

*A collection of information and links to  
websites concerning  
Early Language Learning*

*January 2009*

### **New Year's Resolution**

This year resolve to be more professionally active. Join NNELL by clicking on the "membership" tab at the top of the NNELL homepage.

Click here to learn more about [NNELL](#).

### **Summary of NNELL Events at ACTFL**

#### *Swapshop Breakfast*

NNELL's 2008 Annual Swapshop Breakfast was a huge success. The breakfast was attended by 120 participants, bringing together old and new NNELL members. The ACTFL Local Committee from Florida was represented by NNELL members Jan Kucerick and Sylvia Amaya. NNELL's history was represented by the presence of Past Executive Secretaries Nancy Rhodes and Mary Lynn Redmond, as well as Editor Emerita Marcia Rosenbusch and NNELL Founding Members Helena Curtain and Carol Ann Dahlberg. ACTFL Past President Rita Oleksak and ACTFL President-Elect Janine Erikson also attended this wonderful event.

The 2008 NNELL Award was presented to Dr. William Gavaghan of the Indianapolis Leadership Academy. He spoke about the importance of all students learning a second language.

NNELL's guest presenter, Janet Glass (ACTFL 2008 Teacher of the Year) shared her thoughts on content-based best practices and showed videos of her own students' performances.

Outgoing NNELL President Terry Caccavale thanked each State and Regional Representative for his/her work for NNELL, and introduced new President Paula Patrick to the assembled participants. NNELL Officers Scott Wilkolaski, Secretary, and Jacque Bott Van Houten, Vice President, were introduced, along with Nathan Lutz, newly appointed National Networking Coordinator. Jean Modig was warmly thanked for her four years as National Networking Coordinator.

#### *Annual Business Meeting and State Representative Networking Meeting*

*Wisconsin:* Helena Curtain will present a FLES Festival Networking event sometime in March.

*Georgia:* Vicki Welch Alvis was Teacher of the Year from the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP). There will be a NNELL Session at SCOLT March 5-7, 2009.

*Illinois:* FLAP grants were reinstated and a NNELL event will happen in February.

*New York:* NNELL welcomes Diana Zuckerman as the state representative. The New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYS AFLT) has been very generous

with NELL by letting us use their listserv for promoting early language learning. This past summer, it put on an institute with a strand devoted solely to FLES. At this past fall's Annual Meeting, there was a round table on early language learning, with Terry Caccavale, Past President of NELL, as one of the panelists.

*Connecticut:* The Connecticut Board of Education was going to require students to take 2 years of language, but that item was taken off the agenda and a petition has been filed. Teachers may have to move up levels, leaving FLES positions vacant.

*Arkansas:* This state is focusing on backwards design and there are plans for rewriting curriculum.

*Indiana:* Fall conferences and a swapshop are planned in conjunction with the local library. The March conference will be posted on the NELL website. State certification for elementary teachers is in jeopardy.

*Florida:* State education had major budget cuts with \$50 million cut this year and \$40 million in the previous year. Bilingual and immersion programs will continue. The Música Maestros conference was held and approximately 125 people attended.

*Minnesota:* At the fall conference, EMC provided door prizes and a breakfast for the NELL swapshop. There might be another possible early language session in February.

*Idaho:* There are 2 immersion programs that exist and only 2 schools have K-2 programs.

*Massachusetts:* At this time there is no one in the state department for foreign language. The NELL sponsored sessions were well attended, but most people who attended the conferences were from the secondary level. Contacts have been established and NELL membership has grown.

*West Virginia:* Programs are beginning for K-2 language.

*Colorado:* Networking is taking place at the State Supervisors Meeting. There was a technology conference including language and a NELL booth at the state foreign language conference. There are new dual-language programs and FLES programs are being maintained in spite of budget concerns.

*Virginia:* Virginia recruited over 100 new NELL members. The 2008 Southeast Regional Workshop was held in the spring and it included several breakout sessions for FLES and immersion. McGraw Hill sponsored a breakfast. Another Regional Workshop will take place April 25, 2009. The State Board of Education is recommending elementary foreign language programs. The state conference offered 10 sessions for FLES and ELL.

#### *Best Practices in Early Second Language Instruction: the Minnesota FLES Program*

This NELL-sponsored session began with presenters Kathy Olson-Studler and Lori Grant from the St. Paul Academy

and Summit School leading participants through a voyage of discovery in the Amazon Rainforest. As Kathy and Lori moved from plant to plant and tree to tree, they labeled, discussed, questioned and commented entirely in Spanish, making it clear that their program prides itself on the use of global and immersive methodologies with all of its elementary school participants.

The St. Paul Academy is comprised of a multi-cultural student population and it brings its Spanish students together in mind and spirit in many different ways. Through songs, poetry, the implementation of an artisan-in-residence program and, most importantly, the adoption of a model of Backward Design, teachers in this program establish a meaningful context in which all students are highly motivated to succeed in their acquisition of a second language.

The walls of the conference room were covered with murals, examples of students work, charted songs and poems, and more. Participants were treated to a hand-out including references to some of the resources used by program teachers.

NNELL is thrilled to have sponsored this wonderful session, and extends its most sincere gratitude to both Kathy and Lori for the outstanding presentation they made in Orlando!

If you or someone you know may be interested in submitting an ACTFL session proposal for consideration by NNELL as a sponsoring organization, please contact Nathan Lutz, NNELL National Networking Coordinator, at [nlutz@mph.net](mailto:nlutz@mph.net)

### *NNELL Welcomes New Executive Board Members*

NNELL extends a very warm welcome to Vice-President Jacque Bott-Van Houten and National Networking Coordinator Nathan Lutz. Both Jacque and Nathan are longtime members of NNELL, and have worked in their respective states of Kentucky and New York to further the agenda of early second language learning. NNELL also welcomes Al Martino as the new Chair of its Membership Committee.

NNELL extends its most sincere thanks to Jean Modig, outgoing National Networking Coordinator. Jean has worked tirelessly over the past four years to improve communication within our network, to organize all NNELL sessions at ACTFL and at the Summer Institute, and to appoint state and regional representatives. She will be greatly missed.

*\*\*Thank you to Scott Wilkolaski for the minutes from the state representative meeting and to Terry Caccavale for the write-up of the NNELL sponsored session and the NNELL networking breakfast.*

Send any information, comments, or questions for *Newsworthy* to Tammy Dann at [trdann@juno.com](mailto:trdann@juno.com)