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Note from the Guest Editor

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NOTE FROM THE GUEST EDITOR

TANYA R. SHUY

The goal of the National Institute for Literacy March 2007 Community Literacy Summit in Washington D.C. was to bring researchers, practitioners, coalitions, foundations and organizations together to begin a national dialogue on improving and expanding literacy efforts at the community level. The summit specifically provided an opportunity for community leaders to learn more with regards to the improvement of instruction and how to evaluate and improve outcomes for learners.

This special thematic issue of *Community Literacy Journal* is based on the presentations at the Summit and highlights the critical importance of literacy instruction and performance measurement/management. The articles provide an overview of the key components of literacy, a volunteer tutor approach to improve reading outcomes, basic challenges facing adult learner programs, and examples of possible approaches to performance management.

This issue focuses on evidence-based literacy instruction and on performance measurement/management. The first article, by Timothy Shanahan, addresses the five essential variables to literacy success across the lifespan which include the following: amount of teaching, content of teaching, quality of teaching, student motivation, and alignment and support. Four key questions are provided for educators to ask about every choice made in the design and delivery of literacy programs.

Stephanie Al-Otaiba and Barbara Foorman, discuss the efficacy of early literacy interventions, the possible roles for volunteer tutors in helping prevent reading difficulties within the Response to Intervention (RTI) process, and suggestions for future research. Volunteer tutoring can enhance reading outcomes for children. Programs, however, are only as effective as their implementation.

Daphne Greenberg addresses the complexity of the field of adult literacy through a discussion focused on the challenges of collaboration, diversity, attendance, assessment, and professional development. One adult literacy program that successfully implemented research-based methods suggested professional development activities should provide an awareness of the intervention research, focus on practical strategies and give teachers the opportunities and time to learn and practice the new methods.

Harry Hatry and Elaine Morley speak to the critical importance of performance management focusing on what community literacy coalitions and their literacy partners might do to better outcomes for the use in the improvement of services that ultimately leads to the achievement of greater accountability. Specific suggestions are included for the appropriate roles for community coalitions, outcomes to be tracked and how, outcome indicators for coalition “support” services, and several performance management issues.

The hope is that this issue will stimulate and invoke discussion surrounding community literacy instruction and the improvement of outcomes. For further information on community literacy see the Notes below.

NOTES

Several of the Summit Power Point presentations and video clips are available online at: <http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/community/communityliteracy.html>.

Following the Community Literacy Summit the Special Topics Discussion list hosted an online conversation specifically focused as a follow-up to the summit where the conversation could continue. For further information visit: <http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/specialtopics/07CommLiteracy.html>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the editors Michael R. Moore, who joined us in Washington for the Community Literacy Summit, and John Warnock for making this issue possible. Each article received external reviews. A special thank you is extended to all reviewers for their thoughtful work.

Any opinions contained in this special issue are those of the individual authors and do not purport to represent the policies or views of the National Institute for Literacy.

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ADDENDUM

Elizabeth A. Flynn would like to acknowledge the helpfulness of a conversation with Rebecca Dingo and Jen Wingard as she was preparing to revise her 2006 CCCC presentation, "Student Resistance at the University of San Carlos, Guatemala," for publication in the *Community Literacy Journal* ("Rhetorical Witnessing: Recognizing Genocide in Guatemala." 2.2, Spring, 2008, 23-44. With Rudiger Escobar Wolf). It was Wingard who suggested that accompaniment is a form of witnessing.