

Teacher, Writer, Researcher

Where teachers come to learn to be better writers and better teachers of writing.



Fall 2015

What's Inside

Director of CWP Jason Courtmanche's take on the NWP/NCTE Convention

Page 3 Shirley Cowles in *Voices in the Middle*

Page 6 Secondary Schools Writing Center Conference

Page 7 Students at the Secondary Schools Writing Center Conference

Page 8 Promoting Second Language Acquisition through Poetry and Art

Page 10 A Writing Center for Students, by Students

Page 11 Behind the Scenes with Steven Albrecht

Page 12 Meet the Assistant Editors of the ALAN Review

Director's Corner

By Jason Courtmanche (SI '99)

I was incredibly relieved to be on a plane and heading to Minneapolis on November 18 for the NWP/NCTE Convention. Besides student essays to respond to before I left, I had three important deadlines to meet on the 15th, 16th, and 18th, reviewing teacher education accreditation reports for CAEP, reviewing site reports for the NWP, and reviewing applications for the Aetna Chair position since Lynn Bloom retired last year. As soon as I sat down, I felt that wave of exhaustion hit, and I promptly fell asleep.

There was a fair amount of kidding around about Minneapolis as a site for the convention. It's not exactly Las Vegas or Orlando. It's not even Philadelphia. But it was a great conference. I brought five teacher-consultants—Linda Kauffmann, Lauren Shafer, Anastasia DiFedele-Dutton, John Wetmore, and Dara Bowling—and of course there were many other TC's who came on their own, as well as folks from the other Connecticut sites.

I presented the results of the two research minigrant

Continued on pg. 2

Director's Corner continued

Continued from previous page

programs we ran last year. The publications from those should be available on the CWP website by the time you're reading this. I attended many great panels and workshops. The [K-16 Alliances Working Group](#) presented three great papers on College Reading. Doug Kaufman and two teachers from Goodwin Elementary School here in Storrs—Janet Pagoni and Mary Lee Geary—gave a great presentation on Whole School Literacy, which included videos of the school nurse, the lunch ladies, and the principal, among others, sharing their reading and writing with first and third graders. CWP-Fairfield Director Bryan Crandall and three of his teachers—Kim Herzog, Megan Zabilansky, and Shaun Mitchell—gave a great presentation on Teacher Advocacy, which involved having teachers in the Summer Institute write op-eds about education published by the [CT Mirror](#). I'm absolutely stealing the idea!

I also went to great sessions on College Readiness, Teaching Subversively, and Student Writing Programs. A talk given by Kelly Gallagher and Penny Kittle was standing room only. Do you

know those two have their high school students electronically corresponding with each other? I wonder if those students have any idea how amazing an opportunity that is for them? I also went to three great talks given by the [Washington Post's Valerie Strauss](#), Lois Lowry, and Dave Eggers.

I'll share some favorite insights I culled from here and there:

"History is an argument about the past."—Pat Michaelson.

"The Obamas sent their children to a school that wouldn't let a standardized test evaluate a desk let alone a child." —Valerie Strauss.

"Connecticut practices zip code apartheid."—Bryan Crandall.

"Teaching subversively means learning to channel defiance into approved institutional pathways." —Todd DeStigter.

"Seeing a teacher outside of school is strange, like seeing a horse in a cathedral." —Lois Lowry.

"The solitary child is often a keen observer and an eavesdropper." —Lois Lowry.

"I'd like my kids to read *Pride and Prejudice* but it's not essential to move them forward."—Penny Kittle.

"I teach two different species—9th and 12th grade, but middle school teachers get a free ticket to heaven." —Kelly Gallagher.

"It's interesting that the best teacher in the world [Nancie Atwell] hasn't graded a piece of writing in four years."—Kelly Gallagher.

"Grading does not make students better writers. The grading makes them winners and losers."—Kelly Gallagher.

"My school requires me to digitally enter grades. I play that game as little as possible. In fact, I post a lot of fake grades."—Kelly Gallagher.

Dave Eggers' talk was also awesome, but I didn't take notes. If you'd like to read about how awesome he was, check out Colette Bennett's blog [Used Books in Class](#).

I didn't stick around for the ALAN Conference at the back end, but John and Dara did. The closest I got to any YA authors was an elevator ride with Matt de la Peña. One of these years I'll stick around for the whole week.

Shirley Cowles Publishing Research in NCTE's *Voices in the Middle* on Motivating Students to become Writers

This interview with Shirley Cowles, Language Arts Challenge Resource Teacher for grades sixth through eighth at Sage Park Middle School in Windsor, Connecticut, was conducted and condensed by Amaris Vázquez Vargas.

Q. What can you tell us about your article being published in NCTE's *Voice in the Middle*?

A. It is titled, "My absolutely crummy first draft: The Trials and Triumphs of Motivating the Adolescent Writer." The article is a reflection on a number of years worth of study and inquiry into motivating adolescents to write, understand the importance of the revision process, and developing their voice as young adolescent writers.

Q. How have you implemented this work already?

A. The whole nugget started five years ago. It was September and I was telling my students they wouldn't come to challenge the following week, because of a test taking place at that time, the Connecticut Mastery Test. They all started complaining, and one student at the back of the class asked, "Why can't we just go back to when we were in 1st grade and write our own story?" That really got me thinking and paying closer

attention to what we are asking students to write, and how we can develop strategies to excite them about the writing process.

Then I attended the Connecticut Writing Project's Summer Institute in 2012 and got a clearer vision of the work we do with students and about prompting them to find their own voices. I started working on implementing new avenues to incorporate writing and getting them to look at revision a different way. RE/VISION. I ask students, what does it mean when we look at it this way? What does "re" mean, and what do you think of when you see the word vision? I want them to take pride in their perseverance and following through with the re/vision process.

In order to achieve this, we have a scaffolding model for each grade level's essential questions. In Sixth grade we ask, where does writing come from? Look at alphabets in different languages, including hieroglyphics and Chinese calligraphy. There is an emphasis on development of favorite word lists and poems so they have a reference point. In seventh grade, we move into the re/vision process, and emphasize the importance of re/vision as the key to good writing. Finally in the eighth grade, it's all about voicing

and its development where students take and understand the power of words and the re/vision process to develop their own voices as writers. It's a process that is still evolving

Q. Are there any challenges you have surpassed as you've implemented this process?

A. We run into some logistical problems. Since it is a gifted-talented program where I only see my students once a week for ninety minutes, the week lag time in between is difficult to maneuver. It can be difficult to keep them on task and keep the information in their minds. It's difficult enough for them to remember what they've had for lunch sometimes. The scaffolding approach is very important to develop skills thoroughly. The students work with palatable poems and short stories to read and then write their own. The assignment and genres need to be manageable within the time we have together. I wish I could see them more often, but that's the nature of the program.

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Shirley Cowles's work, continued

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Some questions I'm still trying to work on: would we produce stronger, more interested writers if we changed our philosophy behind the instruction and teaching of writing? What would happen if we let students work on their own ideas and take ownership of the development of their own writing? I worry that creative writing doesn't always have a space in the curriculum. It's very bare-boned, which is unfortunate, because that's one way to get students hooked on writing and get them to write creatively.

Q. What was the publishing process for your article like? What were some challenges and learned experiences?

A. Process is the key word. It is a process. Gathering solidified notes following the idea that was sparked by my student, and then the CWP experience, was just the beginning. I thought, "I should really start writing something about this." I started the whole thing three and a half years ago. Initially, I just began working on an outline of what I would like to include in it, and used other pieces of writing from *Voices in the Middle* as guidance.

One day I saw a call for submissions in the back of a magazine, and the particular article was called, "Writing

Matters," and I thought, "I can do this. This is important. This is the place for my article." I started looking holistically at what I was doing with my students, and readjusted my curriculum and educator goal. For two years I asked my principal if this could be my goal; to build up an environment of adolescent writers. I continued to read and write while working on the idea itself.

I started a draft of the article, and submitted my own crummy first draft around a year ago. The semi-draft was accepted and what followed was a whole other level of back and forth revision with assigned editors. I'm grateful there were editors who were willing to accept it and work with me. There were lots of logistical challenges like getting permission to use photos and writing from my students, since they are all minors and I wanted their work to be part of the article. It took about 5 revisions, before the final revision and edits were accepted in late August. It's now signed, sealed, and done. It's about seven pages in the magazine; there was so much work put in it.

This type of work must be a labor of love and something you're passionate about. I would do it again in a heartbeat. It made me compile ideas, and maybe one day I can produce a

handbook for teachers. There is work is still left undone and I will continue to forge forward and see what happens.

Q. How do you balance your writing, research, and teaching?

A. That's a great question, I think that's what we as writers and educators are striving for, and it's not easy. Teaching for me is a second career. This is my 12th year teaching. I started as a seventh grade Language Arts teacher in Irving A. Robins Middle School in Farmington, CT, and I have my Master's in Education with a concentration in Gifted and Talented Education. Four years into this, my UConn Advisor, Sally Reese, told me about this position in Windsor, and I've been here ever since. I have aspired to be a writer for twenty years. Now is my time.

I have an interesting background knowledge in teaching, education, arts, creative arts, my own personal interest, and the time in my life right now. I have twin boys who are 25 years old now, so I have more breathing room when I leave school and go home. I am also one of those people who's learned to say "no, thank you." I have

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Shirley Cowles's work, continued

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taken a couple things off my plate as well. Professionally, I ran the school newspaper, I created a literary magazine, and I was a department liaison. Now I have passed all of those wonderful opportunities on to other teachers, and I think it will be a good experience for them. Right now my primary role is being a teacher here at Sage Park, and site coordinator with the University of Connecticut and our professional development partnership. That allows me to have more time at home to be creative. One thing we all know as educators is, it's a lifestyle. It's tough to turn the professional switch off and turn the creative one on. At this time in my life, I'm learning to make it a priority to make that time to just do it. I have to write everyday, and if I don't one day, then the next day I have to write twice as much to make up for the time I missed. It's a shift in priorities, in thinking and taking my passion and doing the best that I can with it.

Q. Do you have any tips or strategies following what you've said for others who might be trying to find this balance as well?

A. Have a plan. If I were speaking to someone, regardless of where you are in life, it's always good to have a five or ten year plan, and to

make it happen. Set the goals for yourself. I am all about finding your hobbies, interests, and talents. I believe we all have something to offer. I instill that in my students, my children and their friends, and my own friends. Regardless of where you are in life, know that you have so much to offer.

Sometimes it takes us a little bit longer to figure out what it is that we're really good at. I always reference a high school graduation ceremony where the keynote speaker said "get someone to pay you to do what you love". Hold on to it and be realistic that it's not always smooth sailing, there's always ups and downs, and you have to learn from the positive and negatives that come your way, and just be resilient and stick with it.

As an educator, too, pay attention to student strengths always, the weaknesses will go away. Students need to know we are not only preparing them for success in school but in life. It goes full circle to being able to ask them to write about who they are, what they like, what they know, and what their dreams and passions are. I think if we ask them to write their own stories they may just pleasantly surprise us.

Q. Any final thoughts you'd like to share with us that we may pass on to our readers?

A. In regards to writing, it's very important to meet students where they are in writing and build from there. If you are careful and take the time to build a literacy zone within your classroom, to develop a sense of trust where students are comfortable and motivated to take risks with their writing - either through discourse, thoughts, or ideas and sharing out loud within a small group - then you'll motivate students to want to write and to be writers.

Shirley Cowles has a podcast alongside her article, which was published in December 2015. If you wish to access it, please visit the following link:

<http://www.ncte.org/journals/vm/podcasts/december-2015-cowles>

The podcast is also available through the Connecticut Writing Project-Storrs' website.



Alexandria Bottelson on this year's Secondary Schools Writing Center Conference

Allison Rodman, CWP Intern

Alexandria Bottelson was the director for this year's Secondary Schools Writing Center Conference. On November 9th almost thirty high schools and middle schools throughout the state of Connecticut joined together at UConn to focus on the value of writing centers. Last year Alex was the assistant director, so she was excited to be in charge of the program this year. As a future educator she was amazed to see all of these teachers and students come together at once. At the conference they focused on the importance of peer-based tutoring because it allows students to have agency over their own learning. Not only does this process allow students to grow as writers, but also as tutors.

This year was the eighth annual conference. The conference was comprised of fifteen-minute presentations from each school that attended. These presentations focused on a variety of topics from starting a new writing center to understanding what tutors should and should not do.

Then the room was randomly dispersed into eight different groups where students were separated from their teachers. The goal of this was to have students collaborate with students from other schools. In these breakdown rooms UConn Writing Center tutors led discussion, which was really exciting for the high school students because they were able to see their group leaders as peers as well as teachers. During break-out sessions, the tutors provided icebreakers that led into a conversation

about the goals of writing centers as well as the role of tutors in those centers.

In the second breakout session, each school stayed together. The students and their teacher attended a mock staff meeting. Alex thought this was very productive since during the school year most teachers do not even have a chance to come together since they are so busy. Guided questions were provided, but students' own concerns on major topics of interest carried the conversation. Alex commended this group for being very engaging and excited about their writing centers.

At the end of the day, students gathered back together to discuss what they learned. Everyone was able to reflect on the progress they had made that day. Each school was also asked to share what they took away from the conference, which was helpful because it allowed both students and teachers to recognize the significance of this shared time away from the pressures of the classroom.

Alex believes that this year only added to the success of the program. The group that attended was geographically and economically diverse. Several students' presentations were lively and interactive making the event enjoyable. Alex is overjoyed seeing all of her hard work come to life and is looking forward to next year's conference in October as well!

Ruth Macijauskas and David Jones experience at the Secondary Schools Writing Center Conference alongside their students

Interview conducted and compiled by Allison Rodman, CWP Intern

Ruth Macijauskas and David Jones, teachers from Two Rivers Magnet Middle School, attended this year's Secondary Schools Writing Center Conference with several of their students. Their recollections focus on the shared experience between them and their students:

What was your students' overall response to the Secondary Writing Center Conference? What did your students contribute? Why did you have these particular students attend?

We invited five seventh and eighth graders to attend the conference. These students had demonstrated a sincere interest in working in the writing center, and we wanted them to have the opportunity to share their experiences and learn from other middle and high school students. Our eighth grade students developed a presentation with power point, a script and an outline. Putting it all together, they brought in the rest of the seventh and eighth graders to join the presentation. They devoted their time during consecutive lunch periods and homeroom blocks, as well as time at home. These students presented to the attendees. They covered the history of the River Writers Writing Center from its inception last year to their ideas to improve

upon it this year. They delivered a wonderful presentation that gave them confidence and helped them grow personally and academically.

What are the unique challenges/opportunities of the conference for students? What's the possibility of starting a writing center at their school if they do not have one already?

There were many challenges with opening a writing center. Space, training, promoting it, staff buy-in and student buy-in were among the many hurdles that had to be jumped, and in many cases, still are being addressed. The conference inspired students with all kinds of new ideas to promote the center. These included making promotional videos, renewed creativity for developing the writing center space, and honestly, instilled an added sense of importance to what they were doing. Our students have really taken the role of writing tutor very seriously. They have created schedules, planned out their own presentation for the conference (minus the video); and have continued to advocate for the support needed to help the writing center get up and running during its second year. The major challenge for our students this year is sustaining and growing our writing center after the "training wheels" have been taken off. As a partner school with UConn last year, we received extensive support and

training to help us open our writing center. This year, we have lost most of our built-in class time in which to train and promote our writing center. That has put more pressure on our writing center students to find time to train during lunch, sometimes after school and of course, during the tutoring process. Though not ideal, they have done very well.

Did the possibility of attending a conference motivate students to write?

The students were excited and inspired by the experience of meeting other middle and high school students from around the state, and having the opportunity to discuss topics and challenges facing other writing centers.

By speaking and presenting to an audience of like-minded educators and students, these students became participants in something larger—they were furthering the cause of improving and promoting writing among all students. Speaking and listening, as well as writing skills, are both Common Core and life-long learning skills that will benefit these young adults as they journey down the path towards college and career.



Promoting Second Language Acquisition through Poetry and Art

Interview conducted by: Amaris Vázquez Vargas, CWP Intern

Rochelle Marcus and Amy Nocton travelled to Florence, Italy in November of this year to share a collaborative project they have been working on with co-teacher Beverly Fisher titled *Interdistrict Collaboration to Promote Second Language Acquisition via Spoken Word Poetry and Visual Art*. Rochelle Marcus' eighth grade class in Mansfield Middle School, does a spoken word poetry unit every spring. She challenges the students to immerse themselves in the writing process through revision and polishing of their work, and even invites guest speakers. Last spring her class shared their work with Amy Nocton's University of Connecticut Early College Experience Spanish class at RHAM High School, where her eighth graders translated the poetry into Spanish. Finally, Beverly Fisher's AP art students, also at RHAM High School, produce art translations of the poems. The art class was diligent in capturing the essence of the poems and their meanings as they were perceived in both languages. The work allowed for sometimes very different interpretations of the same poetry, all of which can be found in their co-authored blog.

Amy Nocton was inspired to do this while sharing ideas internationally in Florence, Italy at a conference on teaching languages last year. While presenting at the spring Conference for First Year Writing at UCONN, she heard of artwork being used in foreign language learning, and it got her thinking about Rochelle Marcus' work and the use of poetry and art in foreign language learning. Amy first approached

Rochelle and following her agreement, they approached Beverly Fisher who was excited to participate. The students reacted very positively to the project, finding the work both challenging and rewarding. There are photos and videos of their reactions and conferencing on their work in their blog.

Instructors from forty-eight countries came together for this international conference on teaching. Amy and Rochelle explain it was eye-opening to hear about the challenges they face and the creative programs that they have developed. Their workshop was very well attended and received, and the audience was impressed with the caliber of the students' work. Much of the language acquisition work being done in Europe is through partnerships and other collaborative projects geared towards increasing the learning of multiple languages. In the U.S., we have much less priority given to language learning, but it is growing increasingly necessary in the global marketplace.

When asked about what they did and lessons learned, they were "most grateful to our administrators and our districts for supporting us and encouraging us to go to Italy for the entire week." They spent the first part of their sightseeing in Florence and then attended six sessions and networked with other professionals over meals Thursday and Friday. They are glad to have made connections and hope to continue collaborations with those they met.

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Promoting Second Language Acquisition through Poetry and Art, continued

In continuing to implement what they have learned, in terms of language arts teaching, Rochelle will continue her unit on spoken word poetry and the collaboration with Amy's students. In addition, Rochelle has contacted language teachers in her district to see what collaboration or other professional development they can work on together. Amy would like to continue to work on this project while honing her use of the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages "Can Do" statements to create better performance based assessments. Amy values interdisciplinary studies for students and strongly believes that it serves to enrich their learning experience and understanding of how intertwined the world is. Rochelle and Amy met Antonio Lópes, from the University of Algarve, Portugal, during their workshop and he is in the process of gathering data about how teachers in the European Union are using performance based assessments in their classrooms to enhance students' learning.

Amy, Rochelle, and Beverly would like everyone to check out their students' work at [The Unnamed Spanish Blog](#). Feel free to leave feedback and comments which the students will respond to. Hearing from the public is a rewarding validation of their work. Antonio Lópes is also looking for U.S. input for his work, so anyone willing to share, [here is the link to his brief survey](#), and what he has to say about looking for participants.



A Writing Center for Students, by Students

Interview conducted and compiled by Allison Rodman, CWP Intern

Jason Efland, a dedicated social studies teacher at Suffield High School, is passionate about his students' writing. This led him to be immensely involved in creating a student run writing center in his own school. I decided to ask him about his writing center to see how they develop and function:

When did the writing center begin and what are some of the challenges you've encountered?

We opened our doors three years ago. It took some time to get organized and to spread the word and unfortunately, in an educational environment of data driven decisions, we are constantly concerned with our numbers. Rather than build our program slowly, we expanded quickly. It has been an organizational challenge to manage full time teaching with writing center training, scheduling, and PR.

What have been the rewards opening the writing center?

Running the writing center is rewarding in itself, cliché as that sounds. We work with phenomenal students and while many of them passed through my classroom at some point, I also get to work with students that I never met before. But honestly, the most rewarding part of the writing center is when teachers

approach me to tell me about a session they overheard or when a tutor establishes a bond with a writer and they continue to work together throughout the year. It just amazes me to witness our tutors operate at such a high level. It speaks volumes of their character.

What is the process of establishing a writing center?

For us, the process to establish a writing center took several months. I was fortunate to have a colleague and friend who started one. I met with her on several occasions to discuss the philosophy and mechanics of a writing center. One of the best pieces of advice that she offered was to always have unbridled enthusiasm because:

1. Everyone will feed off of it
2. If you're not excited about the writing center, then it won't survive.

With that knowledge, I just started to read as much on writing centers as I could. After that, I approached my building administration and they loved the idea, so it was just a matter of outlining the details. Again, we were lucky that our principal loved the idea and gave us the autonomy to establish the writing center that we envisioned.

What is the function of the writing center?

Our writing center has two primary functions. First, students can sign up for an appointment before, during, or after school to work with a tutor. The session lasts for 20-40 minutes and tutors know to focus only on higher order concerns. After building rapport with the writer, the tutor has the student read their paper aloud and from there they ask questions to get the writer discussing their paper. While this is happening the tutor records notes, which are then provided to the student's teachers for their records. The other function is our Rent-a-Coach program. Teachers can sign out any available tutor to work with individuals or small groups in a classroom.

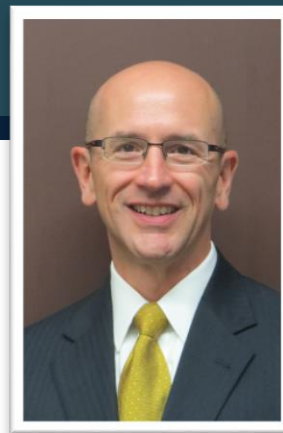
What are some of the challenges of maintaining the writing center?

Running a writing center is rewarding and yet incredibly exhausting. Even with school support, the job of a director is never complete. Whether its finding replacements for absent tutors, or trying to find a spot for a writer in a full schedule, it is a challenge. My advice is to be persistent, talk to teachers about the writing center as much as you can, and don't be afraid to delegate duties to a group of responsible student leaders. They will never cease to amaze you.

Donate to the Connecticut Writing Project-Storrs! Go to our website, cwp.uconn.edu, for information about donating through the National Writing Project or the UConn Foundation.

Behind the Scenes with Steven Albrecht

Interview conducted by Amaris Vázquez Vargas, CWP Intern



Q. What is your new position and what does it entail?

A. As the Educational Technology Curriculum Specialist for the South Windsor Public Schools, I work with a team of technology coaches to promote the uses of technology for teaching and learning. Together, we support teachers K – 12 by providing a variety of professional development activities, including workshops, coaching, and online learning. In addition, I consult with content specialists to design technology-enhanced learning activities and to integrate technology across the curriculum.

Q. What made you decide to make the transition from pedagogy to technology/behind the scenes work? How difficult was it to make this move?

A. Pedagogy and learning theory are at the heart of my work. In fact, successful technology integration marries technical skills with pedagogy and content knowledge. Technologists call this union TPACK.

My journey started several years ago when I attended a workshop called “Learning in the Future Tense.” There, I saw how teachers were using technologies, such as blogs and wikis, Google Docs, and virtual environments, to engage students. I was so inspired that I enrolled in a master’s degree program that centered on educational technology. During my studies, I realized that the notion of literacy was expanding to include myriad media and diverse tools, and, while I was reluctant to leave my English classroom, I saw a future for myself as a teacher of teachers. After receiving my ed tech degree, I began coursework for a sixth-year diploma in educational leadership.

Leaving a community in which I had worked for eighteen years was very difficult. My colleagues and my students at Westbrook High School were like a second family, so I didn’t want to say goodbye. I felt, however, that I had beaten a very familiar track. I knew I had to make difficult choices if I wanted to grow. My former principal, Bob Hale, told me that I would find wonderful people wherever I went, and he was right.

Q. What do you miss most about teaching?

A. In my new role, I most miss working closely with children. I found great satisfaction in watching young people learn and being witness to the milestone events in their lives.

Q. What is your plan as the Educational Technology Curriculum Specialist? What do you hope to gain from this?

A. I am charged with leading implementation of my district’s three-year technology plan, which includes integrating ISTE’s technology standards for students across the curriculum. To begin, I am planning a workshop that introduces teachers and administrators to SAMR, a technology integration model that starts with substituting new technologies for common tools and moves to redefining learning tasks.

Over the long term, I hope to see a guaranteed sequence of technology experiences for my district’s students and to know that our graduates have the dispositions necessary to be effective consumers and creators of information and media in our digital future.

Q. What do you find to be the most rewarding aspect of your new position?

A. In the several months that I have been in my new position, I have been very rewarded by seeing teachers adopt tools or ideas that I have promoted, especially when those things make a difference in the hands of students.

Q. What’s the biggest challenge you have faced at this point?

A. My position is newly created, so I’m not picking up where a predecessor left off. I’ve had to be very observant in order to recognize needs, and I’ve been seeking out lots of input as I plan programs.

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Behind the Scenes with Steven Albrecht

Continued from previous page

Q. What technological advances are you implementing that could be useful to teachers in other districts?

A. During the first marking period, I worked with our elementary school teachers to adopt digital storytelling tools. Digital storytelling expands narrative writing to include images, recorded narration, and music. More recently, I developed a workshop that centered on exploring history through online resources and sharing what was learned through My Maps. Lately, I'm intrigued by 3D virtual environments in which students interact with simulations and design new products.

Q. How do you keep yourself feeling connected to students and the subject matter?

A. While providing classroom coaching, I have found some opportunities to connect with students as they explore resources or applications that I have shared with the teacher, and occasionally, I have been able to coach individual students when they have encountered a software problem or wondered what to do next.

My roots are in the field of English. I'll never lose that. I'm looking forward to returning to pleasure reading and to coaching others toward a broader understanding of literacy.

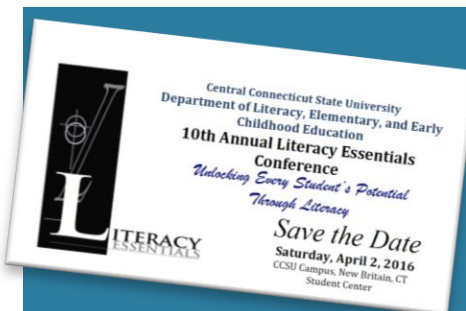
Q. Any final thoughts you'd like to share with us that we may pass on to our readers?

A. In retrospect, my participation in the CWP's summer institute many years ago provided the foundation for the work I am now doing, especially in the area of designing professional learning for teachers. In 1999, I would not have predicted that working with Tami Devine Fagan to develop a workshop on writing portfolios would take me to my current position. When asked in an interview how I planned effective professional development, it was the CWP model I described. And for that summer institute experience, I am most grateful.



Meet the Assistant Editors of the ALAN Review

Young adult literature is a rapidly growing genre. The ALAN Review, or the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of NCTE, is a journal that is completely devoted to publishing high quality articles as well as professional material that challenge its audience's understanding of YA literature. The senior editor, Wendy Glenn, has the help of two graduate assistants each year who bring their own vision to the journal. This year, the assistant editors are Danielle King, who specializes in how disability is represented in this genre, and Ricki Ginseberg who focuses her efforts on multiculturalism in YA literature.



Save the Date!
10th Annual Literacy
Essentials
Conference

Unlocking Every Student's
Potential Through Literacy

Saturday, April 2, 2016
CCSU Campus
New Britain, CT
Student Center



Carl Phillips:
Wallace Stevens
Poet

Tuesday, March 22, 2016
7:00pm-8:00pm

UConn Storrs Campus
Konover Auditorium
Dodd Center

Working together is virtually effortless since the two share the same vision for the journal. They believe that the ALAN Review should promote literature for adolescents as an effective teaching tool as well as a valuable genre of literature in its own right. As such, they work to promote ongoing communication between those interested in this subject by supporting and increasing the number of publications and the amount of attention devoted to this literature.

In addition to managing this publication Ricki and Dani both teach at the undergraduate level, so they must constantly adjust to the transition between being a teacher and a student. Understanding both perspectives of the classroom adds to their contribution to the journal and it specifically allows them to explore their majors more thoroughly. Since Ricki and Dani are both concerned with social justice issues within the young adult genre, they can influence and challenge their readers using the ALAN Review as their medium. Therefore, their graduate assistantship at the ALAN Review is productive for their academic growth. Simultaneously, Ricki and Dani shed a new light on the journal with their unique exploration into under-represented sections of young adult literature, and we thank them for it.

Thank you to all our Teacher-Consultants, Teacher-Writers, and Teacher-Researchers!

We encourage everyone to visit the Connecticut Writing Project Website to read through our Teacher-Writer and Teacher-Researcher publications for 2015.

You can also order your own copies this way!



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The Connecticut Writing Project-Storrs

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