

A Message from the Co-Chairs

In this issue of *The Communicator* and the next, we are featuring our New York State Teacher Center regional network partnerships and collaborations. These mutually beneficial and reciprocal relationships enable Teacher Centers to model a key element in the success of education – cooperation on behalf of students. These relationships amplify, deepen and enhance the professional opportunities Teacher Centers offer educator-colleagues.

Differing in scope, partnerships and collaborations extend statewide, are devoted to a regional network or unfold within an individual center. Some, like *Thinkfinity NY and Beyond*, link the entire statewide network of more than 130 Centers. Others involve one of the seven regional networks, while still others involve individual centers. We will feature various kinds of collaborations in this issue and the next one.

The content of partnerships and collaborations varies widely and can include:

- Collaborative programs with institutions of higher education;
- Support from the NYS Department of Education and its P–16 inclusive educational system;
- Constructive relationships with parents, businesses, museums, libraries and community-based organizations.

We are proud to share these best practices from some of our regional networks and their partners and collaborators. As always, we look forward to hearing from you.

*Bea Carson, New York City UFT Teacher Center
Patti Galimi, Central New York Teaching Center*

NYC UFT Teacher Center & New York Comprehensive Center

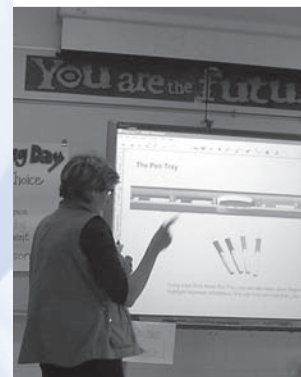
The UFT Teacher Center (UFTTC) and the New York Comprehensive Center (NYCC) believe that a successful collaboration can contribute to their overlapping goals. Disseminating science-based research and best practices has been a shared initiative of the partnership. In its first year, more than 4,000 educators (teachers, coaches and administrators) participated in collaboratively planned activities.

UFTTC is a comprehensive professional development program promoting teacher excellence and student achievement. NYCC is a regional comprehensive center funded by the U.S. Department of Education that “supports education leaders as they strive to meet the goals of NCLB and improve achievement outcomes for all students.”

A major focus of the collaboration has been professional development based on current research

and best practices on adolescent literacy and designed to enhance the instructional capacity of educators. Two reports, *Reading Next* (2006) and *Writing Next* (2007) have been key content resources. Work sessions for teachers, planned and facilitated with the NYCC, have included the Teacher Center Literacy Network. Ongoing meetings throughout NYC’s five boroughs have embedded principles (from *Reading Next*) and strategies (from *Writing Next*) in samples of instruction planned to elevate student reading and writing achievement.

Professional development activities have been structured variously and ranged from all-day, whole-staff conferences for UFTTC staff (over 250 participants) to differentiated action plans for their schools, created by Teacher Center staff members and coaches. Additionally, (continued on page 2)



Eastern Upstate: Off the Charts with Professional Development

The Eastern Upstate Network has dedicated part of our meeting time this year to working on our own professional development goals. The first training took place at our January meeting in Syracuse. The topic was “Enhancing Your Visual Appeal Using Chart Art,” presented by Michael Buckley. Each participant brought an easel and chart paper and Michael walked us through the design of images that would enhance the messages we were attempting to convey. He talked about using text, color, and special effects. We each received a booklet of images that could be traced onto the chart paper, which was helpful to those of us with artistic challenges.

As January tends to be gray and dreary, we gave this meeting a luau theme. The planners transformed the meeting room at the Central New York Teaching Center into an island paradise and greeted each member with a flowered lei, (contributed from a member’s personal collection).

The second training was held at our May meeting in Old Forge where Stephen Bittner (Eastern Upstate and Tech Committee member) walked us through the Intel Teach Program: Leadership Forum. We brought our laptops to allow

participation in this extremely informative, hands-on experience. Having the time to practice a program that we, as Teacher Center directors promote, was invaluable.

Other professional development programs, all facilitated by our members, have included:

- Public Relations Training
- Grant Writing Strategies
- Technology Training on topics such as *Survey Says* and *Thinkfinity NY*
- Book talks on *Evaluating Professional Development* (Killion and Guskey), *Effective Group Facilitation* (Eller), and *Choice Words* (Johnston).

Eastern Upstate directors value the time we set aside for professional development. It is our plan to continue offering opportunities for professional development at each of our meetings. We recognize the importance of practicing the good work we provide for others.

For more information, contact Karen Culotti at the Oswego County Teacher Center.



NYC UFT Teacher Center & New York Comprehensive Center (continued from page 1)

UFTTC staff has provided ongoing school-based support including in-classroom assistance and modeling, co-teaching, coaching and study-group facilitation.

With the third year’s work now beginning, we will continue to build on the learning of previous years. Lawrence Hirsch, Director of NYCC says, “The New York Comprehensive Center has found its partnership with the NYC UFT Teacher Center to be rewarding and effective because of the high professional standards that are held for all of its members. This positive collaboration reflects how mutual respect and the sharing of resources can be productive for all concerned.”

References:

Biancarosa, G. and Snow, C. (2006). *Reading Next – A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy: A*

Report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, (2nd ed.). Washington, D.C.: Alliance for Excellent Education.
Online: <http://www.all4ed.org/>

Graham, S. and Perin, D. (2007). *Writing Next – Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools: A Report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Washington, D.C.: Alliance for Excellent Education.
Online: <http://www.all4ed.org/>

New York Comprehensive Center:
<http://www.nycomprehensivecenter.org>

For additional information, contact Bea Carson of the New York City UFT Teacher Center.



Far West:

Regional Policy Board Training

In the Far West Network, the centers felt there was a strong need for Policy Board training. In order to address this need, the network has held an annual evening program where policy boards from all 17 centers were brought together to receive training on a specific topic, share ideas and interact with other members. These trainings have been well received and will continue as long as the need exists.

In 2004, the focus was **Public Relations**. A director from the network spoke on the spirit and letter of Education Law 316. Public Relations ideas were shared and discussions followed among peer centers. A Policy Board handbook was given to each attendee and a marble apple was presented to the longest-standing member within each center.

The 2005 training was about the **Roles and Responsibilities** of Policy Board members. The group watched “Peacocks in the Land of Penguins” and each member had to identify with a bird type (peacock, owl, dove or eagle). A “bird walk” was taken to charts on the walls where each member wrote a characteristic they felt they shared with their chosen bird type.

Following that exercise the group discussed how diversity among members affects their work within their respective boards. As a culminating activity, the participants played “Whose Job is it, Anyway?” where different roles and responsibilities were listed to determine how tasks should be distributed among Policy Board members.

In the fall of 2006, Riva Korashan from the NYC UFT Teacher Center came to address our Policy Board chairpersons. Riva led an inspiring discussion on the importance of **Leadership**. (continued on page 4)

Southern Tier:

Empowering Local Tech Savvy Teachers

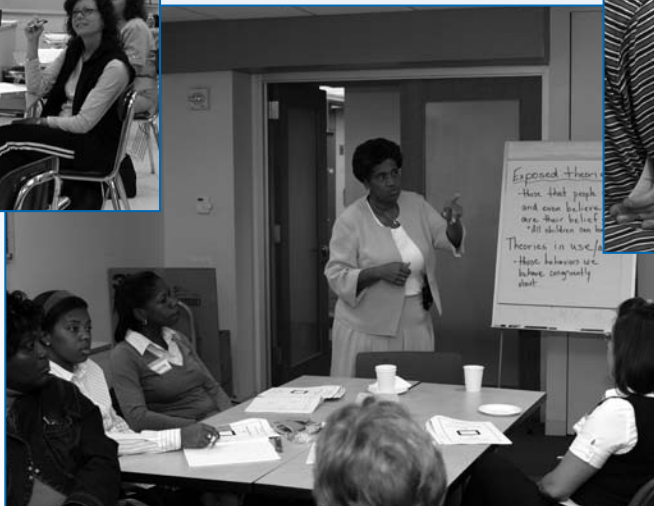
For the past five years, the Southern Tier Teacher Center network has collaborated with our local PBS station, WSKG, to present the “Southern Tier Educational Technology Showcase.” The goal of this conference was to spotlight local teachers who successfully integrate technology and media into their classrooms to improve instruction and student learning.

By showcasing the strategies and resources used by our “master teachers,” the Southern Tier network in partnership with our PBS station has offered K–12 educators the opportunity to observe educational technology in action. Teachers know that often their most valuable resource is other teachers.

Each year a wide variety of best practices are presented to participants, along with opportunities for networking and collaboration among those with shared interests. Participants are encouraged to request follow-up training at their own Teacher Center.

Besides the obvious benefits, this collaboration has allowed the education division of our local PBS station to publicize many PBS educational resources and programs to the local educational community. It has also strengthened the Teacher Center’s professional development offerings. Carolyn Weston, former director of education at WSKG has said of the collaboration, “The success of this conference was based on a strong partnership between the local Teacher Center network and the station, in which both shared a vision of empowering local ‘master teachers’ who successfully use emerging technologies in their classrooms.”

For additional information, contact Gail Szeliga at the Teacher Center of Broome County.



Public Relations Committee

New York State Teacher Centers

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Patti Galimi (co-chair)
Dave Muolo

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NYSUT
Pat O'Neil, SED

Public Relations Consultant

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Far West: Regional Policy Board Training

(continued from page 3)

In November 2007, Joellen Killion, deputy executive director of the National Staff Development Council, spoke on the difference between **Events and Programs**. She shared ideas for implementing programs and the role of Policy Board members in designing Teachers Center programs.

On Oct. 22, 2008, Kathy Graham Kelly, NYSUT Teacher Center liaison, will be the keynote speaker on **Advocacy and the Promotion of Teacher Centers**. In addition to Policy Board members, local Union presidents will be invited to the training dinner. After her keynote address, Kathy Graham Kelly will talk to Union presidents and Policy Board chairs about how superintendents, boards of education, Unions and legislators can work together to build support for teachers centers. The remaining Policy Board members will attend a panel discussion allowing Policy Board members to share their successes and ideas for promoting and advocating for their centers.

For additional information, please contact Elizabeth Dolce of the West Seneca Teacher Center or Sandy Falsioni of the Lackawanna Teacher Center.



Upcoming Conferences

Oct. 30–Nov. 1, 2008

NMSA Annual Conference

Denver, Colorado

www.nmsa.org

Nov. 20–23, 2008

NCTE Annual Convention

San Antonio, Texas

www.ncte.org

Dec. 6–10, 2008

NSDC Annual Conference

Washington, D.C.

www.nsd.org

Feb. 21–25, 2009

International Reading Association

(Annual Convention West)

Phoenix, Arizona

www.reading.org

March 13–16, 2009

ASCD Annual Conference & Exhibit Show

Orlando, Florida

www.ascd.org

March 26–28, 2009

TESOL Convention

Denver, Colorado

www.tesol.org

March 27–29, 2009

NYS Teacher Center Spring Retreat

Bolton Landing, New York

www.teachercenters.org

THE

COMMUNICATOR

A resource for Teacher Centers

This is the tenth issue from the statewide Teacher Center Public Relations Committee to assist staff and policy board members. Each issue focuses on a specific theme and this issue is the first in a series of two focusing on partnerships and collaborations. Newsletter issues are available on Caucus in the Public Relations Library and Filesafe. Remember to include a copy of this newsletter in your Public Relations kit.

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BUG HERE

A source for teachers, a promise for students

