



# The Banner

WINTER 2009

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## President's Message

Dear FLAG Members,  
While 2008 ended on a high note for the Florida gifted community with the successful NAGC Tampa Conference "Growing Gifted in the Sunshine State" in October, the far reaching implications of the end of year economic meltdown have touched all organizations in 2009...including Florida Association for the Gifted.

### Challenges & Opportunities...

First, know that FLAG continues to be a viable organization dedicated to the support of gifted education and gifted children, families, and educators. At the same time, like other entities in this fiscally challenging era, it is necessary that FLAG re-align some of our practices so that we may continue to provide the expected level of services to our members.

During 2008 steps were begun so that FLAG would become a "leaner" organization. The quarterly newsletter was moved to an online format to allow a wider distribution and reduce the cost of printing and postage. Also, beginning in 2008, "electronic" meetings began to replace some of the regularly scheduled meetings of the FLAG Board in order to reduce Board costs. Heading into the new year, the 2009 FLAG Budget was carefully scrutinized by your Board and re-aligned to the current financial times.

Perhaps the most visible change you will see for FLAG in 2009 is the change in format for the FLAG's annual meeting and conference. While in most past years, FLAG has held an annual fall conference in October, the Board determined in January that an alternate arrangement must be made for 2009 in order to be fiscally responsible during these difficult times when travel restrictions threaten potential educator attendance and make it impossible for FLAG to hold a stand-alone fall conference.

### A New Opportunity...

FLAG has been invited to join SENG (Supporting the Social & Emotional Needs of Gifted

[www.sengifted.org](http://www.sengifted.org)) for a joint learning experience, *Mission Possible*, in Orlando, July 17-19, 2009. FLAG will not hold a fall conference in October 2009 however a FLAG "strand" at the SENG Summit will provide an opportunity for FLAG and other Florida presenters to share information with the national audience expected to attend the event.

In addition to the FLAG strand for Florida presenters, special FLAG events at the SENG Summit will include the FLAG Annual Meeting, FLAG Awards, and a "showcase of ideas" for Florida gifted teachers. Further information will be posted at [www.flagifted.org](http://www.flagifted.org) as the planning progresses.

The collaboration between SENG & FLAG will provide a unique opportunity beyond what previous FLAG conferences have typically been able to offer. Because SENG prioritizes the recognizing, understanding, and accepting the unique social and emotional needs of the gifted population, the conference will include a focus beyond educational issues and include sessions for educators, parents, grandparents, mental health professionals, gifted adults, gifted teens, and gifted children. In fact, the 2009 SENG / FLAG Summit is for the entire family! While adults attend multiple sessions focused upon the needs and challenges facing the gifted population, children and teens may attend sessions tailored especially for their age levels and interests.

It is our sincere hope that the SENG Summit will provide gifted educators, advocates, parents, and families with all the opportunities for learning, sharing, and fun that have been a part of past FLAG events.

### A Call to Action...

What can YOU do as a supporter of gifted education?

**Invite a friend, family member, or colleague to join you at the July 2009 SENG Summit in Orlando.** A "call for proposals" is linked from this newsletter for potential FLAG Strand presenters. Watch for more information about the

July 17-19 event coming soon!

**Share FLAG membership information with fellow gifted advocates.** And... remember, FLAG members enjoy reduced membership rates to NAGC!

**Make a donation to the Scobee Scholarship Fund.** College bound students need our assistance now, more than ever. Contact Anne Faivus at [faivus@palmbeach.k12.fl.us](mailto:faivus@palmbeach.k12.fl.us)

**Volunteer to serve on a FLAG committee.** Even if you've never been involved before, now is the time to contact one of the committee chairs (publications, conference, parent, awards, membership, advocacy, special populations) and volunteer to get involved. We welcome new people and new ideas!

**Continue your membership to FLAG.** Since membership dues are essential to FLAG's financial viability, your continued support of FLAG is critical so that we may continue providing scholarships and mini-grants, as well as hosting FLAG events.

### Your ideas and input...

As you have ideas for improving the functions of FLAG, I encourage you to contact me or one of our Regional Coordinators.

Florida Association for the Gifted will continue to be YOUR state organization in support of gifted education...children, families, and educators.

Thank you for all you do in support of gifted education in Florida.

*Whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.*  
~Max Ehrmann

Sincerely,

**Lauri Kirsch**  
President Pro-Tem  
Florida Association for the Gifted



“The communication and networking with other instructors has been invaluable...”

# DOE Update: Governor’s Program

Twenty three applications for the Governor’s Summer program were received by the Department of Education in December and the Review Team has met to assess the applications and make recommendations for funding. Thanks to **Dovie Bass** (formerly with Gilchrist, Alachua and Levy Counties), **Willis Henderson** (Escambia), **Holly Melchiori** (Indian River), **Suzanne Rawlins** (Volusia), **Pam Sudzina** (Polk) and **Dr. Chris Weber** (UNF) for serving as reviewers and giving their time over the holidays to read applications and rate them for strengths and

weaknesses. An additional thank you to Pam for hosting the review meeting in Bartow at the Jim Miles Professional Development Center. Recommendations from the team will now be forwarded to the DOE leadership for review and approval. We anticipate making an official announcement sometime in late March or early April.

## WOGI Working On Gifted Issues

Contact: **Dr. Christine Weber**, University of Northern FL  
Email: [cweber@unf.edu](mailto:cweber@unf.edu)

WOGI will begin the New Year with a new format for our WOGI website! Take a moment and check it out at [www.unfwogi.com](http://www.unfwogi.com). We think you will be pleased with the ease of navigation and new look.

As with the calendar, this year’s WOGI initiatives are marching along. Two sets of regional meetings have been scheduled to support colleagues in providing quality gifted services statewide. Facilitator Jodi O’Meara, in collaboration with the FLAG regional coordinators, has completed five of the seven regional meetings related to the gifted endorsement courses. These meetings have been attended by instructors of the endorsement courses. The meetings have been a valuable platform for discussions regarding efforts to update the current gifted endorsement modules. Feedback related to the resources, strengths, needs as well as the relationship to the NAGC Professional Development standards has been discussed at each of these meetings. Data have also been gathered in relation to the instruction and delivery of the modules in each county represented. This feedback and data will be used directly in the efforts to update the modules. Currently the *Curriculum Development for the Gifted* module is being updated using information from these meetings. The communication and networking with other instructors has been invaluable according to the meeting evaluations. For a listing of the times and places of the last two meetings to take place in the spring of 2009, visit the WOGI website.

Additionally, the WOGI Regionals, traditionally held in the fall but delayed this year due to Florida’s opportunity to host the annual NAGC Conference, are scheduled to begin with the first meeting in Palm Beach County on January 9 and the last on February 9 at PAEC in Chipley. Each meeting is scheduled from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The dates, locations and driving directions to each location can be found on the website under the “Meetings” tab. Facilitator Karen Hairston, provided an agenda to district coordinators of gifted programs in the December Highlights in Florida Gifted Education. Coordinators of gifted programs are asked to RSVP to Karen Hairston at [kkarston@aol.com](mailto:kkarston@aol.com).

In the continued effort to provide support and options for Florida teachers to obtain the gifted endorsement online, WOGI, in collaboration with Broward’s Virtual University, is offering Curriculum Development for the Gifted beginning March 16, 2009. The cost of the course is \$240. Deadline for registration is **March 2, 2009**. To register:

- Go to <https://broward.gosignmeup.com>
- Go to **My Account** to create an account
- Click on **State Gifted** (Non-Broward)
- **Gifted** and then **Curriculum Development/Gifted**

Two new courses are in the final stages of development for the 2009 summer session. The courses are Education of Special Populations of Gifted Students and Theory and Development of Creativity for the Gifted. Both courses begin May 25, 2009 with registration deadlines of **May 8, 2009**. Please note that earlier communications listed Guidance and Counseling of Gifted Students and Creativity as the summer offerings, however, it was decided to delay Counseling to a later date.

The WOGI Advisory Work Group held its second meeting on January 15, 2009. The members are working to develop more examples of the “Looks Like/Sounds Like” originally designed by Jodi O’Meara for goals and objectives of the *Florida’s Frameworks for K-12 Gifted Learners*. They will be available at the website when completed.

**Save the date.....June 7 – 8, 2009.** The annual WOGI Institute will be held in St. Augustine at the Marriott World Golf Village. Plans are being made to make this year’s Institute another productive and meaningful opportunity for coordinators of gifted programs. Dr. Julia L. Roberts is tentatively scheduled as our main presenter. Check the website for upcoming information.

**Remember to visit the newly revised WOGI website at**  
[www.unfwogi.com](http://www.unfwogi.com)

In early February, Rep. Legg (R-Port Richey) filed a bill “relating to gifted and academically talented student education” in the Florida House of Representatives ([HB 835](#)). Sen. Wise (R-Jacksonville) filed a senate companion ([SB 1870](#)) on February 18. This is the same bill filed by Rep. Legg last year that saw no action (it was never even heard in committee). According to Terry Wilson, Director of the Florida Gifted Network, Legg filed the bill as a starting point expecting it to be amended if ever heard.

The bill would require several things including:

- Extensive reporting requirements for districts regarding details of gifted student placement and the kinds of services they are receiving.
- A requirement to give written notice to all parents regarding gifted eligibility requirements and how to request evaluation.
- Makes mandatory district policies on acceleration and annual reports of acceleration to DOE.
- Requires that state-approved teacher education programs include information about gifted identification and differentiation.
- Mandates that districts report the amount expended on the education of students included in the ESE guaranteed allocation including the amount expended on gifted education K-12.
- Sets up a “Gifted and Academically Talented Student Task Force” to make recommendations regarding the gifted rule, “eligibility criteria for academically talented student classification,” annual screening procedures for these two categories, and model programs.

There is little in this bill to recommend and is largely a reaction to the results of the OPPAGA study completed two years ago. The reporting requirements would be very expensive and labor-intensive for districts to implement as they would require reporting of data elements that some districts do not even have (e.g., number of regular plan vs. Plan B students placed as gifted).

I believe that there is merit in the sections having to do with teacher education and with a requirement that each district have a provision for grade skipping acceleration in its Student Progression Plan.

The task force proposed in the bill anticipates setting up another category of ESE service, “Academically Talented.” It is this writer’s opinion that advocacy of this category could spell the end of gifted education in Florida as we have long known it. There are already adequate provisions for “academically talented” students in the state in the form of advanced academic programs such as AP or IB programs at the second level, and these programs already receive special state funding.

Considering the almost impossibly difficult budget times, it is doubtful that the legislature will pass any legislation that would cost money (as would this would have a price tag to the districts and for the state paying for task force expenses).

At this point, the budget should be viewed by FLAG members as the priority. All programs, including some gifted services, are targets of budget cuts across the state. Unless federal education stimulus dollars reach Florida, districts may be facing even deeper cuts after the regular session of the legislature closes in May.

FLAG members are strongly urged to contact [your Florida House and Florida Senate members](#)\* [immediately](#) with the

following message: Avoid balancing the budget shortfall on exceptional education students Do not cut funding to the ESE guaranteed allocation disproportionately to the Basic Student Allocation cuts. In addition, urge them to develop some durable and reliable revenue streams (e.g., eliminating numerous exemptions for sales taxes, increasing tax on cigarettes) rather than relying on tourist revenue to fund education.

Place a [phone call](#) to the local district offices of your representative and senator and leave the message for the legislator. If you know your legislator or their legislative assistant, then make the call to their Tallahassee office. Or drop in to their local office with your message. If you absolutely do not have the time to call or if you call and get a continuous busy signal, go ahead and send an email. However, [a phone call is much more effective than an email.](#)

\*To [find your members](#); enter your Zip+4 at the bottom of column on the left. Access [contact information for Representatives](#) and [Senate contact information](#) through these links.

**“FLAG members are strongly urged to contact [your Florida House and Florida Senate members immediately ...”](#)**





“It seemed obvious they were pleased that this dialogue with the students took place...”

## Awards

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 the Nicholas Green Distinguished Student Award.

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

Contact: **Anne S. Faivus**  
Email: [faivus@palmbeach.k12.fl.us](mailto:faivus@palmbeach.k12.fl.us)

## Special Populations

Contact: **Jo Glover**  
Email: [jo523@bellsouth.net](mailto:jo523@bellsouth.net)

Presentation at the 2008  
NAGC  
Annual Convention  
Having Our Say:  
A Memorable Morning

*Having Our Say: A Memorable Morning*, was the title of a presentation given at the 2008 National Association For Gifted Children Convention in Tampa, Florida by **Lois Lee** and **Jo Glover**. This session featured 15 upper elementary and secondary gifted students from Hillsborough County Public Schools in Tampa, Florida. The students responded to interview questions and engaged in dialogue covering key concepts of giftedness, talent, image management, the labeling dilemma, a need for friendship, cultural alienation, peer pressure, and fear of the future. Many in the audience lingered after the presentation to converse with us and the students. It seemed obvious they were pleased that this dialogue with the students took place.

We want to give a special thanks to **Deborah Barron**, Magnet Specialist from Tampa, Florida Public Schools and **Dr. Lauri Kirsch**, President of Florida Association of the Gifted, for their assistance. This presentation would not have been possible without their help.

National Black Child  
Development Institute  
39<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference (NBCDI)

The National Black Child Development Institute Annual Conference (NBCDI) will be held at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta in Atlanta, Florida on October 24-27, 2009. The conference theme is *Cultivating Genius...Imagine the Possibilities*. This premier professional development training conference is designed for early childhood, elementary and middle school educators and administrators, social workers, health practitioners, researchers, and parents. The sessions will cover skills and strategies to help improve outcomes for children, especially low-income, immigrant and ethnic minorities.

Website: [www.nbcdi.org](http://www.nbcdi.org)  
Ph: 800-556-2234 or 202-833-2220

Minority Student Achievement  
Network (MSAN)

You have been provided with updates on MSAN at various times and you may recall that it is a coalition of 25 multiracial urban-suburban school districts across the United States. The network's mission is to discover, develop and implement the means to ensure high academic achievement for students of color specifically African American and Latino students.

A new dimension has been added to MSAN, in the appointment of **Joshua Aronson** to the team. Joshua Aronson, Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology, internationally recognized for his research on “stereotype threat” and minority student achievement, has been appointed to serve on the National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council's prestigious Strategic Education Research Plan (SERP) Committee. The committee is charged with designing and implementing a 15-year initiative to strengthen K-12 education in the United States. Aronson will be working with SERP's Minority Students Achievement Network, which examines ways of boosting the engagement and performance of disadvantaged students and narrowing the achievement gap.

For more information about MSAN or if your district might be interested in joining the Network, contact the Executive Director, **Dr. Madeline Hafner** at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, University of Wisconsin-Madison, at [mhafner@wisc.edu](mailto:mhafner@wisc.edu) or 608-262-1665

# FLAG Special Election

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

A special election will be held to fill the position of President-Elect on the Florida Association for Gifted (FLAG) executive board. The commitment will entail two and one-half years as President-Elect followed by two years as President and two additional years as Past President. Since the position is a long-term promise to the gifted learners of Florida, FLAG will be seeking an experienced professional or parent who is in good standing as a member of FLAG.

Included in the nomination should be the following items:

- Name of the person making the nomination. (Self-nomination is permitted.)
- Nominee's name
- Nominee's address
- Nominee's contact information
- Nominee's stated interest in the position.
- Nominee's experience with gifted learners and their education.
- A short biography that will be made available to voters with the ballot. A small black and white photograph (2x3) may be included, if desired.

To make a nomination, the individual should be aware of the nomination and agree to serve in the position. Nominations may be sent to Suzanne Rawlins, Past President, at [srawlins@volusia.k12.fl.us](mailto:srawlins@volusia.k12.fl.us) or mailed to Suzanne Rawlins, Gifted Program Administrator, 200 N. Clara Avenue, Brewster Center, DeLand, Florida 32720. Deadline for submission is **March 30, 2009**.

Opportunities to serve the gifted learners of Florida are cherished moments. We hope that all those of interest will not hesitate to step forward at this time.

*“Opportunities to serve the gifted learners of Florida are cherished moments. We hope that all those of interest will not hesitate to step forward at this time.”*



# Regional Reports

## Region I: Northwest

Region Coordinator: **Willis Henderson**  
whenderson@escambia.k12.fl.us

Bay, Escambia, Holmes, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Walton & Washington Counties

Region I gifted representatives participated in the first two Response to Interventions (Rtl) workshops conducted by the Florida Department of Education. The Rtl model is a multi-tiered approach to provide high quality instruction and intervention matched to student needs (FDOE, 2008). With this mandate, gifted students who need more than the

basic curriculum, underachieving gifted, and the highly gifted will have an opportunity for progress. Districts have been encouraged to include gifted representatives in their Rtl leadership teams.

The January 30, 2009 Region I hosted the WOGI Regional Gifted Endorsement Course Session. Facilitator **Jodi O'Meara** listen to representatives

from several Panhandle districts, University of West Florida faculty, gifted endorsement instructors, and classroom teachers. Each of the modules was discussed as well the National Association for Gifted Children Standards. Positive input was generated from all participants.

## Region 2: North Central

Region Coordinator: **Susan Barnes**  
barness@mail.leon.k12.fl.us

Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Hamilton, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Suwanee, Taylor & Wakulla Counties

Region II in co-sponsorship with Leon County Schools Exceptional Student Education Department and the Academic Resource Center PTO held a highly successful Annual Symposium on Gifted Education for Parents and Teachers on Saturday, January 24th in Tallahassee. Seventy-seven parents and seven teachers from four Region II school districts attended, and event evaluations completed by participants were uniformly glowing.

The meeting began with a keynote address by **Dr. Christine**

**Weber**, "Taking Steps to Meet the Needs of Parents of Gifted Students in Florida," in which she discussed WOGI initiatives including the results of parent workshops and the gifted frameworks. Dr. Weber also presented a two-hour workshop for teachers, "Designing Effective Rubrics for Classroom Use with Gifted Students." There were several other sessions from which parents could also choose.

Budget cuts may be negatively affecting the delivery of elementary gifted services in the future in Leon County Schools. The superintendent is

considering recommending the closure of the Academic Resource Center, the district's bus-in gifted enrichment center which has been in existence since 1972. At the symposium, Ward Spisso, Director of Exceptional Student Education for Leon County Schools, reported what he knew about possible closing plans and answered question from parents. ARC Parents are currently organizing to give information and feedback to the superintendent and board members to prevent the closure of the ARC.

## Region 3: Northeast

Region Coordinator: **Dovie Bass**  
bassd@atlantic.net

Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Citrus, Clay, Columbia, Dixie, Duval, Gilchrist, Levy, Marion, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns & Union Counties

Region III met in Gainesville on December 5, 2008. District representatives discussed the need for providing parents with more informational resources. Although regional parent meetings have been well attended, the meetings have not been successful in reaching many parents who live distances away from the meeting sites. A collaborative plan was initiated to develop an internet based presentation that provides

parents with resources on a variety of topics that is supplemented by hard copy materials and local information. The intent is to create a basic presentation that can be the basis for parent meetings in the individual districts. When possible, district representatives will assist with presentations in neighboring districts.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2009 at Kimball Wiles Elementary School in Gainesville at 10:00 a.m.

Please contact **Dovie Bass** at [bassd@atlantic.net](mailto:bassd@atlantic.net) for more information and meeting dates.

## Region 4: East Central

Region Coordinator: **Martha Kesler**  
martha.kesler@ocps.net

**Brevard, Flagler, Indian River, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter & Volusia Counties**

Members of the Regional IV team met in December and February to discuss upcoming events and other issues of shared interest. Included in the discussions were plans for offering endorsement courses, new DOE rules affecting Gifted Education, results from continuing efforts to reduce disproportionality and plans for advocacy for Gifted students.

There is a continuing web of

support across the region for gifted coordinators in the districts. Especially worthy of note are some expected changes to services and awareness of gifted issues in Osceola County, which expects to see a notable increase in identified gifted students for the 2009-10 school year.

Other upcoming events include the Future Problem Solving Program State Competition, to be held March 27 – April

1 in Cape Canaveral (Brevard County) and the Odyssey of the Mind State Tournament at University of Central Florida (Orange County) April 4. Regional trainings for coaches of teams for both of these competitions have been occurring throughout the year.

Orlando will also play host to the Project CREATE Expo during Engineering Week (February 16 – 20) Project CREATE (Creative Response

## Region 5: West Central

Region Coordinator: **Joe Musselman**  
jmusselm@pasco.k12.fl.us

**DeSoto, Hardee, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk & Sarasota Counties**

Region V last met on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Hillsborough County continues its school wide

Reading enrichment model for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. Hillsborough is also continuing to implement the Renzulli Learning systems and is currently available in all of their Title I schools. They are also pursuing participation in the NRC student on reading and teachers of gifted.

Pasco County has continued

to increase its elementary level gifted inclusion model by 6 additional schools this school year. Pasco is also evaluating how its current reading series is impacting the learning gains of its elementary gifted. They are also in the process of developing on-line endorsement courses.

Pinellas has been focusing on the social/emotional needs of their gifted students. It is also pursuing a middle school, which will serve gifted students full time. It is also participating in the NRC

study on reading and math.

Polk County had an evaluation conducted by Dr. Mathews and continues to work with the Gifted Frameworks. Polk is also in the process of redesigning its curriculum maps to address the needs of its gifted students.

## Region 6: Southwest

Region Coordinator: **Cathy Cochran**  
CathyCo@leeschools.net

**Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Highlands & Lee Counties**

Lee County in Region 6 hosted the WOGI Training for the gifted endorsement instructors on 12/10/08.

It was an outstanding session with opportunity for discussion and helpful leadership from **Jodi O'Meara**. Many commented that we had never met as a

group and the networking was most beneficial.

Region 6 FLAG Coordinators Meeting was scheduled for 1/16/09, but postponed until 2/6/09 in Lee County after discussion at the WOGI Regional.

Region 6 FLAG Coordinators met briefly together during the WOGI Regional in Manatee County on 1/12/09.

## Region 7: Southeast

Region Coordinator: **Dr. Lissette T. Camps**  
LCamps@dadeschools.net

**Broward, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee, Palm Beach & St. Lucie Counties**

On February 6th, Miami-Dade County Public Schools hosted a workshop entitled *Curriculum Frameworks and Units for Gifted*. Teachers of the gifted attending had the opportunity to network and plan with teachers implementing gifted programs district-wide. Session activities

focused on units of study which utilize the gifted differentiation strategies of acceleration, enrichment, compacting, and project-based learning.

Finally, teachers had an opportunity to learn more about the State-adopted curriculum frameworks for gifted students. This document, *Florida's Frameworks for K-12 Gifted*

*Learners*, is the product of the Working on Gifted Issues (WOGI) grant, funded by the State of Florida, Department of Education. It provides a framework for developing and designing differentiated learning experiences for gifted students. Approximately 150 teachers participated.

# Teachers of the Gifted

Seeking Florida's Gifted Endorsement?

Try these training links...

Dr. Gillian Eriksson

<http://education.ucf.edu/gifted/>

Dr. Elizabeth Shaunessy

<http://www.outreach.usf.edu/gradcerts/certinfo.asp?ccode=XGF>

Dr. Laura Tissington

<http://www.giftedep.com/index.html>

Dr. Christine Weber

<http://www.unfwogi.com/index.html>

Calling all gifted education teachers:  
Share your expertise!

SENG Summit 2009  
July 17th-19th  
Orlando Airport Marriott

Special FLAG strand proposals  
now being accepted!

See pages 10-11 for complete details!



Being the parent of a gifted child comes with many responsibilities; one of which is that of *advocate*. Finding others who share the daily trials and tribulations that you undoubtedly traverse is a both a relief and means of support. To be effective, an organization must have a clear vision and mission. Members must be credible and willing to assist the community at large (Berger). Effective groups require parents to be knowledgeable, organized, and have defined goals and objectives. An understanding of the organization and structure of their local school system should be realized and used in all pre-planning stages. Parent advocates should become partners with their schools, and the organization should introduce itself as helpers to its local school board.

The organization must be willing to work within existing local and state systems, and most importantly be committed, patient, and persistent. Keeping abreast of all national, state, and local trends in gifted education is an ongoing effort. Communicating with the membership about these trends is a great way to keep members active and involved. Finally, learning how to work cooperatively with gifted consultants, legislators, state education groups, and other parent groups locally and nationally is a sign of a mature advocacy organization.

Parent advocates for gifted students must learn to work **with** the bureaucracy: remember that it is bigger than you are! Become a partner and work to make change from within!

## Parent Groups for the Gifted in Florida

### STATE-WIDE ORGANIZATIONS:

#### **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](mailto:twilson@floridagiftednet.org)

### COUNTY/LOCAL GROUPS:

#### **Broward County Gifted Advisory**

Website: <http://gifted.browardeducation.com/>

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

Chair: Nagarajan Kannan [browardcountygac@yahoo.com](mailto:browardcountygac@yahoo.com)

#### **Citrus Organization for the Gifted**

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

Email: [citrusgifted@yahoo.com](mailto:citrusgifted@yahoo.com)

#### **Flagler Gifted Support Network**

Website: <http://www.flagler.k12.fl.us/fgsn/FGSN/Welcome.html>

Co-chairs: Jane Sbordone [jane.sbordone@gmail.com](mailto:jane.sbordone@gmail.com) & Danielle Scarcella [Dscarcelone@yahoo.com](mailto:Dscarcelone@yahoo.com)

#### **GACH, Inc.: Gifted Advocacy Council of Hillsborough-Tampa**

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

President: Stephanie Georgiades [president@GACHFlorida.org](mailto:president@GACHFlorida.org)

#### **Highlands Advanced Academics Parent Network HAAPN**

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

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

#### **PAGES of Hernando County: Partners Allied for Gifted Education and Support**

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

President: Cindy Gustafson [Cindy@PAGEsofHernando.org](mailto:Cindy@PAGEsofHernando.org)

#### **SEPTA- Seminole County Exceptional Education PTA**

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

Contact: Kathy Accurso [kaccurso@cfl.rr.com](mailto:kaccurso@cfl.rr.com)



# Joint Opportunity: SENG Summit '09 with FLAG Strand!

Dear FLAG Friends—

I am honored to return to the FLAG board after a couple of years away. I am also excited, as the FLAG Training and Supervision Chair, to announce the collaboration of FLAG and Supporting the Needs of the Gifted (SENG) for a joint summit. Set in Orlando, Florida, on July 17-19, 2009 at the Orlando Airport Marriott, *SENG Summit: Mission Possible!* promises an outstanding experience for educators, parents and families, and mental health professionals.

I am especially grateful to FLAG for welcoming the SENG family to Florida and sharing in the joint effort of serving educators and families who are committed to serving gifted children. FLAG will have meeting space for board meetings and sessions tailored for FLAG members, and is an opportunity for teachers to receive training in the social-emotional needs of the gifted from researchers, mental-health professionals, parents, and educators from Florida and beyond. This family-friendly event is enhanced by a children's program taught by trained teachers of the gifted, a new teen volunteer program, and a behind-the-scenes experience at Disney.

As Conference Chair and board member of both FLAG and SENG, I am especially proud to tell colleagues, educators and parents in Florida and around the nation that these two organizations have walked the talk (really—we are living this Mission Possible!): we've found a way to capitalize on our common goals of serving our constituents.

Look for details about conference registration and nationally-recognized keynotes with expertise in culturally diverse gifted, intensities, and unique gifts and talents in upcoming issues of *Banner* and on the SENG website ([www.senggifted.org](http://www.senggifted.org)).

Onward and Upward toward SENG Summit: Mission Possible!



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USF Gifted Education Website:  
<http://www.coedu.usf.edu/main/departments/sped/gifteded/GiftedMain.html>

## **Guest Room Reservations**

A discounted room rate of \$99 per night plus tax for SENG guests is guaranteed for reservations made on or before June 15. (For those guests who plan to extend their trip, this rate will be honored based on room availability.) Hotel check in time is 3 PM and check out time is noon. Reservations can be made by phone at 800-380-6751 or 407-851-9000.

**Orlando Airport Marriott**  
7499 Augusta National Drive  
Orlando, FL 32822 US  
Phone: 1 407 851 9000  
Toll-free: 1 800 380 6751

**A wonderful opportunity for your entire family to  
enjoy summertime Orlando!**

**Consider it a ... gifted vacation!**





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.

FLAG's newsletter, *The Banner*, is published quarterly for its members and other interested parties. Articles and other information considered for submission should be emailed to Dr. Shari Valencic, FLAG Board Publications Chair, at sharivu@comcast.net. The next issue will be published in June 2009. The deadline for this issue will be May 15, 2009.

**Visit FLAG's website at**  
<http://www.flgifted.org>

## Membership Information

Revised 2/08

### Membership Application

#### Florida Association for the Gifted

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Online access to member newsletters</li> <li>❖ Information clearinghouse</li> <li>❖ Year round advocacy efforts</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Annual conference</li> <li>❖ Mini-grants for teachers</li> <li>❖ Scholarships for gifted students</li> </ul> |
|---|---|



**For Association Use Only**

Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name	
Email	
Required Address	
City	State
County	Zip Code
Home Phone	Work Phone
Please check all that apply:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired Educator
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator	<input type="checkbox"/> NAGC Member
	<input type="checkbox"/> CEC Member

**New Member**                       **Renewal**

Membership Dues (please check where appropriate):

<input type="checkbox"/> 1 year -- \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Retired* -- \$25
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 years -- \$55	<input type="checkbox"/> Institutional (up to 30) -- \$650
<input type="checkbox"/> 3 years -- \$80	

\*Please send documentation.

Please consider a contribution to the **Scobee Scholarship** fund (awarded to students each year for excellence in the fields of math and science). Contribution Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

**How did you learn about FLAG?**  
Please let us know if someone referred you; we would like to thank them!

Please make checks payable to:

FLAG  
19711 NW 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Pembroke Pines, FL 33029