



FALL 2011

CENTERPIECE

Center for Teacher Education and Research



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www.westfield.ma.edu/center

SONGWRITING SEMINAR FOR TEACHERS

FEATURING SARAH LEE GUTHRIE AND JOHNNY IRION

On September 14th, recording artist Sarah Lee Guthrie, granddaughter of the renowned Woody Guthrie, and her singer-songwriting husband, Johnny Irion, presented a songwriting seminar to history teachers in the Memorializing Promise and Conflict Program.



Sarah Lee Guthrie and Johnny Irion

Using their own music, the music of Woody Guthrie, and the labor struggles of the early 1900s as a backdrop, Sarah Lee and Johnny discussed and demonstrated the styles, structure, process, and power of songs. For further inspiration, the teachers had an online conversation about universal themes coming alive through everyday characters with Johnny's uncle, Tom Steinbeck, author and son of novelist John Steinbeck.

As the day progressed, the teachers practiced writing their own songs about historical characters or events. Working in small groups, they wove their ideas into verses, which were then set to melodies with the assistance of Sarah Lee and Johnny, lead educator Peter Curro, and volunteer musician Grant Wicks. At the end of the day, the teachers had a chance to share their songs with their colleagues.

The teachers in this program will be working with their students to develop a project that incorporates songwriting based upon research into characters, events, or concepts in American History. These projects will be presented at a showcase in July.

TRIP TO ELLIS ISLAND

A trip to Ellis Island, Liberty Island, and the Lower East-side Tenement Museum kicked off the third year for the Visions of Liberty and Equality Teaching American History Program. Thirty-one participants immersed themselves in the immigrant experience—from the glorious view of Lady Liberty in the harbor, to the tour of the Ellis Island museum, to a recreated circa 1916 tenement apartment. The Tenement Museum led the group on a *Walking Soles* historic tour through the Lower Eastside, a neighborhood that so many immigrants called home upon their arrival to this country.



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VISIONS OF LIBERTY & EQUALITY PROGRAM

Wistariahurst Museum in Holyoke provided the setting, and the The Enchanted Circle Theater Group provided the players for a living history demonstration and professional development seminar. Using selections from the *The Skinner Servants Tour*, a play about the prominent silk manufacturing family of William Skinner, the teachers were shown ways to integrate theater into the classroom as a dynamic teaching tool.

The teachers learned about and studied the journals, diaries, photos, and oral histories of the servants that were used in developing the play. They used these primary sources to understand and reflect upon the disparate lives between the rich and the poor, the compelling relationship between them, and how those elements could be woven into a story. They explored creative ways of interpreting history and communicating it in the classroom.

The program year closed with a display of teacher presentations. Participants had a chance to share how they incorporated what they learned from the program into their classrooms. The displays included books, historical artifacts, classroom photos, videos, lesson plans, and student work.



Housekeeper
Hattie Riley

FEATURED RESOURCE FROM OUR LIBRARY

World War II for Kids

This book is packed with information that kids will find fascinating, from Hitler's rise to power in 1933



By Richard Panchyk

to the surrender of the Japanese in 1945. It is filled with excerpts from actual wartime letters written to and by American and German troops, personal anecdotes from people who lived through the war, and gripping stories from Holocaust survivors. It also contains a variety of informative activities where readers can vicariously go on a reconnaissance mission, grow a victory garden, track a ship's movements using latitude and longitude, and experience other aspects of wartime life.

Our Lending Library: We have over 1,200 history and science books and a variety of educational DVDs, games, and periodicals. All items are available for a two-week checkout.

Library Link: www.westfield.ma.edu/center/resources/resources.html

MEMORIALIZING PROMISE AND CONFLICT HISTORY GRANT FOR GRADES 7-12 TEACHERS

In April, the Veteran's Education Project presented the seminar *Using Oral Histories to Explore the Lessons of the Past*.

Veterans and guest speakers modeled meaningful interview techniques and shared their stories of war. The speakers included Walt Kieszek, a US Navy Veteran and Pearl Harbor survivor, and Ray Elliot, a WWII veteran of the US Army Air Corps. Other activities included reflecting upon historic artifacts and role playing characters for the purpose of bringing history alive.



A Rosie the Riveter Simulation

The day wrapped up with a talk by Andrew Carroll, author and founder of the Legacy Project, a national all-volunteer effort that preserves the letters and emails of veterans and active troops. Andrew talked about ways to use letters, journals, and other writings to explore and understand the past.

MENTOR PROGRAM

FOR TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PARTICIPANTS



Shaw Memorial

An early April visit to the African American Heritage Trail in Boston rounded out the program year for the Teaching American History Mentors.

Each mentor, along with a colleague "mentee," visited the Museum of African-American History and attended a presentation highlighting significant leaders in the freedom struggles of black Bostonians. The group then walked the African American Heritage Trail, which explores the history of the 19th century free black community in Boston. The trail, which consists of 14 sites, includes the Robert Gould Shaw Memorial, the African Meeting House, the Abiel Smith School, and the former homes of several prominent abolitionists.

EARTH SYSTEMS SCIENCE (ESS) PROGRAM

In the spring, ESS participants attended a seminar on the study of Ecosystems. Keynote speaker Geoff Wilson, of the Hubbard Brook Research Foundation, talked about the Hubbard Brook Ecosystem Study and its work using watersheds to quantify ecosystem nutrient cycling. He discussed the use of watershed-scale experiments to determine the impacts of acid rain on watersheds and forests. Dr. Jennifer Hanselman, WSU faculty, reviewed the inputs/outputs of ecosystem models and discussed the question whether or not ecosystems have a “tipping point.” The teachers then broke into groups for a hands-on application of these concepts.

The ESS program wrapped up in June with three all-day seminars that revisited all of the concepts that were covered throughout the year. In addition to the lecture portion of the seminars, the teachers had a chance to head outdoors for field experiments, where they collected soil and tree samples for analysis. During the last day, the participants shared their year-long inquiry projects in a teacher learning showcase.

The ultimate goal of the three-year ESS program was to help teachers implement inquiry-based learning into their classrooms. Dr. Tim Parshall, Dr. Tarin Weiss, Dr. Jennifer Hanselman, and Dr. Frank Giuliano are the WSU faculty members that delivered the program content. To see photos of faculty and ESS participants engaged in the program, you can view a slideshow at <http://www.westfield.ma.edu/center/ess/>.



WSU's Dr. Tim Parshall, Associate Professor of Biology shows a soil sampling technique

SUMMER ELL INSTITUTE

For three weeks in July, the CENTER hosted an English Language Learning (ELL) Institute for K-12 educators. The comprehensive institute was designed to provide depth and breadth in preparing teachers to address the unique needs of the growing population of students for whom English is not their first language.



The courses included: (1) *Linguistics and Language Acquisition*, (2) *Methods of Sheltering Academic Content*, and (3) *Literacy for the Non-English Speaking Student*. By completing the courses, teachers were able to meet Massachusetts Category 1,2, and 4 training requirements and prepare for the ELL/ESL MTEL.

The institute was funded by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Office of English Language Acquisition & Academic Achievement.

SPRING & SUMMER EVENT RECAP

March 2011: Setting Bully Prevention Policy

At this conference, Dr. Elizabeth Englander, founder of the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater State University, talked about aggressors and targets and discussed disciplinary options for addressing bullying. Ann Gilligan, of the Massachusetts Department of Education, gave tips on handling the media when bullying incidents occur.

April 2011: Solar Sense Workshop

The Northeast Sustainable Energy Association delivered a *Solar Sense* Workshop. Teachers learned the basics of solar energy, sampled a variety of hands-on activities, and received a demonstration kit with materials and curriculum resources.

June 2011: CENTER Open House & Year End Party

Teachers celebrated the end of the school year at our open house by networking with colleagues, checking out the CENTER library resources, enjoying refreshments, and winning door prizes.

July 2011: Engineering is Elementary Training

The Boston Museum of Science delivered a class entitled *The Attraction is Obvious: Designing Maglev Systems*, a part of the Engineering is Elementary (EiE) curriculum. The teachers explored transportation engineering, magnetism, and the technological innovation of the Magnetic Levitation train. The teachers also received curriculum materials and a lesson kit.

August 2011: Olweus Bully Prevention Training

The CENTER hosted a train-the-trainer seminar for the Olweus Bully Prevention Program, a school-wide program aimed at preventing or reducing bullying behavior.

CENTER BULLY PREVENTION INSTITUTE

In August, the CENTER teamed up with the Hampden County District Attorney's Office to offer a bully prevention institute to local school administrators and school residence police officers.

The three-day program showcased an impressive line-up of experts who spoke on a range of topics. Dr. Sameer Hinduja, Co-Director of the Cyberbullying Research Center, talked about cyberbullying prevention and understanding social media. Dr. Warren Blumenfeld, Associate Professor at Iowa State University, covered bully prevention policies that support LGBTQ students. Shannon Cuttle, Director of the Safe Schools Action Network, discussed ways to create inclusive and safe spaces in the classroom. Dr. Michael Bradley, a psychologist and bestselling author, explored the inner workings of today's adolescents and offered strategies for effectively guiding their behavior. Local experts Carolyn Almeida and Gina Kahn talked about family outreach strategies.

CENTER staff, along with WSU's Dr. Elizabeth Stassinis, and Anne Gilligan, of the Massachusetts Department of Education, capped off each day with bully prevention planning workshops. The goal of these sessions was to equip administrators with the tools they need to review and improve their school's bully prevention and intervention plans.



Westfield
State University

Hampden County District
Attorney Mark Mastroianni
delivers the opening remarks



Dr. Sameer
Hinduja



Dr. Warren J.
Blumenfeld



Shannon
Cuttle



Dr. Michael J.
Bradley



Carolyn
Almeida



Anne
Gilligan

UPCOMING EVENT

NOVEMBER 10, 2011 KIM MARSHALL DECISION POINTS FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

This seminar will highlight the best practices for principals to use in order to see representative slices of teaching, give credible feedback to teachers, and act as players in improving teaching and learning. Educational leaders will gain strategies for getting teacher teams invested in high-quality curriculum unit design, interim assessment analysis, and follow-up, The training will cover models for teacher supervision and evaluation, mini observations, rubrics for end-of-year teacher evaluation. For more details, please see our web site at www.westfield.ma.edu/center or contact Kathy Wicks at (413) 572-8150.



Kim Marshall was a Boston teacher and school administrator for 32 years. He now works for New Leaders for New Schools (www.nlns.org), a non-profit that recruits, trains, and supports urban principals. Kim coaches new principals in NYC, with a focus on improving teacher supervision, evaluation, and the effective implementation of interim assessments. He writes the *Marshall Memo*, a weekly newsletter summarizing educational research and ideas.