



FLAG NEWSLETTER



www.flagifted.org

2008 FLAG Board

Members:

- < Lauri Kirsch, Ed.D, President
-Pro Tempore
- < Lois Lee, Treasurer
- < Jenny Klimis, Secretary
- < Suzanne Rawlins, Past
President
- < Donnajo Smith,
State Consultant
- < Michael S. Matthews, Ph.D.
Publications Chair
- < Christine Weber, Ph.D
Training & Supervision
Chair
- < Jo Glover-Thomas,
Special Populations Chair
- < Ann Faivus, Awards Chair
- < Susan Barnes,
Legislative Chair
- < Bill Charlton,
Membership Chair
- < Keri Guilbault,
Conference Committee
Chair
- < Stephanie Georgiades,
Parent Liaison Committee
Chair
- < Willis Henderson,
Region I Coordinator
- < Susan Barnes,
Region II Coordinator
- < Dovie Bass,
Region III Coordinator
- < Martha Kesler,
Region IV Coordinator
- < Joe Musselman,
Region V Coordinator
- < Cathy Cochrane,
Region VI Coordinator
- < Lisette Camps, Ed.D.
Region VII Coordinator

Letter from the President

Pro-Tempore

Dear FLAG Members,

Although Floridians have not yet experienced a change in the weather, autumn is officially upon us. With the change of seasons comes the event Florida 's gifted educators and advocates have been anxiously awaiting...the 2008 National Association for Gifted Children Convention in Tampa!

Within weeks, the "gifted world " will converge upon Tampa. It will be a wonderful opportunity for learning, sharing ideas, and making connections with fellow gifted educators, advocates, and parents. I hope you will be with us as we welcome our visitors to Florida and join together for *Growing Gifted in the Sunshine State*.

Visitors to the convention will want to save time at the convention to attend some of the special

events especially for Florida attendees, including events honoring individuals who have contributed over the years to Florida 's successes in gifted education. Please mark your calendar for these special convention events:

NAGC Awards Ceremony & Annual Assembly (Friday, October 31, 5:45-7:15 p.m.): Terry Wilson, FGN Founder and FLAG Member will be honored with the NAGC Community Service Award

Signature Series with Dorothy Sisk (Friday, October 31, 2:45-3:45 p.m.): "Celebrating the Florida Connection: The ' Perfect Storm ' of will, skill, and resources that made gifted education a possibility "

Content in this issue:

NAGC Honorees.....	2-3
DOE Challenge Grants...	4, 6-7
Parent Day at NAGC.....	5
New FLAG Webpage.....	5
Dorothy Sisk at NAGC...	8
FLAG Awards.....	9
WOGI Project.....	8,10,12,17
FLAG Regional Reports.	9, 11, 16
FL Students to Perform..	12
Raising Gifted Kids.....	13-15
Local Parent Groups.....	16-17

Mark Your Calendar! **NAGC** is here!

NAGC 2008
ANNUAL CONVENTION
Tampa, Florida October 29-November 2, 2008

Parent Day (Saturday, November 1, 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

FLAG Annual Business Meeting (Saturday, November 1, 5:00-5:45 p.m.)

Florida Reception (Saturday, November 1, 6:00-7:00 p.m.)

Thank you to the many FLAG members who have volunteered to serve over the course of the convention in a variety of support roles. Each of you is playing a critical role in the success of the convention. I hope that the experience will be rewarding for you and lead you to increased involvement within FLAG.

Many individuals have worked tirelessly over the past months as FLAG Subcommittee Chairs and have dedicated numerous hours to recruit convention volunteers, schedule student performers, plan Action Labs and special events, and make numerous other arrangements to support NAGC in preparing for a successful convention. My sincere appreciation goes out to FLAG Subcommittee Chairs Keri Guilbault, Jenny Klimis, Cathy Cochrane, Stephanie Georgiades, Suzanne Rawlins, Martha Kesler, Jo Glover, Lois Lee, Chris Weber, Donnajo Smith, and Susan Barnes.

Finally, beyond involvement at the NAGC Convention, I encourage each of you to stay abreast of developments in gifted education. As advocates for gifted children, it is our duty to be ready to respond to potential changes and to recognize threats and opportunities for gifted education in Florida.

See you in Tampa!

Lauri

—Lauri Kirsch

FLAG President Pro Tem

Lauri.kirsch@sdhc.k12.fl.us

NAGC to honor founder of Florida Gifted Network

Long-time Florida gifted education advocate Terry Wilson has been selected to receive one of two **NAGC Community Service Awards** for 2008. Terry is the founder and president of the **Florida Gifted Network** (<http://www.floridagiftednet.org/>), a statewide advocacy organization that has a long and successful history of supporting gifted learners in Florida. In addition to its web page and emailed alert messages, the FGN hosts a discussion forum at <http://floridagiftednet.org/forum/index.php> as well as a Yahoo forum at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/floridagiftednet/> where parents and community members can discuss gifted education issues.

FLAG members are encouraged to attend the presentation of this award on **Friday, October 31 at 5:45 pm** during the Annual Awards Ceremony to be held at the Tampa Convention Center in Tampa, Florida at NAGC 's 55th Annual Convention. Congratulations Terry!

Save the Date! FLAG 2009 Conference to be October 9-10, 2009

Unwrapping the Gifted: Understanding and Nurturing Excellence

Plans are underway for the 2009 FLAG conference! Our conference will be held in Lake Mary at the Orlando Lake Mary Marriott Hotel. Book your hotel room now by calling 1-800-380-7724 and requesting the “FLAG rate” of \$130/night for a double or single. We ’ll have nationally known key-note speakers and dozens of break-out sessions on Friday and Saturday along with vendors, a scholarship auction and awards luncheon. Speaker proposals will be posted on the FLAG website in the spring of 2009. Contact Keri Guilbault at kguilbault@gmail.com with any questions or to volunteer.



Visit the FLAG website!

NAGC Announces 2008 Javits-Frasier Scholarship Recipients!

The National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC) announced the third class of Javits-Frasier Teacher Scholarship recipients who will attend the 55th Annual NAGC Convention on October 29 – November 2, 2008. The 15 educators from Title I schools, selected from a nation-wide pool, will be trained to identify high-potential children in low-income settings and will receive a travel stipend through generous support made possible by the Javits-Frasier Teacher Scholarship Fund for Diverse Talent Development. The teacher training program honors Mary Frasier, Ph.D., the late and beloved past president of NAGC who led the way in identifying under served gifted children.

FLAG is especially proud to recognize the four 2008 honorees who teach in Florida schools:

Vyrtice Archie-Cross

*Robles Elementary Academy & Foster Elementary Academy
Tampa, FL*

Laura Roberts

*Suwannee District Schools
Live Oak, FL*

Tanya Diaz

*Thena C. Crowder
Miami, FL*

Karen Whelan

*Vero Beach Elementary School
Vero Beach, FL*

—Jo Glover

www.flagifted.org

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 2008-09 Challenge Grants for the Gifted & Collaborative Curriculum Projects

The Challenge Grant: Collaborative Curriculum Projects are intended to enhance the academic achievement of students who are gifted through the innovative redesign of instruction and meaningful collaboration between gifted students and teachers, other students, colleagues, mentors, or agencies. It is expected that this collaboration will enhance instruction and thus the academic performance of the students by introducing new information, skills, talents, and perspectives to the instruction. Collaboration may be coordinated with general education classrooms, classrooms for students with disabilities, other schools or school districts, professionals in a particular field who are willing to become mentors and share expertise, colleges or universities, museums, and laboratories. These collaborative projects may involve face-to-face interaction or coordination through the use of technology such as the internet.

Typically, grants of up to \$10,000 are awarded for 8-10 projects annually. Participation in this project is open to all schools and school districts in the State of Florida. Funding is competitive and based on the recommendations of a review team. Consideration is given to geographical distribution throughout the state.

Further information is available from Donnajo Smith, Program Specialist for Gifted, Florida Department of Education, 601 Turlington Building, 325 W. Gaines Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400, 850/245-0478, donnajo.smith@fldoe.org.

Collier County School District:

In this district plan, Rigor Plus, achievement will improve in writing, research, critical thinking, mathematics, and science for 40 students grades 6-8 through a curriculum which guides students to select current real-world issues which interest them: Nuclear Power, Wind Power, Bio-Fuels, Solar Power, Water Quality, De-Deforestation, Global Warming, Cloning Stem Cell Research, etc. Two instructors will collaborate and teach two classes. As students discover and refine their ideas, they will collaborate throughout the year in small groups with similar and/or opposing topics. Students will move from novice to expert and present their final proposal in an oral debate setting.

Project Contact: Irene Benfatti

5775 Osceola Trail

Naples, FL 34109-0919

239-377-0088

benfatir@collier.k12.fl.us

Florida State University Lab School: Real World Chemistry Integration

The "Real World Chemistry Integration" program is designed to incorporate forensics, fire science and hazardous materials management into chemistry curriculum. The goal of this high school program (grades 10-12) is to provide an alignment of curriculum with these areas in

Davidson Institute Seeks Extraordinary Achievers to Receive \$50,000, \$25,000 And \$10,000 Davidson Fellow Scholarships

The Davidson Institute for Talent Development is offering high achieving young people across the country the opportunity to be named as 2009 Davidson Fellows, an honor accompanied by a \$50,000, \$25,000 or \$10,000 scholarship in recognition of a significant piece of work in Science, Technology, Mathematics, Music, Literature, Philosophy or Outside the Box.

To be eligible, applicants must be under the age of 18 as of Oct. 1, 2009, and a U.S. citizen or permanent U.S. resident residing in the United States. There is no minimum age for eligibility. The deadline to apply is March 4, 2009. Applicants must submit an original piece of work recognized by experts in the field as significant and it must have the potential to make a positive contribution to society. The scholarship must be used at an accredited institute of learning. For more information on the Davidson Fellows scholarship, or to download an application, please visit www.DavidsonFellows.org

**Get your M.A. in Gifted Education online at
the University of South Florida!**
See details at

<http://www.coedu.usf.edu/main/departments/sped/gifted/index.htm>

Parent Day at the NAGC 's Annual Convention in Tampa

On Saturday, November 1, NAGC will offer a full day of activities for parents from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. including breakout sessions, a mini-keynote with Dr. Barbara Kerr, a parent advisory panel, a special session with Dr. Deborah Ruf, exhibits, refreshments, and much more. You can access more information about Parent Day, including a [registration form](#) at the [NAGC website](#).

Make your plans now to attend, and please share the flyer with your PTA President, teachers of the gifted, administrators, and friends.

If you have any private and/or homeschooling connections in your area please share the information with them as well.

We look forward to seeing and meeting many of you there. All interested in volunteering, please contact [Jenny Klimis](mailto:KLIMISJA@pcsb.org) at KLIMISJA@pcsb.org. Please address any logistical questions to [Stephanie Georgiades](mailto:stdesmarais@mindspring.com) at stdesmarais@mindspring.com

—Stephanie Georgiades

New FLAG Website is Online!

Bryce Levan, FLAG's new Webmaster, has just posted the newly redesigned pages on the [FLAG website](http://www.flagifted.org/index.htm) at <http://www.flagifted.org/index.htm>

He will be adding future newsletter issues as well as a link to the archived newsletters.

Please check it out! If you want to contact Bryce, his email is bryce.levan@sdhc.k12.fl.us

And...Thank you to outgoing Webmaster Susan Barnes who has graciously managed the FLAG website for all these years!

—Lauri Kirsch

Challenge Grants and Collaborative Curriculum Projects (cont. from p.4)

a challenging format for up to 62 Honors and Gifted students. This program will incorporate scientific methods and technical knowledge of chemistry in situations that simulate real world conditions with professionals from those areas of concentration. This project is an innovative way to attract gifted students.

Project Contact: Dr. Susan Martelli
(Technical)

Florida State University High School
115 Stone Building
Tallahassee, FL 32306
mbest@admin.fsu.edu

Highlands County School District: The Art Exploration Project for Gifted Students

The Arts Exploration Project for Gifted Students intends to expose students in a rural area to a combination of activities and events in the fine arts, performance art, and visual arts. The exploration will be a collection of hands-on activities, performances, and workshops. The intended learning outcomes will include: the examination and creation of 2D and 3D media; innovative visual problem solving and creative skill development; critical thinking skills; an understanding of the different categories of the arts; observation and response to various performances; development of a student portfolio with original works of art.

Project Contact: Rebekah Kogelschatz
Highlands County School Board
426 School Street
Sebring, FL 33870
Kogelscr1@highlands.k12.fl.us

Marion County School District: Water Wonderland

Howard Middle School's Water Wonderland project offers 100 gifted students (grades 6-8) opportunities for research inquiries into water quality and management and related environmental issues. Partnering with Central Florida Community College, Silver River Museum and State park, St. John's Water Management District, and community partners in the Watershed Action Volunteers project, students will collaborate with professionals through research proposals, recommending solutions, and educating 150+ elementary (including other gifted programs) and Howard Middle school students. Interagency cooperation will include " hands on " activities at various locations, utilizing current events and the Internet for research and testing, evaluating, and reporting on environmental issues.

Project Contact: Kathy Collins
Howard Middle School
1108 NW Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue
Ocala, FL 34475
Kathy.Collins@marion.k12.fl.us

Miami-Dade County School District: The Physical Science/Physics Continuum Project

This project will facilitate a spiral curriculum between physical science and physics concepts for students from middle through senior high school enrolled in Mater Academy's gifted program. All 6th grade gifted students, 50 in total, will be affected. Two physical science and three physics teachers will be involved in the project. Students will take part in project-based learning experiences in the classroom focusing on physical

science and physics research activities. The project will integrate standards-based science, mathematics and social studies activities developing advanced critical thinking and reasoning skills. Florida International University (FIU) will provide additional curriculum resources as well as teacher training in order to make this project a more enriching experience for both students and teachers.

Project Contact: Alberto Carvalho
Mater Academy
7901 NW 103rd Street
Hialeah Gardens, Florida
acavalho@dadeschools.net

**Palm Beach County School District:
Puentes Al Mundo**

“ Puentes Al Mundo ” is an academic Spanish language and culture program, that will serve students in grades K-2 enrolled in Banyan Creek Elementary School ’ s gifted track. The school will collaborate with Florida Atlantic University ’ s Spanish Department to create an effective, innovative learning experience. The gifted students will embrace expanded roles that enable stronger interactions within school, locally, and globally; they will benefit from enriched academics, second language abilities, and a multicultural education that will prepare them to excel today, and in tomorrow ’ s global community. This school-level proposal will provide academic study outside the current curriculum.

Project Contact: Karin Gellen
Banyan Creek Elementary
4243 Sabal Lakes Road
Delray Beach, FL 33445
561-715-3534
kgellen@comcast.net

**Polk County School District: Lawton Chiles
Middle Academy**

Lawton Chiles Middle Academy serves 135 gifted students (23% of 589 total students) in grades 6-8. This proposal is to develop and implement a new math, science, and technology curriculum for the gifted students using three of the student goals from Florida ’ s Frameworks for Gifted Learners. The intent is to train students to conduct thoughtful research and exploration of real world problems and to present their findings to a variety of authentic audiences. Eighteen teachers will participate in this school project.

Project Contact: Pamela Sudzina
Lawton Chiles Middle Academy
400 North Florida Ave.
Lakeland, Florida 33801
Pamela.sudzina@polk-fl.net

**Volusia County School District: Legendary
Florida**

Legendary Florida is a true collaboration between the Museum of Florida Art and Volusia County School ’ s gifted program. Teachers of the gifted and teachers of art will develop an integrated curriculum for an additional twelve paintings at the museum in order to support a newly implemented history program for 4th and 5th grade self-contained gifted classrooms. Thirty-five self-contained gifted classrooms will receive an infusion of this content. Further development of this curriculum will meet the academic needs of over 465 gifted students and approximately 50 high-achieving students of traditionally underrepresented subgroups at 13 elementary schools.

Project Contact: Richard D. Jones
Volusia County Schools
P.O. Box 2410
Daytona Beach, FL 32115
rdjones@volusia.k12.fl.us

—Donnajo Smith

Celebrating the Florida Connection: The “Perfect Storm” of Will, Skill, and Resources that made Gifted Education a Possibility in Florida

Back when gifted education was still a new idea, it took key individuals, navigating strategically, to make it happen. In this interactive NAGC convention session, Dr. Dorothy Sisk shares Florida’s story of gifted connections: individuals, institutions, and inspirations that came together in a “perfect storm” and changed the face of gifted education.

Discover how the alignment of gifted with special education and key connections between multiple stakeholders including; the University of South Florida, the Florida Association for the Gifted, state consultants from Connecticut, Georgia, and North Carolina, the Sid Richardson & Edyth Bush Foundations, the Council for Exceptional Children, and NAGC established an environment in Florida where gifted education became a reality. This convention session will be held on Friday, October 31, from 2:45-3:45 p.m. in Room 24 of the Convention Center.

Join the conversation and learn how the vision of a small group of committed individuals moved gifted education beyond a vision.

Mark your Calendar: The **FLAG Annual Business Meeting** is scheduled for **Saturday, November 1 (5:00-5:45 p.m.)** in **Ballroom D** at the **Marriott Waterside**, during the **NAGC Convention**.

WOGI Consultant to Support Teacher Preparation Programs

In collaboration with the FLAG regional coordinators, plans are set to conduct seven workshops for teachers who lead the professional development gifted endorsement courses. Each FLAG region will host a workshop with WOGI Project Consultant Jodi O’Meara. Jodi is a past FLAG board member of 11 years and has contributed to various WOGI projects including most recently, The Florida Frameworks for K-12 Gifted Learners. She will be leading discussions and sharing information across the state regarding the modules including course strengths, areas of need, and developing,

with input from the participants, next steps to be taken with the gifted endorsement courses.

Currently WOGI is working with a newly established FLAG committee, headed by Lisette Camps, to examine FLAG’s involvement in the New Teacher Workshop and how FLAG’s involvement may be used to benefit the organization.

Check the [WOGI website](http://www.unfwogi.com) (www.unfwogi.com) for more information including a listing of the dates, locations and times once they become finalized.

—Christine Weber

FLAG Awards: The Results Are In!

The Awards Committee has worked long and hard to determine the winners of the FLAG awards for 2008-2009. The awards include two Scobee Scholarships for \$1000 each, a Mini-Grant Award for a teacher of the gifted, an Excellence in Creative Teaching Award, and a Nicholas Green Distinguished Student Award. Complete biographies of award winners will appear in the January newsletter.

- Scobee Scholarships will be awarded to Shane McKibben of Melbourne and Greta Schneider-Herr of Goodland.
- The Mini-Grant will be awarded to Susan Crate Babish of St. Augustine.
- Excellence in Creative Teaching will be awarded to Susan Campbell of Palm Beach.
- The Nicholas Green Distinguished Student honor will be awarded to Emily Horne of Oviedo.

Congratulations to these worthy winners of FLAG Awards!

—Anne Favius

FLAG Regional Reports

Region I—Willis Henderson

Donnajo Smith, Gifted Specialist, Florida Department of Education, and Willis Henderson, Subject Area Specialist/Gifted Escambia School District and FLAG Region I Coordinator, introduced the Florida Gifted Frameworks for K-12 Gifted Learners to teachers of the gifted in Santa Rosa and Escambia Counties. The pre-school event was well attended and both districts will explore the possibility of future collaborative efforts. Participants were encouraged to use the assessment software rubric and the Frameworks to report student progress, develop and implement lessons/units of study, and as part of their professional evaluation. A special thanks goes to The Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resource Center/ Westgate for their help in organizing the event.

Region I is happy to announce that FLAG memberships have seen a modest increase recently. This increase can be attributed to an awareness and commitment at both the university and district levels. FLAG Region I would like to thank the University of West Florida for its continued commitment to gifted students.

Region II—Susan Barnes

Region II has been busy trying to recruit new parent members as the school year starts. The Annual Symposium on Gifted Education for Parents and Teachers has been scheduled for Saturday, January 24. We will soon be conducting an online survey (with the help of our local FLDRS Associate Center) for parents and teachers to determine interest in potential topics for the symposium.

Region III—Dovie Bass

Region III will host one of a series of seven WOGI workshops for teachers of gifted endorsement courses. The workshop for Region III will be held on October 10th in Gainesville. Please contact [Dovie Bass](mailto:bassd@atlantic.net) (bassd@atlantic.net) to reserve a seat.

Region III is scheduled to meet again in December. Please contact Dovie Bass if you are available to represent your district.

Region IV—Martha Kesler

Region IV played host to several statewide events during recent months. The Odyssey of the Mind

(Continued on page 11)

WOGI Institute Update

Thanks to the efforts of many including our gifted colleagues and parents across the state, the Working on Gifted Issues (WOGI) grant project has had a very productive 2007-2008 year.

The annual WOGI Institute took place on June 9-10 in St. Augustine at the Renaissance's World Golf Village. This year's Institute was very well attended with fifty-three participants receiving pertinent information related to the field of gifted plus a wealth of resources to support the gifted endorsement modules and a copy of the newly revised Special Populations module. Special Pops is the fifth of the modules to be revised and WOGI will continue to consider updates to the modules as needed.

The agenda featured presentations by Mary Ann Clark on rigorous curriculum utilizing Dr. Sandra Kaplan's model of Depth and Complexity, a session on the identification of underrepresented populations by Dr. Susan Johnsen, and an introduction and demonstration by Dr. Ben Graffam and Manny Klimis on the newly developed CD that can be used as a management tool to assist teachers in developing goals for EPs using the Florida Framework for K-12 Gifted Learners. The WOGI Institute also featured DOE up-

dates, district reports on progress from this year's pilot projects, and an update on the Parent Workshops. Evaluations indicated that the information and materials presented were very relevant, informative, and beneficial.

On Tuesday afternoon, WOGI sponsored a special follow-up session with Dr. Susan Johnsen for representatives of state universities and colleges. The session featured the new National Gifted Education Standards for university teacher preparation programs and for Pre-K-12 professional development. Participants were also guided through the steps for certification. Information related to this Institute and other grant initiatives can be found at www.unfwogi.com

Plans are already in the making for the 2009 WOGI Institute. Mark your calendars for the Marriott Renaissance World Golf Village for June 7th and 8th. The opening for the Institute will begin on Sunday evening and conclude the afternoon of Monday June 8th.

—Christine Weber

Mark your Calendar: Florida Reception at the NAGC Convention

Be sure to save some time at the Convention to attend the Florida Reception on Saturday evening at 6:00. If you "followed the flamingos to Florida" after last year's FLAG-hosted luncheon in Minneapolis, you're sure to enjoy the chance to relax on "Flamingo Island." The reception will be held on the Lobby Patio at the Tampa Marriott. Meet your Florida hosts, enjoy hors d'oeuvres and drinks overlooking the Garrison Channel, and listen to our own Joe McCoy playing and singing.

Winners of the Scobee Scholarships, Nicholas Green Award, Teacher Mini-Grants, and FLAG Teacher of the Year will be recognized at the reception. Thanks to Suzanne Rawlins, Lois Lee, Jenny Klimis, Marianne Solomon, Cathy Cochrane, Monika Schuler, and Bill Charlton for helping menu planning and decorating the beautiful outdoor area for this special award.

—Martha Kesler

FLAG Regional Reports

(Continued from page 9)

State Tournament was held at the University of Central Florida in early April and it was an exciting time. Many Florida teams were eligible to participate in the World Competition and went on to become winners. And, the Florida Future Problem Solving State Bowl was held in Cape Canaveral in mid-April, resulting in several Florida winners at the International Competition. Congratulations to FLAG members who were coaches at the events. In May, Challenge Grant winners from across the state met in Orlando with Donnajo Smith to learn more about the grants they were awarded. Region IV had two grant winners—Mariel Milano from Orange County, with Forensic Fusion, and Suzanne Rawlins from Volusia County, with Legendary Florida.

In addition, regional coordinators have met to plan and reflect on many topics of shared interest. Region IV members have been involved in planning for NAGC, especially in membership development, action labs, and the Florida party. We've been researching and discussing potential enhancements to our website and membership processes in anticipation of the 2009 FLAG Conference coming again to Region IV. We're expecting to host the FLAG/DOE New Gifted Teacher Workshop in the Summer of 2009, for which we have begun planning.

Region V—Joe Musselman

Region V met on August 26. Elizabeth Shaunessy discussed endorsement course offerings at USF. She also discussed her experience at the annual SENG conference, which took place this summer.

Hillsborough is continuing initiatives from last year; including Mentoring Mathematical Minds, AVID, and the Schoolwide Enrichment Model—Reading (4th/5th grade); Sally Reis has volunteered to speak to teachers about reading on October 29th. All five district-led endorsement courses are up and running. Renzulli Learning Systems continues for gifted students in all 63 Title I

schools. The professional study day for gifted was successful.

In Pasco county, gifted inclusion sites are currently being increased at the elementary level by 6 additional schools. Two high schools may pilot seminar offerings to gifted freshman.

Pinellas County gifted programs were evaluated. Parents' responses have been very positive based on survey results. Jenny Klimis, as a professional goal, will target social emotional needs of gifted students. The gifted committee is considering a full time middle school that serves gifted as a continuation of the elementary magnet school program.

Polk County continues to offer the gifted endorsement courses. Michael Mathews recently conducted an evaluation of gifted education in Polk County. Polk is providing a copy of Joyce VanTassell-Baska's gifted characteristics to each teacher on 5 different bookmarks. Ben Graffam provided an in-service on the new gifted Frameworks.

Shirley is willing to assist with a Regional initiative for serving high school students.

The next meeting of the Region V coordinators is tentatively scheduled for January 13, 2009.

Region VI—Cathy Cochran

Region VI held its first regional FLAG meeting on August 26 at the Lee County Public Education Center. Gifted leaders from Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Highlands, and Lee County will meet to discuss service delivery models, Challenge Grants, the NAGC Convention, Plan B, testing, and more. We are eager to build a powerful network in Region Six to the benefit of all our gifted students. We are happy to have three Challenge Grants in our region, and will have much to share about the progress on those interesting and innovative projects. The Challenge Grants from Region 6 include Collier County's Rigor Plus, Highlands County's Art Exploration Project, and Lee County's Gopher

(Continued on page 16)

WOGI to offer Gifted Endorsement Modules in 2008-09

The Working on Gifted Issues project (WOGI) will offer online courses through Broward County's Virtual University for the 2008 fall, 2009 spring & summer sessions. Enrollment in each course is open to all Florida teachers. The cost for each participant to register is a registration fee of \$240 per course.

The course start dates are as follows:

Semester	Course	Start Date	Registration Deadline
Fall	Nature and Needs	October 13, 2008	September 26, 2008
Spring	Curriculum	March 16, 2009	March 2, 2009
Summer	1. Counseling 2. Creativity	May 25, 2009	May 8, 2009

To register for the fall semester:

Go to <https://broward.gosignmeup.com>.

- Go to **My Account** to create an account.
- Click on **State Gifted** (Non-Broward).
- Gifted** and then **Nature and Needs of Students Who Are Gifted**

Contact person for the fall Nature and Needs: Karen Hairston, kkarston@aol.com

—Submitted by Christine Weber

Florida Students to Perform at NAGC Convention in Tampa

Student performances at the National Association for Gifted Children Conference in Tampa will be many, varied, and unusual! We'll showcase the talents of student artists from Volusia County with individual works displayed on easels all around the convention center. The outstanding Pine View Chorale will be performing from Pine View School for the Gifted in Sarasota. We'll be enjoying the special energy of Lil' Peppi, a singer/performer from Tinker Elementary who has made his first CD. The Embellish Hand Choir from Chiles Elementary will entertain us with their unique sounds. We'll even be able to see the amazing Minotaur Robotics Team! We have a classical guitarist, a jazz band and vocals group, dancers, musical theatre, and more. We're very proud of the diverse talent our students bring to the convention.

—Cathy Cochrane

The Do's and Don'ts For Raising Your Gifted Kids

By Deborah L. Ruf, Ph.D.

*Dr. Ruf will be a featured speaker for Parent's Day at the NAGC Convention in Tampa

Parents have usually reached the "We're desperate!" stage by the time they seek out a person to help them with their gifted child. In fact, although all the background information on IQ scores, gifted programs, and affective needs is nice, what parents really want is to staunch the bleeding. Their formerly bright-eyed, bushy-tailed preschooler has lost the spark, turned sullen, or worse, hates school. Different but often equally troubling, some kids actually make such a good adjustment to school that they no longer seem to be learning anything new at all beyond "fitting in" skills.

Many parents, like their own parents before them, figure that someone in the schools will tell them if the child is gifted; therefore, if the parent is the only one thinking something is amiss, something is probably wrong with the parent (or the kid). Fortunately, sometimes the parent has enough confidence and courage to persevere on behalf of the child despite all the apparent odds. It is a good sign if you are a parent reading this article. You have taken some important steps to learning what you can about what ails your child, and about what you might do to make it better. Here are some ideas to get you started.

Don't forget who's the child and who's the adult.

Children need to feel they are safe and protected. An adult who assumes that a gifted child can make his own decisions about the best schooling or activities for him, just because he's gifted, is giving too much power to the child. This undermines the child's confidence in the adult. This puts too much of a burden on the young person. It also undermines the authority of the adult. It is curious to me that educators will often pose the question,



"Has anyone asked Melanie what she wants to do?" when acceleration or other gifted options are being considered; but few would ask any children their opinions on regular schooling. These decisions are up to the adults who have experience, wisdom, and hindsight.

Do provide intellectual challenge in and out of school. Gifted children learn to underachieve in the early grades. Accomplishing what their classmates accomplish is done with no effort, no practice, and great speed. Test anxiety, perfectionism, and fear of failure may all be associated with this early conditioning and lack of challenge in school. Give your child chances to be frustrated, to need to work hard and to take extra time to figure something out. Try to arrange this opportunity as often as possible in the school setting.

Sometimes, however, "in the school setting" is not a quickly available option. You might have to work around the schools when they are not prepared to be collaborative with you and your child except on their own terms. You can set up meaningful intellectual challenges during non-school times and during school times that significantly contribute to many facets of your child's growth. Read on.

Don't over-schedule your gifted child; that is not the same as providing challenge. Give your child

(Continued on page 14)

Do's and Don'ts (continued from p.13)

exposure to many different skills and activities that may uncover talent and passion in the child. Give your child the freedom and opportunity to make choices regarding clubs, activities, and extra-curriculars. Give your child enough down time to process, read for fun, vegetate, let ideas simmer. Don't judge the value of your child's choices during the free and down times (except for safety and health issues).

Rather than tacking activities onto her long school day, consider giving your child regular school breaks for learning at her own pace and depth at home, especially during early elementary grades when she is reading at the 5th grade level while her classmates are working on beginning readers. Some kids would quickly zoom ahead in math if only given the opportunity. Some schools will allow you to have your child tutored, usually at your own additional expense, on school property during the school day, but that is not common or completely comfortable to arrange. The home school laws available in every state also enable you to part-time home school. (You don't have to make an endless, daily, all the time commitment to home school). You can decide which times of the school day are not contributing to your child's intellectual or emotional growth and give your child challenging, meaningful experiences elsewhere during those times. You can get all the information you need to get you started on the Internet under "home school".

Don't focus the challenge on either your child's strengths or weaknesses. Allow the child to really pursue her highest interests and

abilities. Help the child recognize which skills and knowledge will be important for any normally functioning adult citizen. In other words, help her to recognize the necessary "hoops". Then believe it yourself and let go of total perfection. Remember, perfect grades probably mean good "reading of the teacher" more than the quality of the academic or intellectual learning that has taken place.

At the same time, there are virtually no career opportunities that allow a person to circumvent the need for clear writing, filling in forms (tax preparation, job applications), or doing simple math. No excuses; these are examples of necessary "hoops." Gifted children, however, just as with any other children, should be taught and accelerated at their own readiness level and pace. A gifted child does not need three to five years of elementary school to learn basic math facts. If that is what is happening to your child, it is not a necessary "hoop", it is a waste of time and will build in underachievement.

Do give compliments to your child for his abilities and efforts. Gifted children need recognition for their abilities from people whose opinions matter most to them just as much as anyone else. Try to be particularly aware of when your child really has put a great deal of effort or thought into something and needs encouragement or positive feedback. If the child has a talent area (art, music, games, anything) acknowledge it. Look for ways to help the child know himself.

Don't hold your child up as an example for siblings or other children to emulate, compete with, or follow. Each person is unique and abilities affect interests and goals as much and often more than effort. Comparisons might make you child tone down her abilities so as not to feel freakish or disliked. Comparisons can put other children in an untenable, unfair position.

Do demonstrate how to prioritize, schedule, and let

(Continued on next page)

go. Gifted individuals discover early that they have many interests and can get more done, wear more hats, than most other people. Sometimes they get over-involved and can't decide how to lower their stress and their commitments. Even gifted people need down time and processing time, so they must learn how to pick and choose carefully in order to allow the time necessary for emotional growth and self-discovery. Help them learn to recognize the difference between their own goals and someone else's. Help them learn that some goals are necessary "hoops".

Do give your gifted child the same information you have about her IQ and relative ability level. If you don't know how to do this or don't feel comfortable, get professional help to prepare yourself. Children who are within a normal, average range can certainly handle that they "fit in" and are normal. Children who differ from the norm and who therefore experience many things in life differently for that reason need help in understanding why. I believe the specifics can be shared by the time the child's mental age is about 12. You can roughly estimate your child's mental age by recalling when your child reached certain developmental milestones compared to those charts you had on preschool behavior. Toys have an age range on the box, for example. Did your child enjoy and do puzzles well earlier than the box suggested? Don't think you can simply compare your child to the children of friends. That can cause you to underestimate your

child's intellectual level. Remember, you and your friends are very likely within similar intellectual ranges; that's part of how you found each other. Just because your child isn't ahead of your friend's kids does not mean he's not gifted! It's possible, and likely, that they both are gifted.

Don't worry that helping your gifted child know himself (or herself) better will lead to a "big head", a know-it-all attitude, or undo vanity. True giftedness that is understood by the possessor leads to a more open understanding and acceptance of others (if it has been explained well). The more intellectually gifted a person is, the more likely the person will know how much he doesn't know yet. Don't worry that the child will feel superior to you; children need to look up to their parents and you are better equipped than you may realize.

Do enjoy this wonderful time in your life; have fun. One of the hallmarks of giftedness is sense of humor. Other common traits are excellent vocabulary and high levels of perceptivity. You and your gifted children have much in common. As you get to know each other and grow together, take time to appreciate what a gift you are to each other. No matter what your child's level of giftedness or your school's level of support, you should be able to end most days saying to yourself, "Wow! Am I ever lucky!"

—Deborah L. Ruf, Ph.D.

FLAG Membership Information

Special Joint Membership Rate in FLAG and NAGC: See links on [p. 18](#)

Regular membership: \$30 one year, \$55 two years, \$80 three years

Student/Retired: \$25 one year

Institutional (up to 30 members): \$650 one year

Membership applications are available online at www.flagifted.org. If you have a question regarding your membership status or expiration date, please contact Membership Chair, **Bill Charlton** at: charltw@ocps.k12.fl.us

the Cache.

FLAG Regional Reposts (*continued from p. 11*)

Region VII—Lisette Camps

It is my pleasure to inform you that the parent conference, *A Path to Rigor... Your Child and Advanced Academics*, that took place Saturday, March 15, 2008, at the Dadeland Marriott Hotel, sponsored by the Division of Advanced Academic Programs, Miami-Dade County Public Schools was an awe-inspiring success. Fourteen (14) senior high schools throughout the District were pick-up and drop-off sites to ensure transportation access for all parents.

A teacher of the gifted in our Region (and FLAG member), Jesse Rachel Cukierkorn, has written a book titled *Arts Education for Gifted Learners*. Dr. Cukierkorn is a practicing artist, art educator, and Teacher of the Gifted at Natural Bridge Elementary School in North Miami—Region II. While fairly new to the gifted education classroom, she has taught visual art in general and special education settings at the elementary and secondary levels, in both public and private schools in four states. (Watch a future issue of the FLAG Newsletter for further information about this book —Ed.).

Parent Groups for the Gifted in Florida

STATE-WIDE ORGANIZATION: Florida Gifted Network (FGN)

Discussion forum: <http://floridagiftednet.org/forum/index.php>

Yahoo forum: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/floridagiftednet/>

Temporary Contact: Terry Wilson twilson@floridagiftednet.org

COUNTY/LOCAL GROUPS:

Broward County Gifted Advisory

Website: www.browardgiftedchildren.org

Yahoo discussion group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BrowardCountyGifted/join>

Chair: Nagarajan Kannan browardcountygac@yahoo.com

Citrus Organization for the Gifted

Website: <http://www.citrusgifted.org/>

Email: citrusgifted@yahoo.com

FGSN- Flagler Gifted Support Network

Website: <http://www.flagler.k12.fl.us/departments/fgsn>

Co-chairs: Jane Sbordone jane.sbordone@gmail.com

& Danielle Scarcella Dscarcelone@yahoo.com

GACH, Gifted Advocacy Council of Hillsborough-Tampa

Website: <http://www.gachflorida.org/>

President: Stephanie Georgiades president@GACHFlorida.org

Highlands Advanced Academics Parent Network HAAPN

Website: <http://home.comcast.net/~advancedacademics/>

Yahoo Discussion Group: <http://highlandsparentnetwork.com/about.html>

(Continued on page 17)

(Continued from previous page)

PAGES of Hernando: Partners Allied for Gifted Education and Support

Website: <http://www.pagesofhernando.org/>

Email: admin@pagesofhernando.org

SEPTA- Seminole County Exceptional Education PTA

Website: <http://www.seminolesepta.org/>

Contact: Kathy Accurso kaccurso@cfl.rr.com

2008-09 WOGI Project Goals

The 2008-2009 WOGI Project will continue to research effective practices and support districts as they plan, develop, and implement screening strategies aimed at reducing disproportionality. The initiatives for 2008-2009 include:

Disproportionality: address under-representation of special populations in gifted programs by establishing, monitoring, and providing support for pilot programs designed to address disproportionality and the role that the screening process plays;

Support for Parents: provide a forum for developing parental awareness of common issues related to parenting students who are gifted;

Gifted Workgroup: establish a state-wide gifted advisory work group to study gifted issues and make recommendations for appropriate services;

Support for Teachers: work on revisions to update the endorsement modules and their dissemination, continue development of new courses for online endorsement and continuation of existing courses, provide continued training as well as technical assistance and development of materials for implementation of the state Frameworks for gifted;

Support for District Programs for Students who are Gifted: finalize the gifted handbook and its dissemination; host 5 regional meetings for coordinators of gifted programs, and host a Spring Institute focused on professional development for district personnel who work with gifted students; and

Support for Teacher Preparation Programs: provide 7 regional trainings for those who teach the endorsement courses and will continue the com-

munication established with teacher training programs at the university level.

The project deliverables include:

- Question and Answer link for parents placed on the WOGI Web site
- CD Rom/training module of the updated Curriculum for Gifted Learners
- On line course for Theory and Development of Creativity for the Gifted
- On line course for Guidance and Counseling for the Gifted
- Report and/or development of additional support materials needed for implementing the Frameworks.
- Gifted Handbook

The WOGI project will collaborate with the Florida Association for the Gifted (FLAG) to establish 7 regional meetings to provide support and training for the individuals and university personnel who have the responsibility of teaching the endorsement module/courses.

Instead of having one project manager this year, the WOGI Project has hired three consultants, each working within their areas of expertise to meet project initiatives. In order to streamline communication, we ask that all questions, comments, or suggestions be sent to Dr. Christine Weber at cweber@unf.edu or Dr. Laurel Stanley at stal0008@unf.edu

We are looking forward to continuing our collaborative relationship with FLAG this year.

—Christine Weber

Newsletter Submissions? Please send in electronic format to mmatth36@uncc.edu

Dr. Michael S. Matthews, Editor

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte

9201 University City Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28223



FLAG's Mission Statement

The mission of FLAG is to support educationally appropriate programs for gifted students through exchanging information, promoting research, supporting constructive changes in all areas of gifted education, and cooperating with local and state organizations in reaching mutual goals and objectives in support of students who are gifted.

ATTENTION: FLAG Joint Membership rates are now available!

With the NAGC conference coming to Florida this year, NAGC has generously offered current FLAG members in good standing a discount membership in NAGC. This will result in a lower registration fee for the conference in October/November. Educator members may join for \$45 and may access a joint membership form through [this link](#), while parent members can join for \$10 and find a membership form through [this link](#). This is a great opportunity! Please take advantage of this one-time offer.

www.flagifted.org

NAGC 2008 in Tampa!