

# School Leadership News

The Newsletter of AERA Division A: Administration, Organization, & Leadership

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The American Educational Research Association (AERA), a professional membership organization, strives to improve the educational process by encouraging scholarly inquiry related to education. AERA offers a comprehensive program of scholarly publications, training, fellowships, and meetings to advance educational research, to disseminate knowledge, and to improve the capacity of the profession to enhance the public good. Division A of AERA is devoted to furthering the aims of the organization through scholarly contribution in the areas of educational administration, organization, and leadership.

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## Vice President's Column

**Linda C. Tillman, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

*"Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, I am the dream and the hope of the slave."*



Greetings! We are rapidly approaching the 2008 American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, which will be held in New York City, March 24-28. This year's meeting promises to be intellectually exciting with over 2,000 sessions. Division A has a very strong program this year. Many thanks to Judy **Alston**, the Division A Program Chair, and the Division A program committee for all of their hard work. Please make note of the following sessions:

- **Division A Early Career Mentoring Seminar**, Sunday, March 23, 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (There is still space available for this session. See the Division A website for details or contact me at [ltillman@email.unc.edu](mailto:ltillman@email.unc.edu))
- **Vice President's Session – The United States Supreme Court's Ruling in Parents Involved in Community Schools versus Seattle School District 1: Triumph or Challenge Toward Education Equity in America?** Monday, March 24, 2:15–3:45 p.m., Sheraton New York, Executive Conference Center, Conference Room D, Lower Lobby
- **Division A Executive Board Committee meeting**, Monday, March 24, 4:00-5:35 p.m., Hilton New York, Hilton Board Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor. *This meeting is open all members of Division A.*
- **International Committee Session – Forging a Collective Identity for Educational Leadership Around the World**, Monday, March 24, 4:05-5:35 p.m. Sheraton New York, Metropolitan Ballroom East, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor
- **Division A Business Meeting –** Hilton New York, Sutton Complex, Beekman Parlor, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
- **AERA Awards Presentation and Presidential Address**, Wednesday, March 26, 4:05-6:05 p.m., Hilton New York, Grand Ballroom, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

### Vice President's Column (continued)

- **Division A, Division L, UCEA, Corwin Press Reception** – Wednesday, March 26, 8:00-10:00 p.m., Sheraton New York, Metropolitan West, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor
- **Division A & L David L. Clark Graduate Student Research Seminar**, Friday, March 28 (1-8 p.m.) and Saturday, March 29 (8:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.), Sheraton New York
- **Division A- New Members Session** Tuesday, March 25 - 12:25pm - 1:55pm, Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers / Executive Conference Center, Conference Room E, Lower Lobby
- **Division A Practitioner Session - Leadership Creativity and Innovation in Turning Around Low-Performing Schools: Lessons From the Field**, Wednesday, March 26 - 2:15pm - 3:45pm, Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers / Executive Conference Center, Conference Room E, Lower Lobby
- **Division A Affirmative Action Session** - Thursday, March 27 - 10:35am - 12:05pm, Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers / Riverside Ballroom, 3rd Floor, Affirmative Action and the 21st Century
- **Division A Graduate Student Fireside Chat: New York; Engaging the Possibilities: Partnerships Between K-12 and Higher Education in Addressing the Needs of the Schools and Community**, Tuesday, March 25 - 4:05pm - 5:35pm., Marriott Marquis Times Square/Shubert Complex, Shubert Room, 6th Floor

While each of us is very busy during the conference, please plan to attend the Division A Business Meeting (Monday) and the Division A, L, UCEA, Corwin Press joint reception on Wednesday.

Best wishes for an enjoyable annual meeting and I look forward to seeing you in New York!

### **Collective Identity for Educational Leadership Around the World**

The International Committee of Division A invites educational leadership faculty from around the world who are interested in promoting educational leadership programs and international connections to participate in this session. This two-hour gathering will use World Cafe methodology for generating discussion. The long-term goal is to use session input in order to: 1) create a network for an international community of scholars who work in leadership preparation; and, 2) plan for a World Summit on Educational Leadership Programs and Preparation. The World Cafe will discuss questions such as: How do we best prepare future educational leaders? How can our programs address global issues? What might we learn from one another? How do we acknowledge important differences among us while working collaboratively toward shared meaning and understanding about leadership?

**Monday, March 24<sup>th</sup> from 4:05pm – 5:35pm**  
**Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers**  
**Metropolitan Ballroom, Metropolitan East, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**

### **Mindful Leadership in Policy Formation and Practice: The Importance of Theory** **Curt Adams, The University of Oklahoma**

The role of theory in educational leadership programs has become the target of critical accounts leveled on our field. Murphy's polemic that appeared in the Fall 2006 issue of this Newsletter, "*I am aware of no body of evidence that suggests that theoretical constructs from the behavioral sciences guide practice in school administration to any real extent*" is the most damning. The application of theory to inform policy and practice certainly merits scrutiny, but the nature of the relationship and its utility for practitioners should not be undermined by assertions of its futility. This article challenges the assertion that theory-to-practice is an illusionary bridge that educational leaders do not cross as they develop policies and implement programs. An  $n=1$  is hardly enough evidence to persuade Professor Murphy that mindful leaders regularly draw on theories for decisions on policy and practice but it will demonstrate how administrators in one school district are effectively using conceptual models derived from behavioral sciences to inform decisions.

#### **Mindful Leadership**

Pervasive norms in the larger institutional environment of education serve to diminish the importance of using theoretical frameworks to understand problems. Take elements of NCLB as an example. Attaching the labels of "best practice" and "evidence-based" to a program automatically legitimizes it without any meaningful interrogation of both the evidence justifying such claims and the theoretical foundation of the program. The irony of these ubiquitous slogans is that policies and practices hailed as "scientifically proven" in many situations lack relevance to the unique needs of the school and dispositions of the students. If this is the case, proclaimed rigor is lost on relevance. A program, no matter how "proven" the results, cannot be rigorous if it is not contextually relevant. Determining relevance and understanding fit requires a rich understanding of the theory undergirding the policy or practice. Mindful leaders who use multiple theoretical frameworks can sort through the myths and rhetoric perpetuated by slogans such as "best practice" and "research based" to assess program/practice relevance for their school and district.

In the absence of good theory, decisions in education tend to be myopic in focus and fall woefully short of addressing systemic causes of problems. Murphy's suggestion of a "just-in-time" knowledge framework for practice seems more vulnerable to such operational tendencies. Knowledge removed from theory is more likely to result in specification error and superficial solutions than interventions that attack the sources of problems. In medicine, quick decisions and diagnoses occur often. Take for example a patient with flu symptoms. Doctors examine the patient and make a diagnosis based on their knowledge of the flu virus and its symptoms. In this textbook case, the illness is easily identified and a proper treatment is prescribed. But what happens when abnormal symptoms do not show a pattern consistent with "just-in-time" knowledge? Doctors in this case peruse journals looking for theories and evidence that might explain plausible causes of the symptoms.

Decision-making by mindful administrators is similar to that of doctors. Some problems fall within the general knowledge-base that administrators can easily and quickly reference to make prompt diagnoses and immediate decisions; however, similar to medicine, problems often fall outside the prescribed framework of "just-in-time" knowledge,

requiring mindful administrators to reference a larger body of knowledge and evidence to make and support decisions on policies and practice. Using simplistic frameworks that reduce the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical intricacies of learning and development to prescribed practices, could make schools vulnerable to the prevailing myths in the larger institutional environment. What good is a program if educators do not understand how and why it works?

Being a mindful leader requires the use of theoretical lenses to understand phenomena in schools as well as to construct policies and practices centered on the nature of a phenomenon. Whereas medical doctors can measure the effects of a prescribed treatment within a couple of weeks or months, educational administrators do not have the luxury of knowing the effectiveness of interventions after two or three weeks of adopting a new policy or practice. Thus, it is important to correctly frame the problem before designing an intervention. The success of systemic reform starts with an accurate diagnosis of the problem. Mindful leaders do not begin with a “proven” program and work backwards to fit the program into the educational environment. They start with a conceptual understanding of problems/issues within the environment before developing relevant programs, policies, or processes that address the complexity of the problem.

### **The Policy Landscape**

Beginning with the freshman class of 2008-2009, high school students in Oklahoma must pass End of Instruction exams in Algebra I, English II and two of the following: Algebra II, Biology I, English II, Geometry, or US history, in order to graduate with a standard diploma. Even though the underlying legislation, Achieving Classroom Excellence (ACE), does not take effect until the next school year it has significantly shaped school district policy and practice in the area of remediation. Many schools are seeking to develop preventative policies targeted at middle school students identified as “at-risk” for not passing End of Instruction exams in high school. Early identification is critical, but identification without a theoretical base to understand the source of the problem is akin to setting out on a journey without directions or a destination. Theory provides the map that enables schools/school districts to effectively and efficiently arrive at their intended destinations.

In regards to remediation policies stemming from the ACE legislation in Oklahoma, a “just-in-time” knowledge framework is more likely to elicit structural and technical changes that on the surface look effective and rigorous but in reality are misaligned to the sources of the problem. For example, changes to policy or practice could involve increasing instructional time through tutoring, summer school, or alternative schedules; developing credit recovery programs; or instituting additional testing. These isolated interventions do not really change practice, nor do they address the problem. Instead, they do more of the same but with greater intensity. What happens when a student who is not engaged in school, does not feel a sense of belonging to school, is not motivated to learn, or has low efficacy is forced into one of these programs? Will increased instructional time, as an isolated treatment, make a difference? Is it a relevant intervention? A simple change in structure based on superficial knowledge of the problem can be harmful.

### **A Theoretical Approach to the Problem**

What does mindful practice look like? Union Public Schools in Tulsa, OK, is an archetype of the theory-to-practice bridge that Murphy finds to be more mythical than practical. Union's remediation policy and practice emerged from a systematic examination of the problem through the lenses of organizational dynamics, social networks, psychosocial needs, and behavioral motives. Their program, called FOCUS, attacks the problem in two ways – early identification of 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students who exude symptoms of disengagement from school and structural, social, and behavioral reforms that change

the learning climate to help these students form healthy relationships with adults and peers. The attention to relationship building is designed to support students' cognitive, emotional, and social development.

Similar to other interventions, the aim of FOCUS is to help students graduate from high school ready for work or post-secondary education. The difference is in the approach. The means by which FOCUS achieves its outcomes target the endogenous, normative conditions that affect the ways of thinking and the ways of doing, the habits of mind (cognition) and hand (abilities), that are needed to reorient students to their innate curiosity for learning. FOCUS is a nurturing approach to education, one that appeals to the motives underlying behaviors that are associated with meaningful learning. Understanding how to transform the social system to promote the appropriate conditions for learning did not emerge from a "just-in-time" knowledge possessed by the leadership of Union School District, but instead through their understanding of the theoretical conceptions in social and behavioral sciences.

Could Union arrive at the same model without using conceptual lenses to understand the phenomena driving the problem? In the absence of empirical evidence, one can only speculate but I do believe it is improbable that systemic changes to the entrenched mindsets and practices would not have occurred without scholarly leaders equipped with the theoretical knowledge to make sense of the underlying antecedent conditions. Mindful administrators who use theory to guide decisions are able to not only understand root causes of problems but to explicate policies and practices in ways that help others buy into and understand the rationale undergirding decisions. As more data on the effectiveness of FOCUS become known, schools will invariably want to replicate it. But, as the mindful architects of the model will suggest, it is the conceptual process that is more meaningful and relevant for schools to follow than the blind adoption of their program.

**Policy to Practice** is a new and recurring feature of the Division A Newsletter and is edited by **Curt Adams, University of Oklahoma**. For comments or questions about the feature, please contact Curt at: [Curt.Adams-1@ou.edu](mailto:Curt.Adams-1@ou.edu).

## ***Congratulations!***

**Dr. James Earl Davis** (Temple University) was elected AERA Affirmative Action Chair. James served as Division A Affirmative Action Chair for four years. He will serve a three-year term that will begin at the end of the 2008 AERA Annual Meeting.

**Dr. Mark A. Gooden** was promoted and tenured at the University of Cincinnati.

**Dr. Catherine Lugg** (Rutgers University) was elected Division A Secretary.

**Dr. Jeffrey S. Brooks** (Auburn University) is President-elect of the Leadership for Social Justice Special Interest Group.

**John Oliver** (Michigan State University) who was elected Chair of the AERA Graduate Student Council. John will begin his term at the end of the 2008 AERA Annual Meeting and will serve on the AERA Council for one year. John is also a Barbara Jackson Scholar who is being mentored by **Dr. James J. Scheurich**.

## Barbara L. Jackson Scholars Network

In November 2003, members of the UCEA Plenum voted to create the UCEA Barbara L. Jackson Scholars Network for graduate students of color who are studying in UCEA members' educational leadership doctoral programs and who are planning to enter the professoriate. The program has grown each year as mentors have worked with the scholars to facilitate successful dissertations, prepare them for future faculty positions, and help scholars begin a publication record through special issues in journals such as *Educational Administration Quarterly (EAQ)* and the *International Journal for Qualitative Studies in Education (QSE)* (watch for these upcoming special issues).

While the US, UK, and Canada's populations are becoming more diverse, the educational faculty continues to be predominately White. UCEA's public stand to foster "human progress" through support of equity and social justice in institutions has helped to spur this program on and increase it in size and scope. The activities sponsored for the Scholars include an annual graduate student seminar at the UCEA Convention, listervs, a mentoring program, and networking opportunities for students as they seek to move into faculty positions. UCEA Institutions are encouraged to nominate at least one graduate student for the program and provide not only financial support for the graduate to attend the convention, but also to provide the scholar with research and teaching opportunities.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2008 JACKSON SCHOLARS:

**Andres Arroyo**, University at Buffalo / SUNY; **Hollis Batista**, Duquesne University; **Meca Berne Mohammed**, The University of Georgia; **Gerald Blankson**, Arizona State University; **Colleen Bowman**, New Mexico State University; **Brian Dixon**, New Mexico State University; **Kevin Dougherty**, University of Arizona; **Alfred Dunn**, Vanderbilt University; **Jewel Dunn**, Pennsylvania State University; **Michael Gaines**, University of Cincinnati; **Pamela Gayles**, Georgia State University; **Colleen Gordon**, Auburn University; **Leticia Grimaldo**, Texas State University - San Marcos; **Jane Harstad**, Pennsylvania State University; **Rahmon Hart**, Duquesne University; **Lillian Hawkins**, Miami University; **Neverson-Anyjah Heatley III**, University of Florida; **Richard Holdgreve-Resendez**, Michigan State University; **Willis Jones**, Vanderbilt University; **Guodong Liang**, University of Missouri-Columbia; **Sophia Masewicz**, University of Northern Colorado; **Priscilla Maynor**, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; **Meca Berne Mohammed**, The University of Georgia; **Rose Narvaez**, Texas A&M University; **John Oliver**, Michigan State University; **David Parker**, Duquesne University; **Malila Robinson**, Rutgers University; **Jolanta Smolen**, Louisiana State University; **Emanda Thomas**, University of Minnesota; **Darryle Todd**, University of Nevada Las Vegas; **Trina Valdez**, University of Utah; **Brenda Valles**, University of Utah; **Deneca Winfrey**, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; **Annjanet Woodburn**, Fordham University; **Anjale Welton**, University of Texas at Austin

AERA UPDATE: The 2008 AERA Jackson Scholars event will be held on Monday, March 24, 9 a.m. - noon. Guest speakers **Dr. Andrea Evans**, Northern Illinois University and **Dr. George Wimberly**, AERA Director of Social Justice and Professional Development will work with students on preparing proposals for the AERA Minority Fellowship and AERA Post Doctoral Fellows

## WHERE ARE FORMER JACKSON SCHOLARS NOW?

**Dr. Joyce Piert** (Michigan State University) is working as an educational consultant in the Beecher School District in Flint, Michigan.

**Dr. Michelle Thompson** (University of Florida) is working in the Freshman College Department at Bethune Cookman College.

**Dr. Sharon Brooks** (SUNY Buffalo) is an assistant professor at Georgia Southern University.

**Dr. Bernard Solomon** (University of Missouri-Columbia) is assistant principal at Oakland Junior High School in Columbia, Missouri.

**Dr. Patrice McClellan** (Bowling Green State University) is a post-doctoral fellow at Miami University of Ohio.

**Dr. Faith Ngunjiri** (Bowling Green State University) works in the Center for Faith and Culture at Yale University.

**Dr. Latish Reed** (University of Wisconsin-Madison) is an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in the Educational Leadership Program.

**Dr. Lori Bruce** (University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill) is employed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and is an adjunct professor at UNC-Chapel Hill.

**Dr. Noelle Witherspoon (University of Alabama-Tuscaloosa) is an Assistant Professor at Louisiana State University in the Department of Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice.**

**Dr. Lisa Bass** (Pennsylvania State University) is a post doctoral fellow at the University of Vermont.

**Dr. Jennifer Edwards** (Sam Houston State University) is an assistant professor in the Communication Studies department at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, TX.

## Congratulations to Sonya Horsford!

**Sonya Horsford** of The University of Las Vegas was chosen as the recipient of the 2007 Outstanding Dissertation Award. Her dissertation is titled: *Vestiges of Desegregation: Black Superintendent Reflections on the Complex Legacy of Brown v. Board of Education*. Sonya is also a Barbara L. Jackson Scholar alumna who was mentored by **Dr. Katherine Bell McKenzie**.

There were two finalists in the competition. The first being **Cheryl May** from The University of Utah whose dissertation is entitled *Organizational response: How a Title 1 elementary school responds to accountability*. The second finalist was **Alex Bowers** from Michigan State University whose dissertation was titled *Grades and Data Driven Decision Making: Issues of Variance and Student Patterns*. Dr. Horsford will be honored at the 2008 Div A business meeting and presented with a \$200.00 honorarium. The finalists will also be presented with a certificate of recognition for their efforts.

**2007-2008 Dissertation Awards Committee Autumn Tooms**, Kent State University (Chair); **George Theoharis**, Syracuse University (Vice-Chair); **Pat Casey**, Texas Women's University; **Larry Daniel**, University of North Florida; **Robert Donmoyer**, University of San Diego; **Heather Duncan**, University of Wyoming; **Stacey Edmondson**, Sam Houston State University; **Doreen Gosimire**, University of South Dakota; **Gaetane Jean-Marie**, University of Oklahoma; **Carol Karpinski**, Fairleigh Dickinson University; **Beverly Klecker**, Morehead State University; **Tammy Kolbe**, University of Maryland-College Park; **David Parks**, Virginia Tech University; **Carrie Mitchell**, Garden Grove Unified School District; **Rose Newton**, **Joe Shedd**, Syracuse University; **Peter Sleeper**, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands; **Dianne Taylor**, Louisiana State University; **Pamela Theroux**, Teachers College Columbia University; **Nadia C. Tushnet**, WestEd; **Veronica Rozic**

## **John Hoyle** **An Interview with an Exceptional Scholar in Education: Part 2**

**Carol A. Mullen, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro**  
**camullen@uncg.edu**

The subject of this leadership portrait is John Hoyle of Texas A&M University. Hoyle, an optimistic champion of the educational leadership profession, engages in ongoing intellectual debate with cynics. His scholarly work and life habits, direction and aspirations, assessment of trends in the profession, and advice for aspiring leaders and academics are the structural elements of this report. Democratic concepts and agendas for education emerged from the interview. Verbatim quotes reflect the words of Hoyle in the first section and of his referral colleagues in the one that follows. In spring 2005 I interviewed Hoyle and his colleagues who corroborated the accounts, without knowledge of the scholar's reactions. This interview is part of a biographical portraiture study of exceptional scholars in education. Future issues of this newsletter will feature interviews with other top scholars<sup>1</sup>. Specifics regarding issues of research design, protocols, procedures, and analysis can be found in the formative (Mullen, 2004) and summative (Mullen, 2007, in press<sup>2</sup>) publications.



**John Hoyle—Champion**

The characteristic of champion emerged from analysis of the multiple data sources (i.e., interview transcriptions, survey results, and salient documents). A champion is an ardent defender of a cause<sup>3</sup>. Hoyle, fitting this definition, has been honored as America's Leading Reformer in Administrator Preparation.

### **White Heat: Habits and Routines**

Robust creative energy is a constant in Hoyle's life. Concerning scholarly writing, he shares, "I grab pieces of time. When I can get alone and capture time, I enter into what I call a white heat" and "hammer away like crazy to get something out of my head that needs to get out."

Interplay between creative energy and educational mission is fundamental to Hoyle's reformist agenda: "Before I start my classes, I draw a smiley face and say, 'This is a generic kid but we need to focus our efforts on the individual.'" His interest that extends to

leadership preparation is squarely on students, including traditionally disenfranchised groups, as the most critical stakeholder in universities and schools—he implores others to adopt his value system.

A vigorous people person, Hoyle derives satisfaction from quality exchanges with others. He makes time for university students, as well as family, exercise, and church, and always has, explaining, “It’s not just about what we write—it’s about what and how we live.” Because such outside forces heavily influence his schedule, he works doubly hard to carve out time for writing.

### **Defending the Cause: Energy and Purpose**

Hoyle’s “white heat” continues to be directed at protecting causes and battling injustice: “My energy is directed at the good things happening in leadership preparation. I’ve always been optimistic about what we do, despite the criticisms.” He sees himself as someone who protects the field against the disparagement “that we have no center, or that we don’t know what we’re doing, or that we haven’t improved schools.” Hoyle underscores that our profession is improving and diversifying: “Overall, our field is much better now. Our women and minority students move into administrative positions. Our students are brighter than ever. Let’s tell that story.”

Although a great optimist, Hoyle (2007) feels compelled to adopt a defensive posture, as in his responses to Art Levin’s criticisms of the EdD degree and educational administration programs as an “off-key ensemble: bunk” (p. 3). Another example of a passionate plea can be found in his justification of the national standards that shape leadership preparation: “These are credible and we do have a discipline worth valuing.” He believes we should be protecting the social sciences, adding “new voices” and approaches, but he recognizes that much remains to be done.

### **Channeling Optimism: Sources of Contribution**

In Hoyle’s mind, optimism influences both people and education itself. He described his own attitude as “hope for our discipline—and I still call it a discipline—to become highly respected and to take its place alongside the tried and true disciplines.” We must show, he added, that “what we do is just as scholarly and perhaps more useful than many other disciplines.”

**Standards.** Channeling Hoyle’s optimism are rigorous academic standards and national guidelines in administration. This self-proclaimed “cheerleader” is “a prime mover in having national standards.” He joked, “A country song applies here, ‘If You Don’t Stand for Something, You’ll Fall for Anything.’” In 1983, he wrote the AASA Guidelines for the Preparation of School Administrators, believing these revitalized the association’s dormant guidelines and initiated the national standards movement: “Those AASA [American Association of School Administrators] guidelines were unofficially used by most states, becoming the benchmark for every set of standards since.” *Skills for Successful 21st Century School Leaders* (Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 1998) emerged out of those guidelines and “professors began looking differently at degree programs from a position of standards and what skills should be taught, giving a social science bent to what we were teaching and measuring.”

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was influenced by the AASA guidelines. Currently, “the AASA guidelines have informed the latest NCATE document for advanced administrator programs, which has since incorporated the ISLLC/ELCC [Educational Leadership Constituent Council] standards.” Hoyle helped shape these standards, pushing to ensure the accommodation of superintendents.

Acknowledging the creators of national standards, notably Joseph Murphy, he reasoned, "I think that NCATE, despite its limitations in evaluating doctoral programs, is probably the best overall standards we've got."

**Future.** Hoyle (1995) believes that "great leaders have a knack for inventing their own future" (p. 18). Recognized as a futurist, Hoyle is devoted to helping organizational leaders inside and outside education design scenarios that anticipate the future. Students and practitioners need to "see the big picture," like the "orchestra conductor" who imagines possibilities. Visionaries, he added, see down the road and enable others to see those futures.

From this perspective, we maintain high standards by "refusing to accept mediocrity," unlike those practitioners who "allow students to fail." Democratic leaders consult families living in poverty to reach students and "people in administration programs need to have this capacity."

**Love.** Another channel for Hoyle's philosophy of optimism is love. It was "a shock to many when I introduced love into the literature" (see Hoyle, 2001). He now favors the idea of spiritual leadership, described as "reaching for a higher power in someone's belief system to overcome pedestrian battles." Hoyle asserted, "You can't have a great school or system without a higher love for each other and for spiritual guidance for what you do—that's what a system is." Hoyle's membership on AASA's Systems Leadership Advisory Committee, which includes Margaret Wheatley, is renowned for fusing systems thinking with spiritual leadership.

#### **The Human Dimension: Major Trends**

To Hoyle, the "human dimensions" of spirituality and standards are starting to coalesce. Honoring 1950s activist Mary Parker Follett's pioneering concept of spirituality in organizational life, Hoyle advocates adopting a spiritual approach to educational standards. Standards more broadly and deeply conceived account for expectations, admissions, and outcomes, and the relationship of these conventional measures to people, both to our ability to grow and become gracious leaders. Interpreted spiritually, standards also support the capacity for caring and specifically the development of aspiring leaders as caregivers (see Hoyle, 1995).

#### **Persistence Pays Off: Advice for Budding Academics**

Persistence and learning to cope with rejection were viewed as crucial "cognitive drivers": "Don't give up. Once the burn is over, send your manuscript to another journal. Just sit down and do it." Hoyle urges aspiring academics to write with senior colleagues, no matter how "crusty," and to develop their careers (and visibility) through national associations and meetings.

#### **Be a Lightning Rod: Aspiring Leaders and Academics**

Hoyle encourages aspiring leaders "to want to make a difference and a life." Quipping, "I like a little ego in my students," he wants "administrators to be scholarly, not just a good ol' boy or girl who blends into the community." Despite the danger, he says that "lightning rods" stand for something. A lightning rod himself, Hoyle's vision for the superintendency has made executive development child centered, as well as more progressive and humane, not just effective. He helps leaders from different disciplines (e.g., business) and professions (e.g., law enforcement) stretch to embrace democratic agendas.

### **Highlights From Hoyle's Referrals**

One referral, a doctoral candidate who is an assistant principal, has benefited from Hoyle's advisement for 9 years. The other, an executive leader of a leading association and a former superintendent, has known Hoyle for 11 years<sup>4</sup>. These long-term colleagues corroborated Hoyle's claims and narrated the power of his circumference of influence. They also pinpointed characteristics that Hoyle himself either only implied or did not mention. Additionally, they detailed the powerful effect he has had on them, others, and the profession itself.

Hoyle's focus on guiding, leading, and establishing trends that make a difference in the lives of others and within the educational leadership profession had ample collegial support. The concern he has regarding what is best for young people is manifested in a desire to mentor doctoral and master's students. For example, Hoyle looks out for his student, the doctoral candidate, by providing sound advice "on the whole deal of graduate school"—the coursework, exams, dissertation, and career. Struggling intellectually at the dissertation stage, the student was guided to the point of breakthrough: "After I finished my proposal in another professor's course, it had real holes in it. The research design lacked rigor. Dr. Hoyle listened to what I was trying to do and then helped me to reformulate it as a case study." He concluded that "Dr. Hoyle is a strong, personal ally for who you are and for what you're doing."

Reinforcing this statement, the executive leader has observed Hoyle helping junior faculty, including women and minorities. It was owing to Hoyle's sociability that, as a new professor, they met. Reminiscing about Hoyle's friendly handshake at a conference, this leader shared that their relationship has since become special: "He watches out for me but not in a fatherly way. I think that his effect on people directly impacts the profession." Hoyle's capacity for connection was clear: "Not many high-quality researchers are down-to-earth enough to just sit and talk with you."

The referrals confirmed that Hoyle's work is not just scholarly in impact but practical for its value. The leader has "read John's writings because they are tied to what I do for a living." The student, referring to "the love book," added, "At my school, I apply his leadership ideas." Hoyle's commitments and writings have "definitely made a significant difference" in this student's thinking, "not only in my life but in others who have read his work, which goes back to affecting the kids."

The executive leader depicted Hoyle's efforts in standards development as having had far-reaching impact:

I consider him an expert on standards and accreditation, partly owing to his historical work. Whenever I have questions about the field's history, especially the standards movement, I consult John, who is rare for his depth of knowledge. He's kept close in order to help us make decisions about [this organization's] direction. Finally, the energy Hoyle gives to supporting the work of superintendents' boards and other educational bodies, including national commissions, was clearly acknowledged. He received praise for having redefined what a professor should be and the kind of work that school administrators could be doing. Further, Hoyle's fight for particular educational causes, including the preparation of democratically-minded leaders, was validated. Champion as mentor, cheerleader, and defender strongly shone through the referrals' statements.

### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup>Each of the four interview reports is an adaptation of the larger study (see Mullen, 2006; in press).

<sup>2</sup>NCPEA *Connexions* ([www.cnx.org](http://www.cnx.org)) is an online clearinghouse for educational leadership materials/modules; submitted manuscripts are externally reviewed even though this is not a journal, meaning that published articles can be submitted elsewhere for review and publication.

<sup>3</sup>The source of the definitions (i.e., champion) provided is <http://dictionary.reference.com>.

<sup>4</sup>Non-identifiers are used for the referral colleagues.

### References

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Editor's note: This interview with John Hoyle is the second in a recurring series of interviews with acclaimed educational leaders conducted by **Carol Mullen**, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Future issues of *School Leadership News* will feature additional interviews.

### Institute for Educational Sciences Education Leadership Research Program

Through the Education Leadership research program, NCER supports research to improve the quality of leadership and administration at the local level (e.g., building, district, and region) in order to enhance the teaching and learning environment for students and thereby improve student outcomes. This program is intended to support research on innovative approaches to the recruitment, retention, and training of education leaders as well as the development and evaluation of professional development programs for education leaders. Innovative approaches to recruitment of education leaders includes alternative pathways to school leadership that are designed to eliminate the barriers that keep talented potential school leaders from joining the profession and to provide the preparation and support necessary for these leaders to effectively function in today's complex education environment.  
<http://ies.ed.gov/ncer/projects/program.asp?ProgID=8>

## **David L. Clark National Graduate Student Research Seminar in Educational Administration & Policy**

The David L. Clark Seminar, sponsored by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), Divisions A and L of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), and Corwin Press, brings emerging educational administration and policy scholars and noted researchers together for two days of presentations, discussion, and professional growth. Individual schools may nominate up to two students for the honor of becoming a Clark scholar. Forty individuals are then selected each year from those outstanding doctoral students in educational leadership, administration, and/or policy, seeking careers in research.

Many of the graduates of the Clark Seminar are now faculty members at predominant institutions including:

**Danna Beaty**, Tarleton State University (2001 participant)  
**Kathryn Bell McKenzie**, Texas A&M University (2001 participant)  
**Brianna Reck**, University of South Florida (2001 participant)  
**Whitney Sherman**, Virginia Commonwealth University (2001 participant)  
**Jeffrey S. Brooks**, Auburn University (2002 participant)  
**Matthew Militello**, University of Massachusetts Amherst (2004 Participant)  
**Betty Murakami-Ramalho**, University of Texas at San Antonio (2004 Participant)  
**Sheldon Watson**, Central Connecticut State, (2005 Participant)

### QUOTES FROM PARTICIPANTS:

"Being a part of the Clark Graduate Seminar provided me with the opportunity to learn from and with eminent scholars from the field of educational leadership and policy as well as the opportunity to develop networks and collegial relationships that have served me well during my early years in academia." – Danna Beaty, Tarleton State University

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2007-2008 CLARK PARTICIPANTS:

**Rebecca Barber** Arizona State University; **Daniel Berebitsky** University Of Michigan; **Bettie J. Bertram** Duquesne University; **Deidre Bigheart** University Of Oklahoma; **Rebecca F. Burton** Tarleton State University; **Benjamin T. Clabo** University Of Tennessee; **Xiu Cravens** Vanderbilt University; **Melissa Askren Edgehouse** Bowling Green State University; **Elizabeth Farley-Ripple** University Of Pennsylvania; **Michael Goetz** University Of Wisconsin-Madison; **L. Jane Hall** University Of Maryland-College Park; **Madlene Hamilton** University Of Texas at Austin; **Robert E. Harper** University Of Cincinnati; **Marcia J. Harr** Fordham University; **Candace Head-Dylla** Pennsylvania State University; **Petrina D. Hill** Bowling Green State University; **Craig D. Hochbein** University Of Virginia; **Kristin S. Huggins** Texas A&M University; **Roxanne Hughes** Florida State University; **Lara Jakobsons** Florida State University; **Bryan M. Johnson** Loyola Marymount University; **Brent W. Maddin** Harvard University; **Willette Nash** North Carolina Agricultural And Technical State University; **Ann Ogletree** University Of Cincinnati; **Vicki Park** University Of Southern California; **Juliet M. Ray** University Of Texas At San Antonio; **Jo-Ann Robinson** North Carolina State University; **Sonja Setnocnik** Lehigh University; **Marc L. Stein** Vanderbilt University; **Cara Stillings** Boston University; **Janice L. Taylor** Sam Houston State University; **Emanda Thomas** University Of Minnesota-Twin Cities; **Toni Tsatoke** University Of Oklahoma; **David D. Ulate** University Of California-Davis; **Trina Valdez** University Of Utah; **Brenda Valles** University Of Utah; **Christine Warr** University Of Lincoln; **Glenné Whisenhunt** University Of Oklahoma; **Sharon A. Wilbur** University Of Oklahoma; **Barbara R. Wrushen** University Of Tennessee-Knoxville

**AERA UPDATE: The 2008 seminar will be held directly after the AERA conference in New York City.**



**UCEA Convention 2008 Call for Proposals**  
***“Preparing democratic educational leaders to foster quality  
teaching and student success: A time for action.”***  
**Orlando, Florida    October 30 – November 2, 2008**

**General Information**

The 22<sup>nd</sup> annual convention of the University Council for Educational Administration will be held at the Buena Vista Palace Hotel in Orlando, Florida. The convention will open at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday evening (October 30, 2008) and close at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday (November 2, 2008). The purpose of the 2008 UCEA Convention is to engage participants in discussing research, policy, and practice in educational leadership and administration. Members of the Convention 2008 Program Committee are **James W. Koschoreck** (University of Cincinnati), **Floyd D. Beachum** (University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee), and **Jeffrey S. Brooks** (Auburn University).

**Theme**

The 2008 Convention theme, **“Preparing democratic educational leaders to foster quality teaching and student success: A time for action,”** acknowledges the urgency for university professors and educational leaders to engage actively in the discourse around the preparation and development of educational leaders and the role of university-based leadership preparation programs.

As policy makers, business people, and the general public participate more in the discourse about the role of public education in a democratic society, we urge university professors and educational leaders to seek new ways to bring their knowledge and skills to the decision-making process rather than simply letting decisions about leadership and public education to be made without their input. In this spirit, we invite all members of the UCEA community (1) to share their research and scholarly perspectives on these themes, (2) to offer new suggestions about how research and theory can inform the actual decision-making process at national, state, and local levels, and (3) to discuss insightful ways in which educational leadership can enhance academic excellence, equity and social justice in P-20 educational contexts.

Anyone interested in research, policy, or practice in educational or youth-serving agencies may submit proposals for consideration. Individuals may present or participate in no more than three sessions. The lead author of papers are required to upload an advance copy of their paper into the All Academic system through the UCEA Convention web page three weeks prior to the convention. By submitting a proposal, the lead author of each proposal also agrees to serve as a reviewer. An author’s failure to live up to either of these commitments may lead to his or her paper being removed from the convention program. **Proposals must be received by Monday, May 5, 2008.** All proposals must be submitted electronically at the link to be provided at the UCEA homepage, **starting April 1, 2008 (<http://www.ucea.org>)**. Submission length **must not exceed 3 single-spaced pages** (2,00 words, 8,000 characters). References are **required** and **must not exceed 1 single-spaced page** (approximately, 400 words and 2,200 characters).

**Read the full UCEA 2008 Convention Call for Proposals at**  
**[www.ucea.org](http://www.ucea.org)**

### **From the Editorial Team**

Hello all! I am pleased to announce that this issue is the first *School Leadership News* using an Editorial Team model. Joining me on the team are **Gaetane Jean-Marie** and **Curt Adams** of the University of Oklahoma; **Sheldon Watson** of Central Connecticut State University; **Whitney Sherman**, Virginia Commonwealth University; **Karen Crum**, Old Dominion University, and; **Danna Beatty**, Tarleton State University. Over the next several issues we will be developing a new features and seeking to enhance the overall quality of the newsletter. If you have any comments, ideas or announcements, please contact me at: [jeffreysbrooks@mac.com](mailto:jeffreysbrooks@mac.com).

Thank you for your support!  
**Jeffrey S. Brooks**, Auburn University

### **Call for Support**

Our goal continues to be expanding the content and distribution of the Division A Newsletter. To make our Newsletter a "must read" for our entire membership, we are seeking:

- commentaries that focus on topical issues
- perspectives that provide readers with insights about Division A concerns
- critiques and recommendations to improve the newsletter content and format
- information and announcements to include in future issues
- volunteers to serve as reporters, historians, and so forth
- calls for proposals and papers relevant to Division A members

Submissions or suggestions for improving the newsletter should be sent to **Linda Tillman** [ltillman@email.unc.edu](mailto:ltillman@email.unc.edu) or to Jeffrey S. Brooks [jeffreysbrooks@mac.com](mailto:jeffreysbrooks@mac.com). Please help us keep each other well informed about Division A and our fields of interest.

### **Submission Guidelines and Deadlines**

In addition to the sections included in this issue, *School Leadership News* periodically considers publication of brief articles on issues that are trenchant and of interest to Division A members. Restrictions for publication will apply (preferably no more than 1,000 words or 5 to 7 pages of double-spaced text) in order to meet newsletter page limitations (2-3 pages). The editors reserve the right to edit for style and length. Suggestions for articles will be accepted from Division A officers, committee chairs and members, and members of Division A and related Divisions or SIGs. Please contact Jeffrey S. Brooks at [jeffreysbrooks@mac.com](mailto:jeffreysbrooks@mac.com) for specific information about specific details and deadline.

We invite you to browse both the AERA Division A Web Site and the Archives of the Division A Newsletter, both available at **[www.aera.net](http://www.aera.net)**.

## Division A Officers and Committee Chairs (2007-2008)

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