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IOWA WRITING PROJECT

# *E-Newsletter*

May 2008

<http://www.uni.edu/continuinged/iwp/>

PLEASE SHARE your  
IWP E-Newsletter with your  
colleagues and friends!

## CONTACT US!

### IOWA WRITING PROJECT

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\* *Level II (Advanced Studies)*  
is one major path into more  
IWP involvement and  
teacher leadership roles.

## '08 REGISTRATION: LAST CALL!

### IWP Special Programs and Workshops (Register at IWP Web Site.)

Iowa Writing Project institutes and workshops are designed for K-College practicing teachers in any discipline. Registration required, but with a **special registration rate**: \$100 per graduate credit hour - UNI English Department course numbers - compares to \$350 regular graduate tuition rate.

**Note:** graduate credit may not apply to all degree programs; consult your specific program advisor.

**Prerequisite** for all IWP credit bearing activities: teacher licensure or consent of the instructor and/or IWP Director.

**620:286 Studies in the Teaching of Writing** (\$400 registration fee; 4 hrs. grad. credit.) This *initial level institute* meets M – F, 6 hours daily, and focuses on the teaching of writing and uses of writing to learn across disciplines and program levels through professional dialogue and reading, demonstrated practice and writing experience. Register for one of these sites:

\_\_\_ June 9-27 on campus at UNI\*;

**Full** June 16-July 3 at NICC, Peosta;

\_\_\_ June 16 – July 3 at Mt. Pleasant High School;

\_\_\_ July 14-Aug. 1 on campus at UNI\*;

\_\_\_ July 7-24 Crestview Elementary, West Des Moines;

\_\_\_ July 14-Aug. 1 at Northwestern College in Orange City;

**Full** Aug. 4-8, plus 4 weekends (school year) and 1 week in June '09 on campus at UNI\*.

\* In conjunction with the Cedar Falls Community School District; limited number of open positions available through IWP.

**620:286 Advanced Studies in Writing and Learning** (\$400 registration fee; 4 hrs. graduate credit. Prerequisite: prior participation in initial level IWP institute.) This *advanced level institute* meets M – F, June 9-20, 6 hours daily, at UNI, and focuses on individual and shared investigation of practice, related to implementation of practices following participation in IWP Level I, and on writing – especially revision – experience in a writing workshop.\*

### **620:133g (IN)<sup>3</sup> Integrating Initiatives into Instruction – 2 hrs.**

This open enrollment *workshop* meets M-F, June 23-27, 6 hours daily at UNI to help participants integrate, meaningfully and purposefully, such current Iowa educational initiatives as: Quadrant D Teaching and Learning; Authentic Intellectual Work; differentiated, inquiry-based and problem-based learning; interdisciplinary teaching; etc. In this professional, reflective learning community, participants will have time, opportunity and support, including feedback, to improve one of their own units.

*Every compulsion is put upon writers to become safe, polite, obedient, and sterile.*

Sinclair Lewis in a letter declining the 1926 Pulitzer Prize.

*The fatal tendency of mankind to leave off thinking about a thing when it is no longer doubtful is the*

### **620:133g Teaching Writing Festival – 2 hrs.**

Multiple ½ -1 day workshops; meets M-F June 29 (Sun. eve.)-July 3, 7 hrs. daily (M-Th.) at UNI. Experience *multiple workshops* on an array of topics selected by registrants and facilitated by IWP teacher leaders and invited guests. To inform topic selection, **choose and prioritize 3** (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>) from:

- \_\_\_ Writing and Art
- \_\_\_ Writing and Nature/Place-based Writing
- \_\_\_ Multi-genre Writing for Multiple Ages
- \_\_\_ Writing and Core Curriculum Concepts
- \_\_\_ Writing for Professional Publication
- \_\_\_ High School – College Writing: Transitions
- \_\_\_ Memoir Writing
- \_\_\_ Writing and Teacher Leadership
- \_\_\_ Interdisciplinary Connections: Writing to Learn
- \_\_\_ What’s Happening with Writing On-line?

**620:133g Teaching First-Year College Writing** (Special arrangement including expense stipend; 2 hrs. graduate credit; College/District support preferred.) Meeting M – F, July 7-11 on campus at UNI, 6 hours daily, this *workshop* is for teachers of beginning college writing whether in 2 or 4 year college or high school settings. Expect to explore the nature of, issues in, and exemplary practices for teaching writing to students at the point of transition into college by interacting with colleagues, with professional literature and curriculum materials, and by reflecting on your practice.

**Register at:** [www.uni.edu/continuinged/iwp/](http://www.uni.edu/continuinged/iwp/)

(Credit registration is separate and handled the first day of the activity.)

## **MA: Teaching English in Secondary School**

An MA:TESS is being offered once again by the UNI Department of English. Degree candidates are being sought for a cohort group to begin fall semester 2008 (IWP Summer 2008 credit can apply) and, by taking basically one course per semester, complete the 33 hr. degree in the fall semester 2011. Course registration will occur through the office of Continuing Education Credit Programs, but candidates must apply and be admitted to the Graduate Program in the English Department. A combination of ICN and face-to-face course delivery will make it possible for clusters of candidates in different parts of the state to participate. The program culminates in both written and oral examinations, and an MA paper during 3 sem. hrs. of independent study. For more information, contact Jim Davis [james.davis@uni.edu](mailto:james.davis@uni.edu) ; to apply to the program, contact Kris Knebel, 319-273-5965 or [kristi.knebel@uni.edu](mailto:kristi.knebel@uni.edu) .

*cause of half their errors. A contemporary author has well spoken of "the deep slumber of a decided opinion."*

John Stuart Mill

*Children are apt to live up to what you believe of them.*

Lady Bird Johnson

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Readers

**Framing the View: Strategies for Teaching the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Reader** will be the focus for the Iowa Council of Teachers of English Fall Conference October 2 & 3, 2008 at the Stoney Creek Inn in Johnston. Attendees can customize a Thursday only, Thursday evening – Friday, or Friday only conference. Thursday will feature NCTE author Bucky Carter on graphic novels; on Friday, John Golden will share uses of film and non-fiction to improve reading and thinking skills. Both days will include numerous breakout sessions by Iowa teachers. Registration options, conference information and updates may be found at [www.iowacouncilteachersofenglish.com](http://www.iowacouncilteachersofenglish.com).

### One Detriment to Reading?

More than 40,000 kindergarteners are home alone each day after school, with a total of more than 14,000,000 school-age kids on their own after school. Surprised? The reality is most parents work now, and there are too few affordable and accessible afterschool programs to handle the number of children...who need a safe place to go. [www.MomsRising.org](http://www.MomsRising.org)

## Iowa Helps Maintain NWP Funding

An IWP contingent to the NWP Spring Meeting in Washington, DC in April helped sustain federal support for the National Writing Project network. Anne Berger and Connie Nagel from the Eastern Iowa Writing Project in the Quad Cities joined Donna Niday, Bridgette Wagoner, Anne Weir and Jim Davis in visits to the office of each Iowa legislator, urging inclusion of NWP in the education appropriation. Over the past two years, on funding authorization and/or appropriation, NWP and thus IWP and EIWP have been supported by both Senator Grassley and Senator Harkin and by Representatives Boswell, Braley, Latham and Loeb sack. Only Rep. King has been missing. IWP agreed to support funding legislation when we joined the NWP network in 1992. Thanks to sustained contact from many in the IWP family, that pledge has been kept remarkably well. Our legislators recognize good work!

## New NWP Executive Director

Dr. Sharon Washington will serve as the third executive director in the history of the National Writing Project. Effective last January 1 she replaced Richard Sterling who had announced last June that he would step down. Washington has held numerous academic positions, most recently the Interim Director of Faculty Equity Programs in the University of California Office of the President. She is the first woman and African American to lead NWP, the most significant coordinated

*One of the most attractive aspects of professional work is the way professionals are treated in the workplace. Professionals are presumed to know what they are doing and are paid to exercise their judgment...*

*Bureaucratic management of schools proceeds from the view that teachers lack the talent or motivation to think for themselves. Properly staffed schools can only succeed if they operate on the principle that the essential resource is already inside the school: determined, intelligent, and capable teachers.*

*A Nation Prepared:  
Teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup>  
Century  
Carnegie Task Force on  
Teaching as a Profession  
1986*

*The most beautiful place in any town should be its school.  
Oscar Wilde*

effort to improve writing in America. NWP sites, located on nearly 200 university and college campuses, share the goal of placing the writing project within reach of every teacher. Through professional development models, NWP strives to develop the leadership, research and teaching capacity to help students become successful writers and learners.

## 3A's of Note?

In order to help create better communities and a more vibrant public life, the **Harwood Institute for Public Innovation** attends to a set of critical touchstones they call "The Three A's of Public Life." By doing so, they reclaim words teachers will recognize as having been unfortunately distorted over the years by leaders who fail to reflect our reality in their actions.

“**Authority** is found in people who hold a deep knowledge of the community – an understanding of people, their lives, where they live, their aspirations, and their concerns. They use this knowledge to inform their decisions and act as part of the community, as opposed to apart from it. This kind of genuine authority is far different from the kind that comes simply from status or title.”

“**Authenticity** is found in people who are able to reflect the reality of others' lives in their words and actions. Authentic people listen to the community in an ongoing way. And, even though people may not always agree with your decisions, if you're an authentic leader, members of the community generally believe you have their best interests at heart.”

“**Accountability** is measured by much more than annual reports, report cards, and surveys. It is slowly built over time by people who are willing to set realistic expectations for change and then make progress. People who exercise accountability pursue actions rooted in purpose and meaning for others in the community. They personally account for what they are learning and avoid 'window dressing' or merely undertaking actions that sound appealing.”

[www.theharwoodinstitute.org](http://www.theharwoodinstitute.org)

While Rich Harwood and his colleagues are concerned with civic leadership at the national level, they also recognize the local nature of much civic life. And we can certainly desire and encourage these attributes in our local community leaders. We might, however, recognize the school as a local civic institution and as a community. We might even consider each class to be a community. What is the basis my **authority** as a teacher? What knowledge do I use, and how, in my classroom communities? How **authentic** am I with others in my classroom communities? Do (should) students know I have their best interests at heart? What **accountability** do I exercise and how is it demonstrated – first to those *in* each classroom community? What is the shared purpose, the meaning in our shared communities? These three A's

*Fundamental to our  
conception of a workable  
professional environment  
that fosters learning is more  
time for all professional  
teachers to reflect, plan, and  
discuss teaching  
innovations and problems  
with their colleagues.  
A Nation Prepared:  
Teachers for the 21<sup>st</sup>  
Century*

*I think of my work as  
water on a stone.  
Cleo Martin*

*These memoirs and those  
to follow allow glimpses*

of public life strike me as a solid basis, in the public space of a classroom, for “the best possible professional decisions in the closest possible proximity to learners.”

### **“No Community Left Behind,” *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2008**

“Make no mistake. I am not opposed to federal involvement in public education or to federal aid to education. What I am opposed to is federal *control* of local schools. Indeed, I would prefer less state control. What I am in favor of is maximum participation by local citizens in determining the direction their schools should take and the ends their schools should serve. What I want is schools that help *build* communities as well as serve them. I want the schools to have more meaning in the life of communities than do government agencies such as the postal service. Schools are, or should be, cultural institutions that define communities and signify how members of a community see themselves and their collective futures.” Phillip C. Schlecty

### **LONG day at the AEA!**

“Wish I felt it was worth all our seat time, but I do not. The plethora of ‘school reform/redesign’ meetings is more of the talk that ultimately means nothing. It’s not that the ideas or goals are worthless; it’s that the constant barrage of handouts, ‘how to’ books and programs changes year to year – always sending the message that we teachers are failing in our pursuits and need to join some micromanaging program that will cause our kids’ scores to rise. Yesterday the best talk was about building and/or district culture and how that has a huge impact on both teachers and kids. Well, duh... writing project people call it ‘climate’ and have been talking that talk/walking that walk for three decades. Is it any wonder teachers are disenchanted with professional development? Despite the obligatory talk about the need not to introduce a new idea or plan every month and to keep things from being one shot training, it still feels pretty much like *somebody’s* ‘flavor of the month’ – okay, *maybe* 2-3 months!”  
An IWP Teacher-Leader

### **IWP Participant Writing on the Radio**

**At 12:30:30 every other day on Iowa Public Radio, during *Talk at Twelve*, listen for pieces written by Iowa teachers and drawn from 30 years of IWP summer institute publications!**

### **A Tribute to Response**

This Occasional Paper, produced from pieces read for the first IWP Star Thrower presentation to Cleo Martin in 1992 and reprinted for the 30<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration last October, is a fine study of the stance and approach of an exquisite responder to student writing. Revered as co-founder of IWP and

*into an IWP history yet to be written, but more importantly they are the stories of teacher leaders whose lives and work can inspire and teach.*

*"The stars," he said,  
"throw well. One  
can help them."  
Loren Eiseley  
"The Star Thrower"*

exemplary facilitator of writing workshops in IWP institutes, as well as in her classes at the University of Iowa, Cleo comments on ten pieces shared at different times in her career, explicating her intentions and approaches to them as a responder. Given to those who attended the Celebration, copies may be ordered from IWP for \$5.00 each. It may also be accessed on the IWP web site.

## **IWP Teacher-Leader Memoirs Published**

*Memoirs of Iowa Writing Project Teacher-Leaders, Volume I: Stewardship* was printed in time for the 30<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration of IWP. Written largely by retired members of the IWP family, these memoirs of active teacher-leaders show the remarkable and varied professional journeys taken by five individuals and accompanied by many colleagues. Featured in Volume I are: Jim Bates, Rod Cameron, Anne Weir, Barbara Turnwall and Jim Brimeyer. Volume II is being developed. Copies of Volume I may be ordered from IWP for \$4.00 each. It will be available on the website later this summer.

## **Star Thrower Awards**

The first IWP Star Thrower Award went to Cleo Martin in 1992, the year she retired from the University of Iowa. Jim Davis was recognized the next year, and Richard Hanzelka the year after that. With the demise of the annual fall conference, the award was not presented again until 2003 when the 25<sup>th</sup> Year of IWP was recognized by the Iowa Council of Teachers of English. At the closing luncheon that year, Christie Vilsack honored IWP on behalf of Governor Tom Vilsack, and IWP conferred the Star Thrower designation on three key contributors to the history and development of the project: Marilyn Kelly from Council Bluffs, Bill Lyons from Iowa City, and Dana Wall from Sioux City.

For the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of IWP, a committee of the award recipients decided to catch up a bit and designated eight additional people as IWP Star Throwers. Each has served for many years and in multiple capacities: institute facilitator, local site director, Advisory Board member and more. Representing the Advisory Board, Steering Committee and the selection committee, Davis, Kelly and Lyons presented a framed certificate and watercolor starfish to: Jim Bates, Marion; Sandra Bolton, North Liberty; Rod Cameron, Council Bluffs; Julie Powell, West Des Moines; Carolyn Steinbrink, Shenandoah; Judie Uhlir, Sioux City; and Anne Weir, Wayland. Barbara Turnwall, Northwestern College in Orange City, was unable to be present but received her award at a special Advisory Board meeting in January. Turnwall and Weir are the newest members of the Steering Committee.

## **Advisory Board – New Members**

With several members retiring from the Board in the last couple of years, some new members have been appointed. They include:

Deb Aldrich, Cedar Rapids Kennedy HS;

Angie Benham, Grinnell HS (representing new teachers);

Kirstey Ewald, Cedar Falls HS;

*I'm always looking for the common ground – it's almost desperately important to me for people to hear my poetry and experience it as part of their own story.*

*Jim Autry*

Myra Hall, Cedar Rapids (representing AEA's);

Cindi McDonald, Cedar Falls (representing curriculum directors);

Margie Ortgiesen, Vinton (representing AEA's);

Bridgette Wagoner, Price Lab School, Cedar Falls;

Brad Weidenaar, Marshalltown HS.

IWP's Technology Liaison with NWP is Susie Bentley, SE Polk HS, and Ann Berger represents the Eastern Iowa Writing Project. They join continuing Board members Jim Bates, Jim Brimeyer, Dick Hanzelka, Donna Niday, Julie Powell, Susan Swift, Barbara Turnwall, & Anne Weir.

IWP's summer program is a result of contributions to planning and development by these people, commendable stewards of the Project.

## **A Poetry Resource!**

Poet Jim Autry is now reading selected works, his own and others', on the radio. In the immediate Des Moines area he may be heard at 8:00 and 3:00 (repeat) daily on local access channel KFMG 99.1 He may also be heard on the internet at [www.kfm991.org](http://www.kfm991.org) where archived recordings may be accessed. Great for your poetry unit!

With IWP support, Jim Autry will be reading his work at UNI in September. Expect an announcement at the start of the new school year.



Look for the next Iowa Writing Project  
E-Newsletter Soon!