

Flashback

1. NWREL CEO HONORED BY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

At the November board meeting, Carol Thomas received a plaque honoring her year of service as chair of the board of directors of the National Education Knowledge Industry Association (NEKIA). The plaque was presented by Jim Kohlmoos, NEKIA president and chief executive officer.

Founded in 1997 as a nonprofit, nonpartisan trade association, NEKIA is a dynamic community of highly successful education organizations and agencies whose common cause is to actively promote and advocate for the expanded use of knowledge-based solutions in K–12 education. According to Kohlmoos, “The association is constantly looking for new and better ways to support high-quality education research, dissemination, technical assistance, and evaluation at the federal, regional, state, tribal, and local levels.”

Thomas has been elected to serve as NEKIA board chair for a second term.

2. ANOTHER SCHOOL IN PARADISE LEARNS SLC BEST PRACTICES

The SLC leadership team from Kalaheo High School on Oahu traveled to NWREL in December to learn the basics of transforming their high school into small learning communities (SLCs). The team began the SLC process by assessing current conditions, studying best practices, and developing implementation and professional learning plans. The next step for this team will be to create systemwide support for SLCs and build consensus around a five-year plan.

3. USE OF NWREL'S WRITING MODEL GROWS

Participants from eight states plus Canada and Venezuela attended December's 6+1 Trait® Writing Institute to learn how to implement trait-based instruction and evaluate student writing across seven dimensions of performance—ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentation. The institute was divided by grade ranges—the first couple of days introduced the writing



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model to teachers of grades 4–12, followed by two days dedicated to teachers of grades K–3. Teachers of grades 4–12 who attended the entire four-day institute deepened their understanding of the model by developing curriculum maps and writing lesson plans based on the traits.

4. NWREL “PRESENT” AT EVALUATION 2006 CONFERENCE

The American Evaluation Association held its annual conference in Portland in November, drawing more than 2,200 evaluators from around the globe. NWREL staff presented several sessions including:

- What’s the Score: Disentangling Qualitative Data by Building Scoring Rubrics
- Tacking Toward High-Quality Evaluation: Lessons Learned From the Title IIB Mathematics and Science Partnerships in the Northwest
- Better Evaluation Designs for Educational Technology Projects
- Challenges and Innovations in the Evaluation of Reading First

NWREL presenters were (from left to right) Ann Davis, Elizabeth Autio, Phyllis Ault, Edith Gummer, Michael Coe, Angela Roccograndi, Kari Nelsestuen, and Matt Lewis. ■