



# Pennsylvania/ New Jersey Chapter

College Reading & Learning Association

Late Spring 2011

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<http://crlapanj.50webs.org/>

## PA/NJ Chapter Conference a Smash Hit!

*Written by Verna Fisher*



The CRLA PA/NJ 2011 Annual Spring Conference “Striving for Student Success: Innovative Approaches for the New Decade” held on March 18, at Northampton Community College in Bethlehem, PA was a roaring success. CRLA conferences bring together learning center supervisors, peer and professional tutors, and college staff for a fun day of idea exchange, best practices, and networking.

After a leisurely continental breakfast, classrooms bustled with active learning for the 155 attendees from 38 community colleges and universities. Break-out session content included learning strategies, technology, tutoring tips, math and writing skills, learning center improvement, and discipline-specific topics for the 36 peer tutors and 119 professional tutors/college staff. As one of the break-out session moderators, Deb Condon, M.Ed., ESC Lab Supervisor at Lehigh Carbon Community College, said she “gained several ideas for doing more with less in the tutoring center.”

Lively colloquium sessions were delivered by Dr. Lisa Perfetti of Muhlenberg College, and Chris Selena, M.S. of Centenary College. Perfetti, author *Engaging Students (and ourselves) in the Big Questions that Matter.* (con’t pg. 2)

## PA/NJ Chapter Conference a Smash Hit! (con't)

She focused on taking students' learning styles and how “we can better engage both the hearts and minds of our students.”

Drawing on his expertise as director of Disability Services, Selena lectured on “Practical Strategies to Identify and Mitigate Learning Weaknesses” introducing the audience to a “variety of practical techniques designed to identify some of the most common learning challenges college students face.”

During the buffet luncheon, we said farewell to our hard working CRLA Chapter President, Suzanne McCarthy and hello to her successor, Nicole Tracey. Conference Committee Site Chair and NCC Learning Center Director, Nichole Bennett-Bealer, Ph.D. shared that it was a privilege for NCC to act as host college. Bennett-Bealer explained, “The first CRLA PA/NJ conference I attended, as a Student Writing Assistant at Rider University, helped to steer me in the path of academic support.”

In an effort to further assist learning center professionals, those in attendance were treated to an interactive talk by Keynote Speaker, Michael Z. Murphy, professor at Union County College, on the “Ten Bad Listening Habits.” Murphy wowed the crowd while teaching skills for improving communication through better listening—skills we tried to carry into the afternoon sessions and beyond.

The spirit of collaboration is so present at CRLA conferences. There isn't any competition among participants; rather a genuine interest in sharing best practices with each other. The 2011 Spring Conference was a runaway success. Expect the Fall Cluster Meeting to be first-rate too!

*To download the presentations and to view pictures from the day, go to <http://crlapanj.50webs.org/>.*



Michael Z. Murphy during the keynote.



Chris Selena and session participants.



Dr. Lisa Perfetti at her session.

## A Cops 'N' Kids Thank You



Children's Literacy Program



P.O. Box 1906 ★ Bethlehem, PA 18016-1906 ★ 610-861-7561  
 lvcops-n-kids@att.net ★ www.copsnkidslv.org

March 21, 2011

College Reading and Learning Association  
 Pennsylvania/New Jersey Chapter  
 c/o Dr. Nichole Bennett-Bealer  
 Northampton Community College  
 3835 Green Pond Road  
 Bethlehem, PA 18020

Dear Nichole,

On behalf of the **Cops 'n' Kids Children's Literacy Program** of Quota International of Bethlehem and the hundreds of children who will get to enjoy the lovely books that were donated during your annual conference, I would like to thank you.

As you know, we have just distributed our 395,000 free book—and this has been accomplished because of the generosity of countless individuals like you and organizations such as yours. I believe that each day we have an opportunity to make the world a better place. Our hope with our Cops 'n' Kids Children's Literacy Program is that we do just that with every book we distribute and every interaction we have with the children who are on the receiving end of our efforts. How thoughtful it was of you and your organizing committee to acknowledge our efforts in this way.

Thank you, again, for helping us to enrich the lives of our children and for joining us in our efforts to *"connect kids and community through literacy."*

Sincerely yours,

Beverly A. Bradley, President



Quota International of Bethlehem  
 Charitable Trust

*"If we get too comfortable, we stop growing."*

*~Herb Thelan*

*"The ultimate goal of the educational system is to shift to the individual the burden of pursuing his education."*

*~John W. Gardener*

*"Being 'educated' means knowing how little I really know."*

*~ Carol T Lloyd*

## **"Doing More with Le\$\$... but with More Resourcefulness and with an Accountable Management System."**

***Presented by Frank L. Christ***

***PA/NJ CRLA Sponsored Webinar – April 1, 2011***

On Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, thirty participants from New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Texas joined Frank Christ at his place in Arizona for a discussion on creative ways to fund services, recruit staff, and acquire supplies needed to sufficiently and adequately run a learning center. Mr. Christ also shared with the group economical ideas for gaining publicity and improving public relations.

Mr. Christ is the founder of the Learning Support Centers in Higher Education (LSCHE), <http://www.lsche.net/>, and past coordinator of the Learning Assistance Support System at CSU Long Beach. He has dedicated over 35 years to learning assistance and study strategies. The Officers would like to thank Mr. Christ for presenting and leading the discussion about providing quality services to students in fiscally strenuous times.

Because of the efforts of Suzanne McCarthy and the support of National CRLA, the PA/NJ chapter was the first chapter to offer an educational webinar free of cost to its members. A special thanks is also extended to Dr. Rick Sheets from National CRLA who provided the technical support for the webinar.

The recording of the webinar is posted on the PA/NJ CRLA website for anyone interested in listening. To access the webinar, go to <http://crlapanj.50webs.org/>.

We look forward to offering future professional development opportunities at low costs!

## Article Review

### “Different Approaches – Common Implications: Brain-Based And Constructivist Learning From A Paradigms And Integral Model Perspective”

by Ajda Kahveci and Selahatdin Ay



Reviewed by Gina Martino

This article compares brain-based and constructivist learning and argues for the benefits of integrating both approaches to improve teaching and learning. The article describes how brain-based learning “distinguishes between surface and meaningful knowledge” (124) and cites the brain’s extraordinary capacity for attention and learning. It describes how constructivism also plays a significant role in teaching and learning. Constructivist teaching places students “in the center of the learning and teaching process” (125) and uses students’ past experiences to help provide a contextual framework for their learning. With this approach, teachers play an important role in providing meaningful experiences by incorporating the correct stimuli to facilitate learning. It also stresses how brain-based learning and constructivism often go hand-in-hand in the learning process and are both important for learning and retention.

Their article comments on how these theories of learning have the potential to impact educational reform and the manner in which students learn in the future. What is interesting is that even though the theories are based out of different areas, brain-based from neuroscience and constructivism from psychology, philosophy and education, the author argues that these two theories can be combined to better educate students and provide a more holistic approach.

Publication Information: *Journal of TURKISH SCIENCE EDUCATION*, Volume 5, Issue 3, December 2008.

## Suggested Further Reading on Brain Theory

- “Beyond Learning By Doing: The Brain Compatible Approach” by Jay W. Roberts in *Journal of Experiential Education*, Fall 2002, Vol. 25, Issue 2, pp. 281, 5p.  
Article found in EBSCOhost, Academic Search Elite.
- “Understanding a Brain-Based Approach to Teaching and Learning” by Renate Numella Caine and Goeffrey Caine in *Educational Leadership*, October 1990, Vol. 48, Issue 2, pp. 66, 5p.  
Article found in EBSCOhost, Academic Search Elite.

## Book Review

Reviewed by Verna Fisher

### ***A Tutor's Guide: Helping Writers One to One*, edited by Ben Rafoth**



Seasoned tutors and newbie's will find comfort and wisdom between the pages of *A Tutor's Guide: Helping Writers One to One*. Featuring 17 essays written by tutoring center professionals, tutors will discover ways to handle unresponsive students and difficult sessions, as well as help students become independent learners. The bulk of the essays deal with writing; however, tutors in other disciplines will glean plenty of valuable information too.

Publication Information: ISBN# 0-86709-587-3

### ***The Synonym Finder* by J.I. Rodale**

For those synonym emergencies, pick up a copy of *The Synonym Finder* by J.I. Rodale. This tome will soon have your reports and emails singing with new-found originality. A staple in the publishing industry, Rodale offers more than 1,500,000 words in dictionary format. You'll wonder how you ever got along without it. Oh, and that Roget's Thesaurus that's collecting dust on the shelf makes for perfect kindling!

Publication Information: ISBN# 0-87857-236-8 or ISBN# 0-87857-244-9 deluxe

## Websites Worth Exploring

Sometimes the topics of grammar, punctuation, and plagiarism rouse fear and loathing in students. As tutors and educators, we can break these issues down endlessly, but often visual and interactive examples produce greater active learning.

The Learning Center at D'Youville College in Buffalo, NY has numerous interactive exercises on specific grammar and punctuation concerns. Check it out at <http://depts.dyc.edu/learningcenter/owl/index.htm>.

Visual samples of what constitutes plagiarism or a paraphrasing job well done can be found at [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org). A variety of articles on the topic and webinars are available too.

## Educational

*Innovative Educators*<sup>®</sup>



## Webinars

*Complimentary Topics*

Innovative Educators.org is offering complimentary recordings of past webinars on demand. The following webinars are currently being offered free of charge:

- “Providing Services 24/7: Restructuring How We Support Today’s Students” presented by Denise Swett, Ed.D., the Associate Vice President of Middlefield Campus & Community Programs at Foothill College, and Valerie Kisiel, an Innovative Educators owner and a part-time teacher/adviser at Front Range Community College.
- “Establishing Course Guidelines and Expectations that Improve Student Success and Satisfaction” presented by Gloria Howell, a teacher, trainer, and coach in counseling and education for over twenty-five years.
- “Creating Successful Partnerships with Parents of First Generation College Students” by Alexandra Duran, Director of the Career & College Connections Office at Foothill College-Middlefield Campus in Palo Alto, California.
- “When Johnny Comes Marching Home: Reintegration Problems and Concerns of Military Service Members Returning from Combat” presented by Dr. Edgardo Padin, Ph.D., Chief of Psychology Service at the Louis Stokes Cleveland DVA Medical Center and Director of PTSD Services; Roger P. Buck., Ph.D., a licensed Professional Clinical Counselor and a Doctoral Addictions Counselor; and Dr. John Schupp, founder of the SERV Program.

To register and to find other helpful articles and links, go to the [innovativeeducator.org](http://innovativeeducator.org) website. The link to the recording of the webinar and any posted documents is available for up to one year, and you are permitted to e-mail it to anyone in your College.

## Have a Suggestion?

### *Newsletter Feedback*

Have a great idea for the next issue?

Have helpful tips or strategies?

Know a great article or resource?



## Know a Great Book?

### *Book Recommendations*

On your professional book shelf, what book do you find indispensable that colleagues may find helpful as well?

Tell us the title, ISBN, and a sentence or two about why you treasure this book for our next issue.

E-mail suggestions to our editors: Nicole Tracey at [traceyn@bucks.edu](mailto:traceyn@bucks.edu), Gina Martino at [deda616@aol.com](mailto:deda616@aol.com), or Verna Fisher at [vfisher@lccc.edu](mailto:vfisher@lccc.edu).

## Closing Remarks from our Chapter President

Dear Colleagues of the PA/NJ Region,

Thank you for a wonderful year. During a time that higher education has been facing many challenges, our local chapter has grown and has been a resource for professional sharing and learning.



With the support of a fine Board and outstanding Conference Committee, we were able to celebrate many “firsts” as a chapter.

- Under the leadership of Nicole Tracey (President-Elect) and Gina Martino (Secretary), our first chapter E-newsletter was launched and you are reading its third edition!
- With assistance of our Membership Co-chairs: Dr. James Stewart in Pennsylvania and Danielle Boeninghaus in New Jersey, outreach was made to encourage professionals from our region to participate in the chapter. We had 50 attendees at our Fall Cluster Meeting and 155 attendees at our Spring Conference – an increase of about 50% at both events over the year before.
- We gave back: our Conference attendees donated five cartons of children’s books to the children’s literacy program Cops ‘N’ Kids chapter located at Northampton Community College, the site of our Conference.
- Our Conference offered a track specifically for those who work as tutors. We included two concurrent colloquium sessions focused on learning support professionals generally, and one geared specifically for tutors.
- We had a historic event hosting the first ever chapter webinar in cooperation with CRLA. Frank Christ, Emeritus: California State University Long Beach (1989) presented, “Doing More With Le\$\$\$\$... but with More Resourcefulness and with an Accountable Management System,” for thirty participants.

We made an effort to run the chapter lean and green. Our Treasurer, Clifford Woodward has managed our finances carefully and reports a balance as we close this program year out of over \$3,000. We were able to communicate with our membership via e-mail and utilized the LRNASST Listserve to share general announcements with other learning assistance professionals. Our website has been efficiently maintained by Lew Cohen with current up-to-date information about our chapter happenings. He made conference handouts available through a wiki linked to our website to help reduce unnecessary printing. Lew also set us up to hold our first electronic election during the first week of May.

More than ever, we need to be a viable professional resource at the regional level with a strong connection to our learning support organizations at a national level. I encourage you to share your time and talents with each other through chapter involvement.

The chapter is healthy and following the theme of our Conference – we are “striving for student success” with many “innovative practices for the new decade.”

All good wishes,

*Suzanne McCarthy*



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## Introducing the New President-Elect...

Congratulations to Larisa Poznahovska, the Chapter's new President-Elect for 2011-2012!

Larisa has been working in the field of student support since 1998 and is currently the Director of the Center for Academic Development and Assessment, at Montclair State University. She is also a CRLA Certified Reviewer for the International Tutor Training Certification Program.



The Officers look forward to working with Larisa in the upcoming year and are excited about the experience she brings to the group!

## Farewell & Thank You!

Suzanne McCarthy dedicated herself fully to the chapter presidency this year and was responsible for all those wonderful firsts mentioned in her letter. She spent countless hours reaching out to members and working with the Officers and Membership Coordinators to draw the record numbers at the cluster meeting and conference.

Suzanne also worked diligently to offer low-cost opportunities, such as the webinar, which she coordinated with National so that the Chapter could offer it free to its members. Suzanne's vision and hard work were the driving force of the Chapter's accomplishments this year.

The Officers thank Suzanne for the spirit and guidance she brought to the chapter and for all of her efforts this year!

Of course, this is not a true farewell...Suzanne already plans to continue her involvement in the Chapter next year as Past President.

## Upcoming Events

*PA/NJ Cluster Meeting*

Friday, October 14, 2011  
Bucks County Community College,  
Newtown, PA

Western, PA – Site TBD

