submissions received in February. Over 100 student editors gathered at UMass on February 27 to make the preliminary selections and to offer suggestions on publication design. The Publication Celebration honored the outstanding work of student authors, editors,

artists, and contributors.

Each student author and each student editor received copies of the publications, and each participating school received a full class set of 25 copies, to be used as a text in the school's curriculum. The anthologies, written "by kids, for kids," include all genres of writing. With titles like *From Our Eyes from Our Hearts*, *Blossoming Imaginations*, *From Word to Shining Word*, *Images of the Future*, and *An Open Door to the Universe*, they showcase and make public the excellent writing that is happening in western Massachusetts schools.

WMWP Fall 1999, Winter/Spring 2000 Calendar

WMWP Steering Committee

Thursday, September 23
Five Colleges, 4:00 pm

"Best Practices in the Teaching of Writing"

Saturday, September 25
UMass, Bartlett Hall, 8:30-1:00
Alums of the 1999 Invitational Summer Institute and of the 1999 "Teacher as Researcher" institute present two sets of concurrent workshops describing and demonstrating good practices in the teaching of writing. Each workshop will be clearly related to the Massachusetts Frameworks and Learning standards. Free, but registration required. You won't want to miss it!

WMWP Alumni/ae Reunion

Saturday, October 23, 9:00-2:30
Bullard Farm Conference Center
New Salem, MA
For alums of the 1993-9 Invitational Summer Institutes, members of the WMWP Steering Committee, success-

ful applicants to the 1999-2000 Mini-Grant program, and invited guests.

Writing and Response Groups

Saturday mornings, Fall 1999: Sept. 18, Oct. 16, and Nov. 6.
UMass, Bartlett Hall, 9:00-1:00
Open to all K-12 teachers in western Massachusetts, these gatherings provide a supportive and creative atmosphere in which all levels of writers can write and revise with the help and advice of others. Led by Diana F. Callahan, Co-Director of WMWP. Free of charge.

Student Writers' Workshop

Saturday, January 15
UMass, Bartlett Hall, 8:30-1:30
A workshop for western Massachusetts student writers in middle and high school (grades 5-12). Students have the opportunity to share their writing with others and receive feedback. Free of charge, but registration required; limited to 100.

Student Editing Day

Saturday, March 4
UMass, Bartlett Hall 8:30-1:00
A workshop for western Massachusetts students in middle and high school (grades 5-12). Working with teacher-editors, students select manuscripts to include in five student writing anthologies (see Student Writers' Workshop, above, and Student Publication Celebration, below). Free of charge, but registration required; limited to 100.

WMWP Steering Committee

Thursday, May 4
Five Colleges, 4:00 pm

Student Publication Celebration

Tuesday, June 13, 4:00 pm
UMass, Campus Center Auditorium
A celebration of student writing published in WMWP student anthologies, the culmination of the Student Publication Program. Free of charge, but space is limited to participating students and teachers.

Travels with Kojo

Bruce Penniman

That's Kojo Nnamdi, host of *Public Interest* on National Public Radio. Not to mention Terry (Gross), Ray (Suarez), and Christopher (Lydon), my other traveling companions during my travels throughout the state as 1999 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year. In 13,000 miles of driving everywhere from Cape Cod to the Berkshires, I've heard a lot of talk radio.

Where have I been? Here's my year by the numbers: 55 workshops and demonstration lessons; 35 keynote speeches and panel presentations; 30 interviews, photo shoots, and public appearances; 60 committee meetings, training sessions, and other professional gatherings. I've also traveled to Nashville, Dallas, and Washington, D.C. (twice). In between trips I've written dozens of letters, made hundreds of phone calls, and read thousands of e-mails. I've also managed to write a few columns and articles, some of which have even gotten published.

So it's been pretty hectic—almost as tough as a year of teaching!

Hours on the Mass. Pike, tables-for-one in bad restaurants, and cases of stage fright notwithstanding, it's been a great experience. I've visited lots of schools, met a variety of educational and political leaders (even President Clinton), and, best of all, worked with a host of teachers and prospective teachers from across the state and across the country. I've shared some of my ideas and techniques (many of them "borrowed" from WMWP colleagues), but I've *learned* even more. This year has offered ample proof of the National Writing Project's creed: that teachers' sharing good practice with other teachers is the best professional de-

velopment. These are tough times for education politically. Mistrust of teachers abounds. But despite the negative energy emanating from the media and many public officials, great things are happening in classrooms across the state.

Teachers are striving to make education reform work for their students, and students are working to meet the new standards. I've seen that this year, and I'm sure you have, too. Let's tell others, especially parents and the press.

Being Teacher of the Year has been a great opportunity for connection and reflection, and I hope to continue some of the professional activities I've begun this year. But most of all the experience has confirmed my commitment to the teaching life, and I can't wait to get back at



it in September. Before that happens, though, I have one more challenge to meet: a week at Space Camp in Alabama with my counterparts from other states and countries. Wish me luck!

Participants in the WMWP Invitational Summer Institute 1999

Elsie Aragonés

Dr. Marcella Kelly Elementary School, Holyoke

Damon Douglas

Swift River Elementary School, New Salem

Andy Frantz

Swift River Elementary School, Belchertown

Irene Hopp

Putnam Vocational Technical High School, Springfield

Jeffrey Kenney

Great Falls Middle School, Montague

Mary Lareau Moore

Athol Middle School, Athol

Celia Pyfrom-Stephens

Brimfield Elementary School, Brimfield

Lynn Schmitt

Thornton W. Burgess Middle School, Hampden

Leslie Skantz-Hodgson

Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School, Northampton

Michael Silverstone

Wildwood Elementary School, Amherst

Karen Sumaryono

West Springfield High School, West Springfield

John Warchol

Smith Academy, Hatfield

1999 WMWP Mini-Grants: Innovative and Proactive Alternatives for Local Schools

Caryl Finn

The WMWP's fourth cycle of mini-grants in the teaching of writing has provided another year of innovative, creative projects and instruction in area schools. This year brings the total number of grants awarded up to eighteen. Eighteen teams of teachers, headed by a WMWP Invitational Institute alum, have been given the opportunity to buy time, consultants, and substitute teachers, thus enabling themselves to work on a project specific to their immediate needs in providing solid writing instruction to their students.

This year the mini-grants offered an alternative option with a "second semester" cycle of grants to accommodate teachers who felt they could not meet a fall deadline for applications. This later cycle gave teams a bit more time to assemble, plan, and create a proposal for submission. The six grants awarded this academic year provided a wide range of writing results and events.

Students at Converse Middle School in Palmer spent an early spring Saturday in one of fourteen workshops offered to engage them in writing beyond the classroom. Students were inspired by keynote speaker, Susan Strempeck Shea. The wide coverage given to the event in the *Journal Register*, validated team leader, Patricia Carbone's ('97) belief in the value and benefits of this kind of program.

Both the Massachusetts Language Arts Frameworks and the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) were considered in the design of mini-grant proposals. The team from Brimfield Elementary

School, headed by Gail Gilman ('93), put together a program that not only enabled students to feel confident in their writing as specified by the Frameworks, but also provided an opportunity for parents and the community to join the students in familiarizing themselves with the school's computer room and to use technology to improve writing skills. Kate Smolen-Morton ('96) and her team took the Framework's suggested lists of authors and works in the reexamining and redesigning of their curriculum and created a Literature Guide using MCAS tests as models for discussion questions and suggested writings.

All departments at Springfield's Cathedral High School benefited from Bonnie Moriarty ('95) and her team of three who created a proposal to accelerate the development of cooperation among departments in the use of writing as a learning tool and to encourage writing across the curriculum.

Donna Brodeur ('96) and her team at Chicopee's P. E. School took the curriculum now under development and examined the ways it could address the needs of students, including those for whom English is a second language. Their focus was to evaluate the curriculum that addresses all standards at all grade levels.

Athol High School Students now have one more opportunity to take their writing ideas and abilities out of the classroom. Tina Browne ('96) and Tom Telicki ('96) used their grant to create a writing club for students who had expressed an interest in writing and publishing, thus providing a space for students to participate in a

writing community that would build confidence and increase risk-taking.

The teachers who participate in the mini-grants program have many qualities in common—they are well-versed in the Massachusetts Frameworks and in the requirements for the MCAS; they are dedicated to the teaching of writing and improving the level and range of student writing; they have the support of their building and system administrators; and they would all be doing this work whether they had the grant or not. The WMWP is privileged to be able to provide the financial support to keep this quality work alive and flourishing in our area schools.

Call for Proposals

WMWP invites alums from its '93, '94, '95, '96, '97, '98, and '99 Invitational Summer Institutes, and from its 1997 program, "Writing for All," to join with other teachers in their schools or school systems and apply for mini-grants to improve the teaching of writing and thereby improve the level and range of student writing.

- The program is open to teams of 3 to 5 teachers led by a WMWP Summer Institute or Writing for All alum.
- Proposals should have as their aim the implementation of the most recent theory and practice in the teaching and learning of writing.

If you'd like more information, please contact the project office (545-5466).

News from the Field: Reports from WMWP Teacher-Consultants

Susan Behl ('94), **Connie Norwood** ('98), and **Paul McKenna** ('98) presented a workshop to the staff of Granville Village School modeled after Integrating the Mass Curriculum and Frameworks.

Todd Felton ('98) was recently named English Department Chair at Wilbraham and Monson Academy.

Donna Rogers-Whitman ('97) presented a number of workshops, including: "Creating a Brochure Can Be Child's Play" and the WMWP sponsored, Writing and Publication Seminar. She's also participated in a number of professional development activities, including: Technology Teacher Leader Development Program, Train the Trainer Program, MCAS R US, and Introduction to the Internet in Education.

Bruce Penniman ('94) has been keeping busy! Here are a few of the workshops he's presented in recent months: "Uncovering the Curriculum: Long-Range Planning for Depth and Breadth," "Beyond MCAS: Developing a Standards-Based Portfolio," and "Open-Ended Response in MCAS Testing and Everyday Teaching." His recent professional development activities include: participating in the Massachusetts Department of Education series, "What Is Proficient?"; serving on MCAS 10th grade ELA Assessment Development Committee; and participating as keynote speaker and panelist at a number of conferences as Massachusetts Teacher of the Year. Bruce recently shared a platform with Ted Sizer and John Silber! In addition, he's received the "Heroes among Us" award from Boston Celtics (April 19) and visited Washington, D.C. in March and April for

National Teacher of the Year festivities. While in D.C., Bruce met Senator Kennedy.

Bonnie Moriarty ('95) has presented three workshops, "Writing for Your Life," for paraprofessionals in the Springfield school system. In April, she presented a portfolio workshop for middle school teachers. Her professional development activities this summer will include: Advanced Placement Workshop at St. Johnsbury Academy as well as the WMWP Teacher as Researcher Institute. She and **Sr. Judith Kappenman** ('96) are two of four members of the English Department from Cathedral High School working on a mini-grant project facilitating the use of writing as a learning tool in departments across the curriculum. **Bonnie** is the team leader. **Sister Judy** has been one of the participants in this year's WMWP Teacher as Researcher program. She will participate in that two-week, WMWP Institute as well as the WMWP workshop, Issues in the Teaching of Narrative.

Karen Hachadourian ('93) is presently on a leave of absence from her position teaching English at the High School of Science and Technology in Springfield and enjoying spending time with her new, adopted daughter, Sarah Qin Hachadourian.

In April **Nancy Lima** ('94) shared a NELMS conference presentation with the staff of Triton Regional School, where she is now teaching.

Let us know what you've been doing in your schools and communities. Please drop us a line, at any time, and we'll keep your news on file for the next WMWP Newsletter!

Second "Teacher as Researcher" Seminar Convenes

Anne Herrington

The second Teacher as Researcher Seminar began this spring and will conclude with an intensive two-week meeting this July. This year's group includes veterans from the 1997 seminar and teachers participating for the first time. I'm pleased to be facilitating the seminar.

The range of topics participants are investigating suggest the complex challenges that English language arts teachers face. The topics include the effectiveness of specific approaches to teaching revision, students' attitudes toward reading and the perceived value of Silent Sustained Reading time in class, strategies for working with a range of students in an inclusion classroom, how special needs students perceive their learning experience in school, the development of 4th grade students' expository writing skills, and whether students carry over writing process strategies learned in English classes to writing in their history classes. Through their research studies in their own classrooms, these teachers aim to learn something that will inform their own teaching as well as that of others. Stay tuned!

Teacher as Researcher Institute, Summer 1999

Susan Casper '95

Jack Czajkowski '97

Linda Fernsten '93

Gail Gilman '93

Bonnie Moriarty '95

Sr Judith Kappenman '96

Bonnie Tipaldi '96

Joanne Wisniewski '95

WMWP Programs Stretch Far and Wide: Meetings around the State

Teachers as Writers' Retreat, 1999

Diana Callahan

The fourth annual Teachers As Writers Retreat was held again this year at Jiminy Peak in Hancock, Massachusetts from May 6-8. This year groups were facilitated by Nancy Allen, Bill Stewart, and Diana Callahan. For many who were friends and colleagues of Pat Hunter, this was a difficult time. Although Pat's warmth and leadership were missed by all, the retreat did continue as she would have wanted. The support of friends and a beautiful service led by Sherril Willis helped everyone cope with the loss, but it was the joy of writing together, of hearing each other's voices, of sharing feedback that left participants "rejuvenated, refreshed, and focused on our craft."

As in past years, the schedule included flexible time for writing and response as well as community times at meals and readings. Most participants agreed that this schedule was "perfect" because it gave them the "time and freedom to pursue their own writing." This year's group readings included pieces from the WMWP Writing and Response Group's publication, *Teachers Write*, and from participants' own works in progress. As one teacher put it, "If I was doing holistic scoring for this (retreat) this year, we'd certainly be seeing '4' in all the slots."

Next year, retreat regulars are hoping to recruit new members. One teacher, attending for the first time, commented that she had always looked for "more content or strategy-based workshops," but coming to the retreat

had convinced her that it was actually "essential" rather than a "luxury." Look for more information regarding next year's retreat in future WMWP publications.

Meeting of New England Writing Projects

Bruce Penniman

Leadership teams from the seven National Writing Project sites in New England met in Nashua, NH, May 28-29 to discuss possibilities for regional cooperation. The retreat, the first of what the 35 participants hope will become an annual series, was held at the Sheraton Tara Hotel.

WMWP was represented by co-directors, Charlie Moran, Diana Callahan, and Bruce Penniman and student publication coordinator, Mary-Ann Devita Palmieri. The WMWP team organized and hosted the event, which was supported in part by a grant from the National Writing Project.

Each site gave a brief presentation on one of its successful programs, and mixed-site groups met to discuss mutual concerns and possible solutions. The participants decided to hold a second retreat in May 2000. Faye Gage, director of the Connecticut Writing Project in Stamford, volunteered to organize that event.

Come visit our Web site!

You'll find updated news of the WMWP at:

<http://www~unix.oit.umass.edu/~cmoran/wmwp>

Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

"Issues in the Teaching of Narrative"

Dick Bentley
UMass, Continuing Education

Melissa Briggs-Leffert
Theresa Niemiec
Sr. Judith Kappenman
Diane Tebaldi
Cathedral High School

Jennifer Cook
High School of Commerce

Julianne Eagan
Janet Gary

Jennifer Kirby
UMass, School of Education

Patrice Lattrell
Monument Mountain Regional

Christine K. Plette
Hopkins Academy

Michele Turner
Springfield Central High School

"Writing Poetry"

Nancy Champoux
Great Falls Middle School

Mary-Ann Devita Palmieri
Great Falls Middle School

Deborah Donahue

Louise Dwyer Huppert
Village School

Karen Feller
Marks Meadow Elementary

Janet Gary

Sandra Hines
Agawam High School

Susan Reyes
Smith College Campus School

Julie Schlobohm
Westfield High School

Mark Staples
Longmeadow High School

Harris Thompson
Williston Northampton

WMWP Workshops & Catalog Address the Massachusetts Frameworks

Wendy Bergoffen

In response to the challenges posed by the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, the Learning Standards, and the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), WMWP offered a three-day workshop in July 1998 to help teacher-consultants modify their existing work-

shops to include information on these new educational reforms. The fruits of their labor were collected, published in "Meeting the Standards: A Catalog of Staff-Development Opportunities Reflecting the Massachusetts Frameworks and Assessments," and distributed to western Massachusetts superintendents and principals.

Two-thirds of the teacher-consultants listed in this catalog presented versions of their projects at "Meeting the Standards," a two-part series of workshops sponsored by WMWP and held in November (at UMass) and in April (in Holden, MA).

Each event offered two sets of concurrent workshops, and the range of projects gave teachers of all grade levels many new ideas and strategies. For descriptions of these workshops or for more information, please contact the WMWP office (545-5466).

Star Writers Showcase Their Work

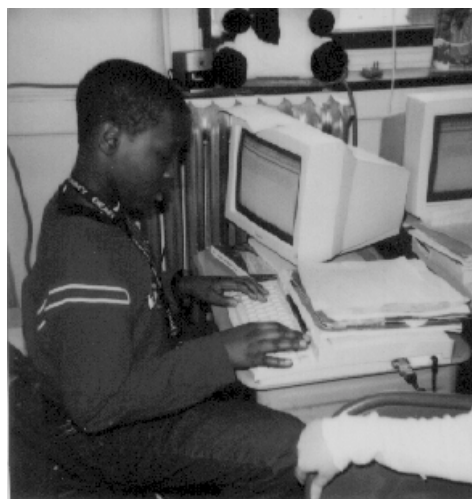
Wendy Bergoffen

Through a grant from the Canon Corporation, WMWP secured funding this year to purchase 50 StarWriters. Tom Telicki and Tina Browne used several StarWriters to facilitate activities for Athol High School's new Writing Club. Pam Howes used them with her students at South Hadley Middle School. Margaret Kelliher used the remaining machines with students at Homer Street School.

Students from Homer Street School, including Nicole Fortier and Kadeem Williams (right), participated in a festive "Publication Celebration" on Wednesday, April 28, 1999 at the Meline Kasparian Professional Development Center. The Celebration capped off the "Writing and Publication Seminar," led by twenty local teachers. Students shared their enthusiasm for StarWriters in a recent letter to WMWP: "Having the StarWriters allows everyone in our group to have either a computer, a SmartBoard, or StarWriter to publish on. It makes our revising go a lot faster, too." Students used their machines to help publish manuscripts for a class folk tale anthology.



Nicole Fortier of Homer Street School



Kadeem Williams of Homer Street School

South African Educator Visits Western Mass

Rochelle Kapp, Lecturer in the Language Development Programme at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, delivered two talks based on her research study of the politics of English instruction at a secondary school in South Africa.

She presented the first talk, "The Politics of English: An Analysis of the Role and Status of English at a South African Township School," at the UMass English Department Colloquium series, co-sponsored by the English Department and the UMass Writing Program. Her second talk, "Reading 'on the line': Language, Identity, and Culture in an English Classroom at a Township School," was held in the Campus Center and co-sponsored by the UMass Writing Program and WMWP. Lively discussions followed.

WMWP Application/Registration Form

Name: _____

School/College: _____

School Address: _____

e-mail: _____ telephone: _____

Home Address: _____

Grade(s) taught: _____ telephone: _____

APPLICATION/REGISTRATION FOR PROGRAMS/WORKSHOPS

Please register me for the Saturday, September 25 workshop, 8:30-1:00, "Best Practices in the Teaching of Writing." I understand that there is no fee for this workshop, but that my registration via this form is required.

I'd like to apply to next-year's (2000) Invitational Summer Institute. Please send me materials as they become available.

Please note my new address and/or telephone number, above.

Please add my name to the Writing and Response Group mailing list.

Please sign me up as a teacher-contact in the WMWP Publication Program.

Return this form to Charles Moram, WMWP, English Department, Bartlett Hall, Box 30515, University of Massachusetts, Amherst MA 01003-0515. WMWP is a local site of the National Writing Project. It is supported by the University's English Department, the Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts, the Provost of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and by the Massachusetts Department of Education.



Western Massachusetts Writing Project
English Department, Bartlett Hall
Box 30515
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003-0515
2-79623

