



## First AERA Research Workshop Centers on Race-Conscious School Assignment

This fall, AERA launched a new initiative to hold intensive research workshops on significant issues of education policy. With the support of AERA Council and based on a recommendation from the Government Relations Committee, the Central Office is convening a series of workshops over the next 5 years directed to synthesizing and integrating education research and findings to inform policy discussions and debates. The workshops are intended to make research knowledge accessible through white papers, issues of *Research Points*, expert resource lists, and other planned activities, including media or Congressional briefings.

The first in the series was the Research Workshop on Race-Conscious School Assignment held on September 15–17, 2006. The topic is directly related to two cases currently under consideration by the U.S. Supreme Court (*Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1, et al.*, and *Crystal D.*



Participants in the Research Workshop on Race-Conscious School Assignment. Left to right, first row: George Wimberly, Felice Levine, and Gerald Sroufe. Second row: Pamela Bennett, Janet Schofield, Roslyn Mickelson, Kathryn Borman, Karolyn Tyson, Linda Tropp, and Richard Valencia. Third row: John Yun, Sean Reardon, Kevin Welner, Angelo Ancheta, Carl Bankston, and Douglas Harris. Fourth row: Steven Rivkin, William Trent, Tamara Jackson, and Chris Tallent. (Photo by Robert Smith)

*Meredith, Custodial Parent and Next Friend of Joshua Ryan McDonald v. Jefferson County Board of Education, et al.*). In addition to AERA staff, the workshop brought together a diverse, interdisciplinary group of 16 social science scholars in research areas at the heart of assessing the potential value and impact of race-conscious school assignment. Broad-based in their methodological expertise, the group included scholars trained in education research and other disciplines including sociology, psychology, economics, anthropology, political science, and law.

This “working” meeting was directed to a critical examination of research on issues such as academic achievement, cognitive and social development, intergroup relations, educational and occupational attainment, race relations, racial stereotyping, and social conflict. In an intensive series of discussions, participants weighed the relevant research to determine which findings were clear and well warranted. By scrutinizing available research, participants assessed what is known about the consequences of racially integrated and segregated schools for minority students and majority students in the short and long term. The “working” aspect of the workshop also took the form of small writing teams putting pen to paper to commit their synthesis to initial drafting.

AERA Executive Director Felice J. Levine emphasized the substantive and structural importance of these research workshops. “They offer an extraordinary opportunity for research experts to interrogate the research, data, and findings in a safe haven and arrive at an understanding of the knowledge base as experts can best determine it,” she said. “What better role for a research society than to use its convening function to enable bringing the best of our knowledge to bear on important issues and then using our good offices to disseminate what is known.” Levine co-chaired the workshop with George L. Wimberly, AERA Director of Social Justice and Professional Development; and Gerald E. Sroufe, AERA Director of Government Relations.

This workshop has already yielded important products. It provided a synthesis of the research that permitted AERA Council to decide to file an amicus curiae brief with the Supreme Court on October 10, 2006, and to hold an informational media briefing on the research on race-conscious school assignment on December 1. (See related story on page 51.) A white paper is also in preparation that accessibly presents the research on academic achievement, cognitive gains, and testing outcomes; long-term educational, occupational, life-course consequences; and social, psychological, and intergroup-relations effects.

**Participant List**  
**AERA Research Workshop on**  
**Race-Conscious School Assignment**

Angelo Ancheta, *Santa Clara University, School of Law*  
Carl L. Bankston III, *Tulane University*  
Pamela R. Bennett, *Johns Hopkins University*  
Kathryn Borman, *University of South Florida*  
Douglas N. Harris, *Florida State University*  
Tamara Jackson, *American Educational Research Association*  
Felice J. Levine, *American Educational Research Association*  
Roslyn Arlin Mickelson, *University of North Carolina, Charlotte*  
Gary Orfield, *Harvard Graduate School of Education*  
Sean F. Reardon, *Stanford University*  
Steven Rivkin, *Amherst College*  
Janet Ward Schofield, *University of Pittsburgh*  
Gerald E. Sroufe, *American Educational Research Association*  
William T. Trent, *University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign*  
Linda R. Tropp, *University of Massachusetts, Amherst*  
Karolyn Tyson, *University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill*  
Richard Valencia, *University of Texas, Austin*  
Kevin G. Welner, *University of Colorado, Boulder*  
George L. Wimberly, *American Educational Research Association*  
John Yun, *University of California, Santa Barbara*

**Travel Support for International Scholars**

AERA's International Relations Committee is offering partial travel support to help defray costs of attending the 2007 AERA Annual Meeting in Chicago (April 9–13, 2007). The AERA Council has allocated \$6,000 for this purpose. No individual applicant will receive more than \$500. Those eligible for this support are doctoral students and/or junior faculty members who received their doctorate no earlier than 1998, who live outside the United States and Canada, and who have a paper accepted for presentation at the 2007 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 5, 2007, to Dr. Joyce King, Chair, International Relations Committee, using the following e-mail address: [governance@aera.net](mailto:governance@aera.net). Questions may be directed to the same address.