

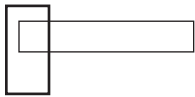


Gloria J. Ladson-Billings, the Kellner Family Professor in Urban Education at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and AERA President, wrote the foreword to *Black Education* and moderated the Book Forum and Media Briefing. Here, after the midday event, Ladson-Billings responds to a question posed by Debra Viadero (right), who regularly reports on research for *Education Week*.

International Trade Center. (See article, page 35.) Many attendees started a series of AERA events with the Book Forum and the Brown Lecture, followed by two days at AERA's annual Combined Committee Meeting in Alexandria, Virginia.

Several news organizations covered the Book Forum, including *Diverse*, formerly *Black Issues in Higher Education*; *Education Week*; and *Education Daily*. In addition, *COSSA Washington Update*, the newsletter of the Consortium of Social Science Associations, featured *Black Education* in its October 24 issue. Also present were a freelance education writer and the editor of *Connect for Kids*, an online publication that gives parents, grandparents, guardians, educators, advocates, policymakers, elected officials, and others information they need to improve the lives of children, youth, and families.

The complete press kit, which includes fact sheets on perspectives on learning and cognition, globalization and its broader view, and building a 21st-century research agenda, is posted on the AERA website (<http://www.aera.net/newsmedia/?id=893>).



AERA-AIR (A²) Fellows Launch Program

This October, the first AERA-AIR (A²) fellows began their tenure at the American Institutes for Research (AIR). Audrey Morgenbesser (2004 PhD in Administration, Training, and Policy Studies, Boston University) and Wehmah Jones (2003 PhD in Counseling Psychology, Virginia Commonwealth University) will hone their analytic competencies and research productivity over the next 2 years in residence at AIR. The American Institutes for Research is one of the largest behavioral and social science research organizations in the world with an emphasis on education. The fellowship is designed to give early career doctoral recipients the opportunity to engage in large-scale collaborative research and to provide them with the advanced skills and experiences essential to strong research careers.

Audrey Morgenbesser reports that her first month at AIR was spent primarily in two projects that fall under the purview of

the Education and Human Development Program (EHD) at AIR. One is the What Works Clearinghouse, a Department of Education Institute of Educational Sciences unit operated under contract by AIR that collects, screens, and identifies studies of the effectiveness of educational interventions (programs, products, practices, and policies). (See <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/>.) Morgenbesser is part of the early childhood group, where she screens and codes data on school readiness programs for preschool children. She also works on the Professional Development Impact Study. Here, she functions as an observer of reading instruction for second graders for the purpose of measuring the impact on teachers' instructional practices of the professional training package that is administered as part of the study.

Wehmah Jones's first research experiences have been in a similar arena. In the What Works Clearinghouse, however, she



Audrey Morgenbesser



Wehmah Jones

assists in coding research on beginning reading (K–3) interventions, referred to as the Beginning Reading Group. Her work on the Professional Development Impact Study all focuses on data collection in the classroom.

A central piece of the AERA-AIR fellowships is the mentor–fellow relationship. With a view to fostering the strong bond that is essential to induction in the profession by observing and learning from a senior colleague, Morgenbesser meets regularly with Kerstin LeFloch, Senior Research Analyst, EHD. Their objective is to design and implement a customized professional development plan that builds on Morgenbesser’s prior research experiences, notably in special education and international development. In addition, Fionna Innes Helsel and Marian Eaton, respectively, oversee Morgenbesser’s work in the What Works and PD Impact Study projects. Morgenbesser reports that the fellowship is allowing her to function as a part of a research organization and has been “a wonderful experience.”

Jones also reports that site coordinators have been helpful in orienting her to the project. Teresa Duncan (What Works), Consuelo Aceves (PD Impact Study), and other team members in both projects discuss the fellows’ progress frequently and as necessary. Jones’s assigned mentor is Stephanie Cronen (Senior Research Analyst, EHD), with whom she meets regularly to explore the professional development options available at AIR—proposal writing, networking, conferences, and online courses. Jones is using this experience to plan her long-term career goals. As a clinical psychologist, her exposure to quantitative and qualitative research was limited. She is enjoying being part of research teams and wants to continue the growth possible at a major research institution. As Jones put it, “Especially coming from a more clinical background, this fellowship is an important building block to research productivity.”

The A² fellowships resulted from the collaboration of several people at both institutions. Sol Pelavin, President of AIR, and

Felice Levine, Executive Director of AERA, identified the need to build a talent pool of highly skilled education researchers in fall 2004. The establishment of the fellowship program in 2005 “reflects the commitment of AIR to capacity building and excellence in education research,” according to Levine. She added, “We welcome AIR’s partnering with us and becoming a part of the ongoing AERA Postdoctoral Fellows Program.” Jay Moskowitz, Senior Vice President at AIR, and Stephanie Jackson, Principal Research Analyst, provide overall leadership and guidance to the A² fellowship program, along with Teresita Martinez Vergne, Interim Director of Social Justice and Professional Development at AERA.

The next application deadline for AERA-AIR fellowships is *February 15, 2006*. AERA has a parallel program with the Educational Testing Service, with first placement expected to commence in the fall of 2006. For further information on these programs and other fellowship opportunities, see the AERA website: <http://www.aera.net/fellowships?id=57>.

2006 AERA Annual Meeting

Travel Support for International Scholars

AERA’s International Relations Committee offers partial travel support for international scholars to help defray the costs of attending the 2006 AERA Annual Meeting in San Francisco, California. The total amount to be allocated is \$6,000; no individual applicant will receive more than \$500. Those eligible for this support are doctoral students and/or faculty members who received their doctorate no earlier than 1997, who live outside the United States and Canada, and who have a paper accepted for presentation at the 2006 Annual Meeting. Prior recipients of this support are not eligible.

Priority will be given to students from countries with limited research infrastructure and funding. Applicants should submit a letter of intent, curriculum vitae, and confirmation of accepted paper. Submit applications electronically by **January 6, 2006**, to Dr. Francisco Ramirez, Chair of International Relations Committee, at governance@aera.net. Questions may be directed to the same address.