

Project Newsletter

The Year That Was

By Charlie Moran

It has been an amazing year. The Retreat was better than ever, our Reunion full of memories and plans. We've seen so many of you this year at our Planning Day, our Catalog Workshop, and at our regular programming.

Lots of you are assuming leadership roles in the Project. Our Publications program, ably led by Mary-Ann Palmieri, is supported by a round dozen teacher-editors. Our Mini-Grant program, led by Pam Howes, brought in six more Institute alums as team leaders.

Dozens of you have given extensive in-service workshop series. Leslie Skantz-Hodgson will be editing the next *Project Newsletter*; Jack Czajkowski and Paul Oh have been central in our New Teacher Seminars. Mary-Ann Palmieri has served on an Assessment Development Committee for the DOE; Tina Browne has co-led our Summer-Write! 2000 writing camp; Karen Sumaryono and Wilma Ortiz have led our two-week "Writing For All" summer program.

At the center of it all is our office, Bartlett 258, a surprisingly small space, with Kim Costino and Wendy Bergoffen managing everything and Tom Maxfield handling our amazingly-complex accounting. Diana Callahan and Bruce Penniman have been an integral part of everything that has happened this year. You are a marvelous group of people to work with. Thank you, thank you all.

WMWP 2000 Calendar

Best Practices in the Teaching of Writing

Saturday, September 30, 8:30-1:00
UMass, Bartlett Hall

Alums of the 2000 Invitational Summer Institute and of the 2000 Writing for All 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!

Writing Matters: Writing in the Science Classroom

Saturdays: Oct. 14, 28, Nov. 18
UMass

In this series for upper elementary and middle school teachers, participants will learn strategies for integrating writing into their science classrooms. Teams of science and language arts teachers are encouraged to apply.

New Teacher Seminars 2001

Thursday afternoons, October 5, November 2, December 7, January 4, February 1, March 1, April 5, May 10, 4:00-7:00
Smith Vocational High School, Northampton

An eight-seminar series for new teachers in western Massachusetts. By registration: limited to 50. Sponsored and funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education.

WMWP Alumni/ae Reunion

Saturday, October 28, 9:00-2:30
Bullard Farm Conference Center, New Salem.

For alums of the 1993-2000 Invitational Summer Institutes, members of the WMWP Steering Committee, successful applicants to the 2000-2001 Mini-Grant program, and invited guests.

Writing and Response Groups

Saturday mornings, Fall 2000: September 9, October 7, and November 4; 9:00-1:00 (spring semester dates TBA)

UMass, Bartlett Hall

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 13 (snow date: January 20), 8:30-1:30
UMass, Bartlett Hall

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. Workshops for parents, guardians, and teachers. Free of charge, but registration required; limit 100.

600 Authors, Editors, Teachers, Families Celebrate Publication of Five Anthologies

On Tuesday, June 13, at 4:00, 600 student authors, student editors, their families and their teachers gathered in the Campus Center Auditorium to celebrate the publication of five WMWP anthologies. Dean Lee Edwards, of the University's College of Humanities and Fine Arts, welcomed the group, and then Mary-Ann DeVita Palmieri, the coordinator of the WMWP publications program, began the official program.

Authors and editors of each of the five anthologies were called by name to the stage: first the authors and editors of *Unlock Your Mind*, then of *Wings on Words*, then of *Endless Possibilities*, then of *Sleepwalking*, and finally the authors and editors of *We Are the Future*. Several authors from each anthology read short excerpts from their work, and all authors and editors were awarded WMWP "Student Author" pins.

Each of the five anthologies was coordinated by one or more WMWP teacher-consultants.

Marilyn Pike, of Gateway Regional, coordinated the middle-school anthology *We Are the Future*. Student authors and editors for this anthology came from these middle schools: Amherst Regional, Athol, Chestnut Hill Community, Gateway, Great Falls, Hampshire Regional, Herberg, JFK-Northampton, and Smith Academy.

Co-editors of *Endless Possibilities*, a grade 3-6 anthology, were Margaret Ashe, Margaret Kelleher, and Paula Moran, all of the Springfield Public Schools. Student authors and editors for this volume came from these schools: Brightwood,

Chapin Street, Fausey, Jefferson, Mapleshade, Mosier, Mountain View, Munger Hill, Paper Mill, Saint Thomas the Apostle, and the Washington School.

Dianne Telicki, of the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, and Tom Telicki, of Athol High School, co-edited the high-school anthology, *Sleepwalking*. Student authors and editors for this publication came from these high schools: Acton-Boxborough Regional, Agawam, Athol-Royalston Regional, Dean Technical, East Longmeadow, Frontier Regional, Gateway Regional, Hampshire Regional, Holyoke Catholic, Ludlow, Northampton, South High Community School (Worcester), and Tantasqua Regional (Sturbridge).

Wings On Words, a publication of writers in grades K-6, was coordinated by Susan Fleischman, of the Bernardston School, and Paul Oh, of Crocker Farm and Mark's Meadow schools in Amherst. Student authors and editors of this anthology came from these schools: Berlin Memorial, Bernardston, The Common School, Hawlemont, Hubbardston Center, Crocker Farm (Amherst), Leeds, Leverett, Mark's Meadow (Amherst), New Hingham Regional, Pleasant Street, Royalston Community, Shutesbury, Swift River, Warwick Center, and Wildwood (Amherst).

Unlock Your Mind, an anthology of writing from authors grades 5-8, was co-coordinated by Joanne Wisniewski, of West Springfield Middle School, and Paul McKenna, of the Granville School. Student authors and editors of this book came from these middle schools: Granville,

Holy Trinity, Millbury, Mosier, the Risler Family (home school), Shepard Hill Regional High, South Hadley, Tantasqua Regional, Thornton Burgess, Westfield, and West Springfield.

At the end of the celebration, the program leaders distributed copies of the anthologies to student authors and editors, and gave classroom sets of 24 anthologies to each of the participating schools. These copies will be used by teachers as classroom textbooks.

Gail Gilman Sturbridge "Educator of the Year"

Gail Gilman, an alum of the first WMWP Invitational Summer Institute (1993), was given one of five "Educator of the Year" awards by the Tri-Community Area Chamber of Commerce. Gail teaches at Brimfield Elementary School, and is a member of the WMWP "Teacher as Researcher" group. Through WMWP and on her own, she has given dozens of in-service workshops in Massachusetts schools.

According to the Southbridge *Evening News*, Gail was recognized for having created and implemented a process through which her students participate in shaping their own courses of study in mathematics, the sciences, in social studies, and in the language arts. This summer she is slated to co-teach, with Bonnie Moriarty, a two-week program, "Best Practices in the Teaching of Writing."

Five WMWP Teacher-Consultants Join National Research Network

By *Bonnie Tipaldi*

As members of the Western Mass Writing Project, we know the creative energy and positive learning that come from our collaboration.

Now imagine the possibilities when five teacher networks collaboratively inquire into common themes and practices across different geographic and demographic areas.

Five WMWP Teacher-Researcher alums, Bonnie Tipaldi, Bonnie Moriarty, Linda Fernsten, Joanne Wisnewski, and Jack Czajkowski, will participate in a year-long project hosted by the University of Georgia and funded by the Arthur Vinning Davis Foundation. Our travels will include an initial conference at UGA in August 2000 at which time research teams will be created along common themes.

During the school year, these cross-geographic teams will collect and share data via our web site, visit each others' classrooms, and meet with other members of our home writing projects. In June 2001, we will again return to UGA to organize and analyze our data and begin writing about our insights.

We expect to learn a staggering amount about literacy education and our own professional development when teachers actively investigate teaching practices across geographic boundaries. Teacher-researchers from the Breadloaf Teacher Network, Philadelphia Writing Project, Boston and Western Mass Writing Projects, Indiana English Teachers Collaborative, and University of Georgia Network for English Teachers and Students will comprise the

full assembly of 65 participants. For more information about hosting activities, please contact Bonnie Tipaldi. <bltipaldi@aol.com>

Bonnie Moriarty **"Distinguished Teacher"**

Bonnie Moriarty has been named one of six "Distinguished Teachers" by the Springfield Chamber of Commerce. Bonnie, head of the English Department at Cathedral High School, teaches advanced-placement and honors English courses at grades 11 and 12. She was chosen from a pool of 400 nominees after a rigorous selection process that included interviews and reviews of teaching portfolios.

Bonnie is an alum of the 1995 WMWP Invitational Summer Institute. She has conducted dozens of inservice workshops for WMWP, and has been a member of the Project's "Teacher as Researcher" seminar, led by Anne Herrington. She was also part of the WMWP Advanced Institute in the Teaching of Literature, led by Bruce Penniman and Diana Callahan.

This summer she is slated to co-teach, with Gail Gilman, a two-week program, "Best Practices in the Teaching of Writing." She will also be giving a 35-hour inservice series in spring 2001 for the Wilbraham public schools, and, with Bonnie Tipaldi and four other WMWP Institute alums, will be participating in the Teacher as Researcher program held at the University of Georgia this coming year.

Invitational Summer Institute 2000

Adina Alexandru

Kiley Middle School, Springfield

Susan Biggs

Amherst Regional High School

Allison Craig

Bowie Elementary School, Chicopee

Vicki Davey

Shutesbury Elementary School

Silvia Fisher

Belcher School, Chicopee

Dorothy Hans

Wilbraham-Munson School

Tina Higney

Ware High School

Andrew Kruger

University of Cape Town, South Africa

Heather Lobenstine

Shutesbury Elementary School

Virginia Shapiro

Narragansett Middle School

Dianne Tebaldi

Cathedral High School, Springfield

Carol Tomkiel

MacDuffie School, Springfield

Writing For All

Mary Angelopoulos

Burncoat High School

Mary Bernard

Rebecca Johnson School, Spfld

Laurie Bossahda

Peck Middle School, Holyoke

Catherine Butterfield

Easthampton Elementary School

Jane Carey

JFK Middle School, Northampton

James Carter

Jane Costello

Marks Meadow School, Amherst

Ilene Freedman

Bowles Middle School, Springfield

Miranda Hamerly

Rebecca Johnson School, Spfld

Jim Hesson

Northampton Public Schools

Deborah O'Callaghan

Rebecca Johnson School, Spfld

Elizabeth Tipaldi

Springfield Technical CC

Robyn Wayrynen

Kelly Elementary School, Holyoke

WMWP Curriculum Development Programs in Six Schools

by Pamela Howes

This spring marked the end of another successful year for the WMWP Mini-Grant program. The six mini-grants focused on a variety of topics, from cross-curriculum writing, to creating writing rubrics, to student writing workshops.

While the topics varied, the goal to improve the teaching of writing in schools and/or districts was central to all the mini-grant programs.

The outcomes of the six programs were very positive. Some of the outcomes included teaching-units for an ESL program, a workshop ready to present to other school departments, and increased opportunities for students to write.

Another positive outcome that was mentioned by many of mini-grant recipients was the increased

communication among colleagues. As one recipient put it, "All in all, members felt that every aspect of our grant project was enlightening and successful, especially because of the opportunities to share ideas on teaching and curriculum."

The WMWP mini-grant program was established to support teachers who have ideas for improving the teaching of writing in their schools and/or districts. The program is now in its fifth year, directed by Pamela Howes, an Institute alum and a teacher at South Hadley Middle School. Teacher-teams, headed by Institute alums, propose programs in early fall and are selected by Howes and the Project Co-Directors. This year's recipients are to be congratulated and recognized for their thoughtful and relevant programs.

Penniman Receives UMass Honorary Degree; Callahan Receives University Outreach Award

Bruce Penniman, Massachusetts Teacher of the Year in 1999 and a co-director of WMWP, was given an honorary degree this spring by the University of Massachusetts. Penniman received his doctorate from the University's School of Education. He teaches English and Journalism at Amherst Regional High School, and is President-Elect of the New England Association of Teachers of English (NEATE). He has edited the NEATE *Leaflet* for the past five years.

Diana Callahan, with Penniman a Co-Director of WMWP, was named one of three recipients of the

University's Community Partnership Award. She has organized and led the WMWP Writers' Retreat. With Bruce Penniman she co-leads the Invitational Summer Institute, and with him has co-led the WMWP Advanced Institute for the Teaching of Literature.

She is herself entirely responsible for the teachers' Writing and Response groups that meet on Saturdays at the University. She also leads the Student Writers' Workshops that meet in Bartlett Hall in the fall. She will lead the WMWP New Teacher Seminars that the Project will give in 2000-2001.

Curriculum-Development Grant Projects

"Helping ESL Students in Transition." Bonnie Tipaldi, Maureen O'Brien, Kathy Andrew, Jill Mendez, and Pam Greene.

Springfield Technical Community College.

"Writing Across the Curriculum." Bonnie Moriarty, Sr. Judith Kappenman, Susan Shaylor, Dianne Tebaldi.

Cathedral High School, Springfield.

"Wow! Write On Workshops." Lynn Schmitt, Diana Duff, Nancy Roy, and Catherine Zaurotny.

Thornton Burgess Middle School

"Curriculum Units for ESL and English Classes that Prepare Students for MCAS Tasks." Karen Sumaryono, Jeff Bozeman, Jim Giguere, and Susan Tyler.

West Springfield High School.

"The Northampton High School Writing Project."

Michele Turner-Bernhard, Robert Bonneau, Christopher Brennan, Ernest Brill, Heather Drucker, Danae Marr, Melissa Michael, Suzanne Strauss.

Northampton High School.

"Writing Across the Curriculum." Elizabeth Fydenkevez, Elaine Tudryn, Coleen Snyder, Ann Poli, Karla Notarianni.

Hopkins Academy, Hadley.

WMWP Completes First New Teacher Seminar Series

WMWP has just completed its first New Teacher Seminar series, funded by a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Education. The seminars were led by Project Co-Directors Diana Callahan of the Easthampton Public Schools, Charlie Moran of the University of Massachusetts, and Bruce Penniman, of the Amherst Regional Schools; and Project teacher-consultants Jack Czajkowski, from Great Falls Middle School in Montague, and Paul Oh, from the Amherst Regional Schools.

Topics included "Classroom Management and Effective Interactions with Students," "Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum," "Using the Curriculum Frameworks and Assessments," "Teaching with Technology," and "Special Education Issues in the Classroom."

The seminar series was held at Smith Vocational School, in Northampton. Seminar dates were February 10, March 9, April 13, May 11, and June 8. The seminar series drew some 40 new teachers, bringing to them the experience of the WMWP staff.

In the seminar series, beginning teachers had the opportunity to discuss some of the most challenging issues they face, including use of the curriculum frameworks and assessments; classroom management; technology; and special education issues in the classroom. The seminars were designed to provide them with support to improve their classroom experience by collaborating with other first-year teachers under the guidance of veterans.

The WMWP New Teacher Seminar series was one of fifteen

statewide, and one of three in Western Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Commissioner of Education Frank Driscoll has noted that "Approximately one-third of today's teachers leave the profession after just a few years. We must develop innovative ways of making the teaching profession more attractive to prospective educators as well as those who have made the initial commitment to teach. These seminars will support about one-quarter of the new teachers hired this year."

WMWP has applied for a grant to support a nine-seminar series for new teachers. If the funding is granted, the series will begin this coming September and continue through May 2001. Mary-Ann DeVita Palmieri and Diana Callahan will lead the proposed series.

Michael Silverstone '99 Publishes Book

The Feminist Press has just published Michael Silverstone's book, *Rigoberta Menchu: Defending Human Rights in Guatemala*. Michael is an alum of WMWP's 1999 Invitational Summer Institute and a teacher at the Wildwood School in Amherst.

The reviewer for *Booklist*, Susan Dove Lempke, had this to say: "Silverstone has done an outstanding job of giving the political, economic, and cultural background and discussing horrifying events in a way that reflects the sufferings of Rigoberta and her neighbors without being too overwhelming for young readers."

Report from Vieques

Caryl Finn, a founding member of WMWP, writes to us from Vieques, Puerto Rico.

"I hope the Project held its Writers' Retreat this spring, and I assume the summer Institute is gearing up, as well as the other summer programs. I have to tell you—while on Saba, I volunteered in the elementary school and loved it. I took groups of third, fourth, and fifth-graders and worked with their literacy skills two days a week. I had brought my middle school library with me—all 150 titles!—and I read to them, let them choose, read, discuss, respond, imitate, and create.

The fourth-graders wrote a collection of poetry based on the image of "flying off Saba" and I published it for them so each one had a copy. When I passed them out, rather than going right to their own poems, they began at the beginning of the book, reading silently until some started whispering, then others joined in until we had a choral reading of every poem in the book. It was magic!....

After a week-long program on drug awareness, I encouraged my fourth-graders to respond in writing. Some of the pieces were astounding. I asked if they would like to send them to the daily newspaper on St. Maarten. They did and were published. The excitement of all these events is impossible to convey. I look back on my years in the Project as preparing me to take the message and meaning of literacy with me and spread it wherever I go. Johnny Appleseed, eat a Macintosh!

I think of you and all the folks at the Project often and with love. Please tell them that for me."