

links

SEDL Begins Move to Paperless Office

After months of planning and development in accordance with its strategic plan, SEDL has introduced a new internal information system known as the SEDL Information Management System (SIMS). More than a database, SIMS was designed to do the following:

- Manage important business processes
- Inform management decisions and work-group planning
- Inform institutional development and strategic planning
- Increase efficiency, eliminate redundancy, and bridge departments

Forty different company processes will be incorporated into SIMS. Implementing these processes will reduce the possibility for errors and increase efficiency. For example, in the past, SEDL employees had to print out and fill in paper time sheets each month. These time sheets had to be delivered to the appropriate budget authority to be signed and then delivered to the Office of Fiscal and Technical Services (OFTS), where the information would be rekeyed into the accounting system. If a staff member needed to revise a time sheet, the steps were repeated. This process resulted in unneces-



Systems trainer Eric Waters shows information associate Nancy Reynolds how to use SEDL's new electronic time sheets.

sary errors and wasted employee time. With the new electronic time sheets, employees log in to SIMS and fill out their time sheets on their computers. After the time sheet has been completed, an e-mail is sent to the employee's supervisor or budget authority, notifying him or her that the form is ready to be approved. Once all

continued on page 2

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Arkansas

Ms. Nancy C. Eddy, Little Rock
Dr. Alvin Futrell, Arkadelphia
Dr. T. Kenneth James, Little Rock
Dr. Veda McClain, Jonesboro

Louisiana

Dr. Brenda Garibaldi Hatfield,
New Orleans
Ms. Paula M. Patrick, Many
Mr. Cecil J. Picard, Baton Rouge
Dr. Anthony Recasner,
New Orleans

New Mexico

Ms. Mary A. Abeita, Isleta Pueblo
Mr. Leonel Briseño, Las Cruces
Sen. Mary Jane Garcia, Doña Ana
Dr. Veronica Garcia, Santa Fe

Oklahoma

Ms. Sandy Garrett, Oklahoma City
Dr. Gloria Griffin, Oklahoma City
Dr. Jo Arnold Pettigrew, McLoud
Dr. Serafin Ramon, Goodwell

Texas

Ms. Imelda C. Guerra, Alice
Dr. Rosa Maria Vida, Laredo



Paperless Office, continued

required approvals are received, OFTS is then notified that the form is complete. Time is saved, the duplication of effort in reentering information is eliminated, and no one had to leave his or her office. Many similar increases in efficiency will be seen as other business processes are incorporated into SIMS.

Considering that the planning for SIMS only began in January of this year, much progress has been made. Full implementation is months away, but already staff are benefiting from this new information tool.

"The first group officially began using the new time sheet system in April, and we've added a new group for each subsequent pay period since then," said Eric Waters, SEDL

systems trainer and designer of SIMS.

"According to our time sheet implementation timeline, the last Austin group will be added on September 15. In October we'll introduce electronic leave requests and get everyone on that system fairly quickly since it is very similar to time sheets. SEDL staffers have been patient with this transition and a great team to work with."

Future plans include implementing electronic versions of travel and purchase requests and authorizations. Thus far, 18 of these new electronic processes are in use or ready to be launched, 9 are in progress or nearing completion, and 13 are planned or under development. ■

SEDL Fellows Expand Knowledge on Research Related to Student Achievement

While many teachers used their summers to take a much-needed vacation, six educators from SEDL's region spent their time off participating in SEDL's ongoing research, development, and dissemination activities during the 2004 Education Leaders Fellowship Program.

Sally Bennett, an assistant superintendent and director of instruction in Osceola, Arkansas; Patricia Candler, an elementary supervisor in Madison Parish, Louisiana; Detra Griffin, a secondary supervisor also in Madison Parish, Louisiana; Judy Casaus, an elementary principal in Bernanillo, New Mexico; James Gray, a secondary principal in Iberia Parish, Louisiana; and Sandra Horn, a Title I special education teacher in Grady, Arkansas, spent 4 weeks working with SEDL staff in Austin. They were selected from SEDL's Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) intensive sites. REL staff travel to these sites throughout the school year to work with educators, including the fellows, to identify and address the issues in their schools and districts that affect student achievement in reading or mathematics.

The fellowship program allows educators an opportunity to become more fluent in basic research skills and more knowledgeable about research findings related to student achievement. The focus of the fellows' work included identifying and investigating best practices to improve student achievement in readings and mathematics, strengthening leadership to support student achievement, and involving families and communities to support student achievement. The fellows contributed to SEDL's development of research-based information, materials, guides, and articles. In return, they brought their knowledge of classrooms, schools, and districts to inform and improve SEDL's work.

During their fellowship, fellows were able to focus on other sites' problems as well as their own and discover strategies and resources to use once they returned home. Additional opportunities will be available during the coming school year for fellows to continue their participation in SEDL's research community, such as participating in SEDL workshops and conferences and helping develop and review new materials.

Education faculty early in their career or graduate students are eligible for the fellowship program. Fellows receive stipends to pay for travel, lodging, and other expenses during their stay in Austin. Fellowships are supported with funds that SEDL receives as part of its contract with the U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences. ■

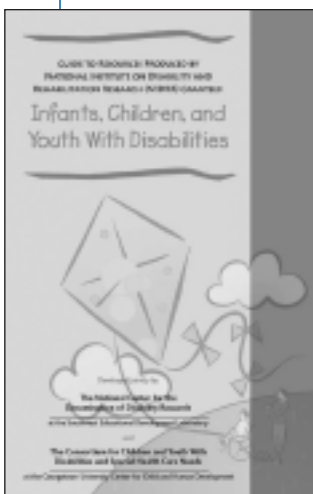
products

New Products List Resources, Provide Guidance

SEDL provides resources and services for policy-makers and practitioners. Many resources are free and available from SEDL's online catalog at www.sedl.org/pubs/ or by calling the SEDL publications department at 800-476-6861. SEDL accepts credit cards for online purchases and conference registrations.

NCDDR Releases Two New Products

SEDL's National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR) has released two new products for researchers and other interested parties. The *Guide to Resources Produced by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) Grantees: Infants, Children, and Youth With Disabilities*



contains 172 entries on resource materials related to infants, children, and youth with disabilities. The *Guide* was created in collaboration with the Consortium for Children and Youth with Disabilities and Special Health Care Needs at the Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development.

It is available online at <http://www.ncddr.org/du/products/>.

NCDDR has also published issue 9.1 of *The Research Exchange* newsletter. This issue presents findings from the NCDDR 2004 Survey. Since 1996, the NCDDR has carried out surveys with NIDRR grantees, consumers with disabilities, and other stakeholders to learn how people with disabilities prefer to receive information that is useful to them and how those with information to share make

such information available. The newsletter is available online at <http://www.ncddr.org/du/researchexchange/v09n01/>.

SCRTEC Creates Poster on Purchasing Computer Equipment

SEDL's SouthCentral Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SCRTEC) has created the "Adventures With Vendors" poster for educators. The poster, which measures 18 x 24 inches, provides suggested questions to consider and actions to take before purchasing computer hardware and software. Questions are categorized in seven areas: essential, infrastructure, instructional, curriculum, product specifications, technical support, and professional development. The colorful survival theme of the poster will add visual interest to teacher work areas, classrooms, libraries, or administrative offices.



National Center Updates Online Bibliography

SEDL's National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools has updated *The Connection Collection*, its online annotated bibliography, adding 64 new entries in 2004. It now includes 335 entries on current (since 1995) research, resources, and other publications about home, family, and community connections with schools. *The Connection Collection* is available at <http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources>. ■

SEDL Partners in Innovative Technology Program for Teachers

The U.S. Department of Education's Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology (PT3) grant program addresses a growing challenge in modern education: nearly all elementary and secondary schools are now connected to the Internet, but most teachers still feel uncomfortable using technology in their teaching. Since 1999, PT3 has awarded over 400 grants to education consortia to help address this challenge.

SEDL has partnered with St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, in their PT3 grant program entitled Building Teams and Tools for Teaching (BT3). In 2001, St. Edward's received a \$779,000 grant as part of the PT3 program to establish this innovative program designed to prepare preservice teachers to use technology in the classroom. Specifically, the BT3 program was established to do the following:

- Train preservice teachers, K–12 teachers, and university faculty to effectively incorporate technology into their teaching
- Promote collaboration between schools and agencies and between teachers and students
- Develop, implement, and evaluate an effective model of teacher preparation that infuses technology and curriculum
- Create a benchmarking and evaluation tool that teacher preparation programs can use to evaluate their effectiveness



The Active Learning with Technology portfolio includes 18 modules, 10 videos, 6 newsletters, a CD-ROM version, and additional print and Web resources.

SEDL has supported the project since July 2001 by providing training and consultation services. Specifically, SEDL's *Active Learning with Technology* portfolio has provided the foundation of the program. The research-based portfolio was designed to train educators on how to use technology as a resource in their teaching. Although it does provide insight into how to use various software and hardware tools, the portfolio offers much more by providing educators with a means of networking with others, learning from one another, and reenergizing educators for the purpose of raising student achievement through an innovative, hands-on program designed to accommodate all students' needs.

"Participants, trainers, and administrators have expressed great enthusiasm over using the *Active Learning with Technology* curriculum," said Allison

McKissack, PT3 grant director at St. Edward's.

The BT3 program includes three universities, 59 K–12 public and private schools, four independent school districts, and two nonprofit organizations in the Austin, San Antonio, Houston, and Dallas areas. Using the *Active Learning with Technology* portfolio, preservice teachers and inservice teachers work in teams to complete a series of real-life, problem-solving modules that can be crafted for use in their own classrooms. Additionally, participants create technology-infused lesson plans, which are based on Texas state teaching standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). University faculty members support participants with the most up-to-date, research-based information available in content and pedagogy. Participants benefit from networking with other educators from across the K–16 spectrum by completing the modules in the *Active Learning with Technology* portfolio, learning new teaching strategies, participating in mentor-mentee training, and creating technology-infused lessons collaboratively.

"Many times we go into a school and provide training and support for a year or two, and then when we go, the effort goes away. With this initiative, not only is the effort being sustained, but it has become part of St. Edward's School of Education," says SEDL program associate Marilyn Heath. "We're glad to have been a part of it."

For more information on the BT3 program, go to <http://www.stedwards.edu/pt3/>. ■

SEDL *in the field*

“SEDL in the Field” describes the goals of major SEDL projects and programs. This section features SEDL work with teachers, administrators, policymakers, researchers, and community members to improve practice. The following events occurred during May–June 2004.

Disability Research to Practice (DRP)

SEDL’s DRP provides information and assistance on innovations and policies to improve special education and rehabilitation services. DRP encompasses the National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR), the Disability Law Resource Project (DLRP), and the Research Utilization Support and Help (RUSH) Project.

NCDDR

NCDDR works with more than 370 disability and rehabilitation research teams and product developers funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) to develop and demonstrate successful methods and strategies that link researchers and information users. Through these linkages, NCDDR audiences may find utility and relevance in research findings. NCDDR activities include research, demonstration, technical assistance, and dissemination and utilization.

- Program associate **Frank Martin** represented NCDDR and provided information about technical assistance at the State of Technology Conference on Mobile Wireless Technologies for Persons with Disabilities in *Atlanta*.
- Program manager **John Westbrook** gave a presentation on dissemination issues to staff at the Southeast Comprehensive Assistance Center (SECAC) in *Metairie, Louisiana*.
- **Westbrook** participated in a teleconference of the RRTC in Neuromuscular Diseases (RRTC/NMD) Advisory Committee. The RRTC/NMD is housed at the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at

the University of California, Davis, School of Medicine.

- **Westbrook** and program associate **Joann Starks** participated in teleconferences with the executive committee of the National Association of Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (NARRTC). Westbrook was elected vice president of NARRTC in April, and Starks is serving a second term as membership chair.

DLRP

In October 2001, SEDL received funding from the Institute for Rehabilitation & Research (TIRR) in Houston to partner with DLRP, which serves Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. SEDL’s DLRP work is part of TIRR’s five-year grant to provide technical assistance, training, and information dissemination on the legal obligations of educational entities; to make available information technology to students with disabilities; and to conduct self-evaluations on information technology accessibility to promote best practices.

- Communications assistant **Stephanie Weaver** participated in teleconferences with staff at Hays CISD and Magnolia ISD to discuss the use of assistive technology and accessible information technology for students with special needs. She also participated in a teleconference with the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) action team, led by Mike Abbiatti of the Louisiana Board of Regents, to identify resources for shaping Louisiana’s UDL model.
- **Weaver** accompanied former NIDRR fellow Gene Rodgers to a meeting with Texas School Performance Review staff to determine the degree to which technology is being taken into account in the review of schools and districts.

RUSH

Funded by NIDRR for 5 years in April 2003, the RUSH project works to identify, describe,

and encourage the use of effective research utilization strategies. It focuses on disability research findings in health, technology access, independent living, and community integration.

- **Westbrook**, communications assistant **Mark Linder**, and communications specialist **Sean Claes** convened the RUSH project's National Research Utilization Review Panel members via teleconferences to discuss the RUSH stipend application process. NIDRR-supported researchers are expected to use RUSH stipends to engage in planning related activities to achieve what might be new utilization outcomes.
- **Westbrook, Linder, Claes**, and information specialist **Lin Harris** provided technical assistance via teleconferences to the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Communication Enhancement at Duke University Medical Center to review and refine its project's dissemination and utilization plan.

Evaluation Services (ES)

As a SEDL corporate office, ES works with most of SEDL's major contracts as an internal evaluator to design and implement goals-based evaluation plans. This office also collects and manages performance indicator data and conducts a quality assurance process for those programs with such requirements. ES assists SEDL's internal programs in reaching their goals by working with program staff to monitor annual objectives and strategies for achieving their multiyear goals. All ES fieldwork for SEDL programs is included with each program's section in this newsletter.

ES also provides external evaluation services for a growing number of educational entities, such as universities, school districts, state agencies, and professional associations.

A+ Schools of Arkansas (A+)

ES evaluates the A+ Schools of Arkansas program, which is based on the idea that arts-integrated instruction leads to enhanced learning opportunities for all students because using the arts taps into multiple ways students learn. ES staff focus on understanding the factors and outcomes associated with high levels of implementation of this program.

- Program associate **Jeannine Turner** interviewed teachers and a principal at Alread Elementary School in *Clinton*.

Technology Applications Readiness Grants for Empowering Texas (TARGET)

TARGET grants serve high-needs students by enhancing education through technology as stipulated in No Child Left Behind and by implementing the recommendations in the Texas Long-Range Plan for Technology 1996–2010. ES staff evaluate TARGET grant work in various areas across the state.

- Program specialist **Cheryl Harris** attended the Education Service Center (ESC) Region One Technology Conference and interviewed teacher participants in the TARGET grant MaXtech project on *South Padre Island*.

Other ES Work

- Program assistant **Rachel Samsel** conducted focus groups for the Teaching American History project in *Weslaco, Texas*.
- Director **Sue Street** and program specialist **Todd Sherron** attended the launch of the Models of Implementation and Dissemination of Environmental Health and Science Across Subjects (MIDAS) project with the University of Texas's M.D. Anderson Center for Research on Environmental Disease (CRED), Bastrop ISD partners, and other community partners in *Smithville, Texas*.
- Program associate **Jack Lumbley** interviewed Standards and Assessment Management Tool (SAM) users and administered a survey to all teachers using SAM in two elementary schools in Socorro ISD in *El Paso, Texas*.
- **Lumbley** observed the culmination of a 3-day Alternative Learning With Technology (ALT) teacher training and administered an end-of-training/performance indicator survey to the 25 participating teachers in *New Braunfels, Texas*.

National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning

In September 2003, SEDL won a 3-year \$9.6 million contract from the U.S. Department of Education to strengthen the content, methods, and retention of the nation's afterschool programs. The National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning is a partnership of eight organizations that provide models, tools, and assistance to public, private, and community entities that help students and their families

learn new skills and discover new abilities after the school day has ended.

- Program associate **Deborah Donnelly** presented “Making the Transition From Enrichment to Academics” at the National Center for Community Education’s (NCCE’s) Reality of Afterschool regional workshop in *Kansas City, Missouri*.
- **Donnelly** hosted a mathematics content area team planning meeting at McREL in *Aurora, Colorado*.
- Program manager **Catherine Jordan** met with representatives from the Children’s Aid Society in *New York City* to visit their afterschool site and discuss possible future involvement.
- **Jordan** and **Donnelly** met with WGBH staff in *Boston* to discuss the Partnership’s Web-based toolkit curriculum project.
- **Jordan** and program associate **Jerry Elder** met with staff from the U.S. Department of Education in *Washington, D.C.*, to plan the content and presentations for the department’s two afterschool summer institutes (one held in July in Los Angeles and the other held in August in Washington, D.C.).

Regional Educational Laboratory (REL)

SEDL’s REL creates and promotes research-based knowledge to help low-performing schools and districts improve student achievement in reading and mathematics in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. Along with its partners, the Charles A. Dana Center of the University of Texas at Austin and American Indian Research and Development, Inc. (AIRD), in Norman, Oklahoma, the REL conducts applied research and development with intensive sites, examines resource allocation and other policy issues, and operates a national center that disseminates research and resources on school, family, and community connections.

REL Staff Announcements

SEDL’s REL welcomed program associate **Kathleen Murphy** and program specialist **Miguel Ramos** in August.

Prior to joining SEDL, **Murphy** was an assistant research professor at Baylor University’s Center for Community Research and Development, a visiting assistant professor in anthropology at the University of Notre



Kathleen Murphy joined SEDL’s REL staff as a program associate in August.

Dame, a postdoctoral fellow and social science research associate at the Center for Social Work Research at the University of Texas at Austin, and an IIE Fulbright Scholar at the Department of Socio-Urban Studies at the University of Guadalajara in Mexico. Her research has focused on families and poverty in Mexico and the U.S.–Mexico border region. Murphy holds a BA in history and literature from Harvard University, an MA in theology from the Graduate Theological Union, and a PhD in social anthropology from the University of Texas at Austin. At SEDL, Murphy will conduct qualitative research in REL intensive work sites, collecting and analyzing data for the development of reports, presentations, and publications.

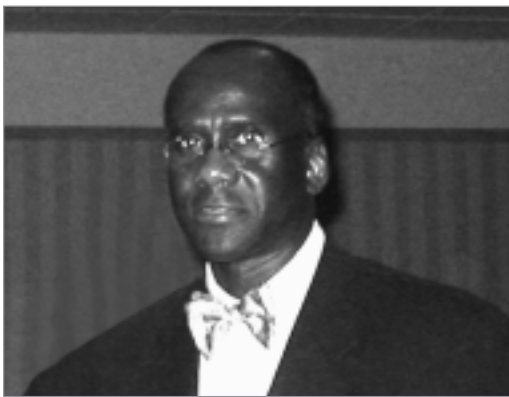
Ramos worked as a program evaluator for the Center for Child, Family, and Community Partnerships (CCFCP) housed in the Lynch School of Education at Boston College before coming to SEDL. He also worked as a university fellow with the National Board on Educational Testing and Public Policy (NBETPP) at Boston College, where he helped conduct a national study examining the



Miguel Ramos joined SEDL’s REL staff as a program associate in August.

impact of state-mandated testing on classroom teaching and learning. Before attending graduate school, he was a high school history teacher in Houston. Ramos received a PhD and MEd in educational research, measurement, and evaluation from Boston College. He also holds a BA in history and sociology from Rice University. In his new position, Ramos works with the Task 1.2 research team as part of the REL Task 1: Building High-Performing Learning Communities in the Region.

The REL said goodbye to program manager **David Rainey**, who left SEDL to focus on his run for the Arkansas House of Representatives. Prior to joining SEDL in June 1996, Rainey served 3 years as director of the Arkansas



David Rainey, former REL program manager, left SEDL to pursue a career in politics.

School for Mathematics and Sciences, a residential school for 300 of the best and brightest 11th- and 12th-grade students in Arkansas. He also worked for 13 years as a building administrator with Dumas Public Schools, 6 years as a junior high school principal, and 6 years as a high school principal. Rainey served as program manager for SEDL's Southeast Comprehensive Assistance Center (SECAC) from 1999 to 2000.

REL Intensive Site Work Arkansas

- Executive vice president and COO **Joan Buttram** and program associates **Stella Bell** and **Stacey Joyner** attended meetings of the administrative team and the district leadership team in *Grady*.
- Program associates **Ann Neeley** and **Sebastian Wren** met with the *Marked Tree* district leadership team (DLT) to plan for the coming school year.

- Dana Center program coordinators **Carl Juenke** and **Janice Bradley** met with the *Blytheville* district math committee and with Sandy Hughey, director of curriculum and instruction, to discuss plans for the final year of the project.
- Program associates **Deborah Reed** and **D'Ette Cowan** guided the *Osceola* DLT in implementing the Professional Teaching and Learning Cycle (PTLC) in all schools in the district. They also met with the West Elementary and Osceola High School Campus Leadership Teams to guide and monitor implementation of the PTLC at these schools. Cowan and Reed facilitated meetings with the superintendents and principals of all schools in the district to identify their roles in supporting implementation of the PTLC model.
- **Buttram** conducted interviews in *Grady* related to the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Program specialist **Frances Deviney** conducted interviews in *Marked Tree* related to the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Louisiana

- **Juenke** met with the *New Iberia* DLT to discuss the benchmark process for middle school mathematics and make plans for the final year of the project.
- Program associate **Ed Tobia** met with district staff in *Madison Parish* to finalize plans for continuing to build the district- and school-level support structures for the elementary reading program for the 2004–2005 school year. He also administered the SEDL Working Systemically survey to district and school staff.
- **Bell** and Dana Center program coordinator **Emma Trevino** met with the *Lafourche Parish* DLT to take action and monitor the PTLC in the classroom at Thibodeaux High School and Raceland Middle School and to monitor taking actions to gather results for modifying the action plan. They also met with district administrators to use and interpret data to narrow the achievement gap between subgroups in the respective schools in the parish.
- Scholar emerita **Shirley Hord** led a day-and-a-half session on professional learning

in the field

communities during an administrators' retreat in *Winfield Parish*.

- **Buttram** conducted interviews in *New Iberia* related to the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Program specialist **Stephanie Bond Huie** conducted interviews in *Monroe City* related to the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

New Mexico

- American Indian Research and Development (AIRD) vice president **Mary Ann Brittan** and program associate **Sebastian Wren** facilitated a meeting in *Newcomb* of the Newcomb High School Literacy Team. The purpose of the meeting was to organize the literacy team, establish roles for the team, and begin the process of collaboratively working to improve students' reading skills in grades 9–12.
- **Brittan** and **Wren** facilitated a meeting of the Central Consolidated Schools DLT in *Shiprock*. The meeting was held to establish standardized formats for district- and school-level reading assessment reports and district-wide standardization of the administration of the SRI reading assessment.
- **Reed** and program associate **Tara Leo Thompson** worked with administrators at *Hatch* Valley Schools to conduct district-wide professional development on vertically aligning vocabulary instruction and discuss plans for next year's work.
- **Neeley** and **Joyner** met with the principal and three new literacy coaches at *Bernalillo* Middle School to discuss their roles and duties and make plans for the upcoming school year. They also visited Algodones Elementary School in Bernalillo to plan for the coming school year.

Oklahoma

- **Cowan** and **Reed** facilitated meetings with the superintendent, central office staff, and principals in *Crooked Oak* to identify their roles in supporting implementation of the PTLC.
- **Brittan** met with the *Kinta* School Improvement Leadership Team to work collaboratively on the use of reading fluency instructional strategies, share learnings, and review the work and accomplishments for the year.

- Dana Center program coordinator **Ted Hull** led a meeting of the *Altus* DLT to discuss the accomplishments of Altus public schools, which included aligning the curriculum to state standards and benchmarks and developing a strong working relationship between the principals and central office. The next step of the DLT will be to include teachers and create collaborative structures at the campus level.
- **Reed** conducted professional development on adolescent literacy for the faculty of Western Oaks Middle School in *Putnam City*. She also modeled application of the PTLC for Putnam's DLT. **Bradley** facilitated the meeting and reviewed the district's action plan. Both Reed and Bradley met with the Reading Cadre at Putnam City West High School to discuss reading intervention plans for the next school year.
- Program associate **Jill Slack** met with the principal and lead reading teachers at Washington Elementary School in *Altus* to plan professional development for the coming school year.
- **Buttram** conducted interviews in *Putnam City* related to the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- **Huie** conducted interviews in *Kinta* related to the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- **Deviney** conducted interviews in the *Central Consolidated School District* related to the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Texas

- **Wren** continued to work on school improvement efforts in *Palestine*.
- **Wren** worked with *Round Rock* Independent School District as a reading assessment consultant for its Early Reading First initiative.
- Program associate **Kathleen Murphy** conducted interviews in *Palestine* related to the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

REL Policy Work

- Program specialist **Diane Pan** presented findings from the research study "Examination of Resource Allocation in Education: Connecting Spending to Student Performance" to approximately

30 district and state policymakers during the Oklahoma United Suburban Schools Association's (USSA's) Eighth Annual Education Legislative Review Conference in *Bethany, Oklahoma*.

National Center for Family and Community Connections With Schools

- Center staff hosted a discussion for six regional educational laboratories on its most recent synthesis, *Diversity: School, Family, & Community Connections*, at the National Center's quarterly videoconference in *Austin, Texas*. The discussion focused on the background of the studies, major findings, and recommendations to put the research findings to practical use.
- Information associate **Lacy Wood** and communications specialist **Víctor Rodríguez** presented "Diversity: School, Family, & Community Connections" at the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education Conference in *Washington, D.C.*
- **Rodríguez** wrote an article for the Texas Association of School Boards' (TASB's) Parent Learning Network newsletter, *The Interchange*. The article, entitled "SEDL's Research Publications on Parental Involvement Inform NCLB Guidelines," addresses how the U.S. Department of Education used SEDL's work in developing its guidelines on parental involvement.

21st Century Afterschool Regional Training Initiative

- Program associate **Marilyn Heath** conducted a 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) afterschool site visit to identify promising practices in mathematics in *Houston*.
- **Donnelly** conducted a 21st CCLC afterschool site visit to identify promising practices in reading in *Denver*.
- **Elder** conducted a 21st CCLC afterschool site visit to identify promising practices in mathematics in *Estherville, Iowa*.
- **Elder** conducted a 21st CCLC afterschool site visit to identify promising practices in reading in *San Antonio*.
- **Donnelly** and program associate **Joe Parker** conducted a 21st CCLC afterschool site visit to identify promising practices in reading in *Philadelphia*.

- **Elder** conducted NCCE's Level I training for new 21st CCLC grantees in *Austin, Texas*.

REL National Activities

- **Buttram** and **Wood** attended the U.S. Department of Education's Comprehensive School Reform Program meeting for state coordinators in *Washington, D.C.* Buttram made a presentation on regional laboratory services to support comprehensive school reform programs, and Wood met with state coordinators to discuss the national database.
- **Buttram** presented SEDL's Working Systemically model at the National Conference on the Principles and Practices of Effective Schools in *Santa Fe, New Mexico*.
- **Hord** served as a consultant and trainer for the Rocky Mountain Center for Health Promotion and Education's 10-member team that delivers professional development services to clients in the *Boulder, Colorado*, region. The focus was on supporting the team's creation of professional development standards for their work and critiquing their work to date as they use innovation configuration to describe and articulate their identified standards in operation.
- **Hord** led 125 participants in a half-day session on professional learning communities and how the concept might be applied in participants' schools during St. Louis University's Leadership Development Conference in *St. Louis, Missouri*.

Science, Technology, and Mathematics (STM)

SEDL's STM program supports systemic science and mathematics reform and assists teachers in using technologies to improve student learning. The STM program houses the Eisenhower Southwest Consortium for the Improvement of Mathematics and Science Teaching (SCIMAST), the SouthCentral Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SCRTEC), and the Louisiana Technology Assessment Program.

STM Staff Announcements

The STM program welcomed program associate **Haidee Williams** in July. Prior to joining



Haidee Williams joined SEDL's SCIMAST staff as a program associate in August.

SEDL Williams worked for Region XIII Education Service Center (RESC XIII), where she provided professional development addressing the needs of science education for grades PreK–12. She has also worked as a curriculum coordinator and classroom teacher at Channelview ISD in Channelview, Texas. Williams holds bachelor's degrees in health and physical education from Lamar University and in biology from the University of Houston. She also has a master's degree in science curriculum and instruction from the University of Houston. In her new position at SEDL, Williams participates in many SCIMAST activities aimed at improving science teaching and learning, including working with SCIMAST access center staff and other science programs across the SEDL region.

SCIMAST

One of 10 science and mathematics consortia funded by the U.S. Department of Education, SCIMAST assists teachers, schools, districts, and states in developing and sustaining quality teaching and effective leadership. SCIMAST staff host state and regional annual forums, conduct intensive long-term professional development, and provide access to exemplary materials and information through such resources as the 40 access centers across the SEDL region.

Arkansas

- Program specialist **Como Molina** met with elementary and middle school teachers in **Little Rock** who will be participants in a yearlong partnership between SEDL and Little Rock Public Schools (LRPS). This orientation focused on logistics, responsibilities, and the opportunity for participating teachers to provide input

regarding their professional development needs.

New Mexico

- Program manager **Vicki Dimock** hosted the quarterly meeting of the directors of the 10 regional mathematics and science consortia from across the country in **Santa Fe**. The directors discussed plans for the development of two cross-consortia papers (Lessons Learned About Professional Development and Lessons Learned About Intensive Site Work).
- **Dimock** represented SCIMAST at the Summit on Education in Northern New Mexico in **Santa Fe**. SCIMAST partnered with several other institutions to host the event.

Oklahoma

- Program associate **María Torres** served as an invited commentator to Belle Isle Enterprise School's Research Lesson Colloquium in **Oklahoma City**.
- **Torres** met with teachers from Webster Middle School, Oakridge Elementary School, and Parmelee Elementary School in **Oklahoma City** to provide information on the Summer 2004 Institute and answer questions about the 15-month intensive professional development project to be held in 2004–2005.
- **Dimock** facilitated a meeting of representatives from 10 of the Oklahoma access centers and Stacy Wienand of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education in **Oklahoma City**. During the meeting, center representatives discussed ways in which they could share resources and increase the visibility of the centers.
- **Torres** presented "Professional Development for Teacher Change Through Lesson Study" at the Oklahoma Council of Teachers of Mathematics (OCTM) Annual Conference in **Oklahoma City**. SCIMAST sponsored an exhibit at the conference.

Texas

- **Torres** facilitated a research lesson colloquium at Garcia Middle School in **Brownsville** with teachers from the Texas Teachers as Leaders 2003 Summer Institute. The daylong event was the fourth in a series of follow-up sessions and

- included researching the implementation of a lesson on addition and subtraction of fractions in a sixth-grade class.
- **Molina** assisted staff from Research for Better Schools (RBS), which operates the Mid-Atlantic Eisenhower Regional Consortium for Mathematics and Science Education, in conducting training sessions using IMAGES, an elementary (K–5) module focused on geometric concepts, at the Region 10 Education Service Center in **Richardson**.
 - **Torres**, who is a member of the Rice University School Mathematics Program (RUSMP) advisory panel, attended a summer colloquium at Rice University in **Houston**.
 - **Dimock, Torres**, and information specialist **Chuck Reese** co-hosted a training event, “ETA Dynamic Classroom Assessment: Linking Mathematical Understanding to Instruction in Middle Grades and High School,” in partnership with ETA/Cuisenaire. Attended by 45 mathematics and science educators from SEDL’s region, the training focused on the use of professional development modules on dynamic classroom assessment developed by Dr. George W. Bright, who facilitated the event.

Other

- **Torres** represented SCIMAST in a meeting of the Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Consortia staff in **Columbus**,
- Ohio**. Participants will update the “Making Schools Work for Every Child” CD-ROM. Staff from the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse will coordinate the work.
- **Torres** worked with a group of 60 mathematics educators in **Managua, Nicaragua**, as an invited trainer for Global Education Fund’s Capacitación Para Capacitadores (Training of Trainers). The event, delivered in Spanish, focused on middle school mathematics and constructivist teaching.

SCRTEC

Through professional development, information dissemination, and technical assistance, SCRTEC supports schools, teachers, and leaders in using technology to foster student success in achieving state content standards, particularly in high-needs schools. With partners such as the Texas Center for Education Technology at the University of North Texas and the Aurora Project in Fairview, Oklahoma, SCRTEC staff help teachers use technology and enable education leaders to acquire, manage, and evaluate technology.

Arkansas

- Program associate **Danny Martinez** led a session, “Get a Clue,” drawn from the *Active Learning With Technology* (ALT) portfolio during the Arkansas State Technology Conference in **Hot Springs**.

SCRTEC Launches New Web Site

SEDL’s SouthCentral Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SCRTEC) has redesigned its Web site (<http://www.southcentralrtec.org/>) in an effort to meet educators’ needs. Over the last year, SCRTEC staff discussed emerging issues in the field and considered how its goals and objectives should evolve accordingly. One finding from these discussions was the need to update its Web site. The new Web site has a fresh look and new content, and the main menu is now structured to better reflect the focus of the consortium’s work.

The site now offers more information about technology standards. Staff updated the resource pages for teachers and education leaders and added a news and events page, which will highlight current projects and events of interest in the field. In response to user requests, the consortium also added a comprehensive products and publications page to give a concise overview of resources that can be downloaded or ordered. SCRTEC staff will continue to add resources and information as needed. ■



Louisiana

- **Martinez** and program specialist **Jackie Cuevas** provided assistance in **Baton Rouge** to the Louisiana Center for Educational Technology in its review of proposals for grants under the NCLB Enhancing Education Through Technology Program.
- Program associate **Kim Hughes** led a poster session with Texas educators from Isleta ISD during the National Education Computing Conference in **New Orleans**.

Texas

- Program associate **Marilyn Heath** provided professional development on the integration of technology for teachers at Heights Charter School in **Houston**.

Smaller Learning Communities (SLCs)

Through a subcontract with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, SEDL conducts ongoing site visits and provides technical assistance and professional development to 30 SLC award sites designated by the U.S. Department of Education. The SLC program provides funding to assist awardees in restructuring their large high schools (more than 1,000 students) into smaller learning communities.

SEDL site visits with SLC grantees include classroom observations and interviews with superintendents, campus administrators, teachers, and students. SEDL staff assess a grantee's progress toward implementation and identify technical assistance needs.

- **Rodríguez** conducted site visits to **Rio Grande City, Texas**, and **Grand Prairie, Texas**, to conduct interviews and focus groups with school and district personnel to identify the implementation progress of SLC structures and strategies on their respective high school campuses.
- **Rodríguez** and program associate **Debra Meibaum** made a site visit to **Iberia Parish, Louisiana**, to work with staff from its two high schools and district administrators in identifying progress toward its SLC implementation.
- Program associate **Melanie Morrissey** worked with the superintendent, district administrators, and high school principals in **St. Louis, Missouri**, in follow-up visits to their high schools. Morrissey is a mem-

ber of a working group formed to ensure the implementation of SLC structures and strategies within each of the district's high schools.

- **Morrissey** conducted a follow-up visit to **New Orleans** to work with school and district staff in designing an action plan for their SLC work.

Southeast Comprehensive Assistance Center (SECAC)

SEDL's SECAC, based in Metairie, Louisiana, is one of 15 regional technical assistance centers mandated and funded under No Child Left Behind to assist states, school districts, and schools in meeting the needs of children served under the legislation, including children in high-poverty areas, migrant children, immigrant children, children with limited English proficiency, neglected or delinquent children, homeless children and youth, American Indian children, and children with disabilities.

SECAC provides professional development, technical assistance, and information services to state and local education agencies, regional education service centers, tribes, and schools in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

Alabama

- Program associate **Jill Slack** conducted a follow-up writing-benchmarks workshop for lead teachers in Conecuh County Schools in **Evergreen**.
- **Slack** conducted a reading workshop in **Moulton** for K–8 teachers and administrators in Lawrence County Public Schools.
- **Slack** conducted a questioning workshop for K–12 teachers in **Athens** and a writing assessment and instruction workshop for elementary and middle school teachers in **Cullman** for the North Alabama Teacher Exchange.
- Program associates **Carolyn Clausing** and **Lou Meadows** conducted follow-up observations of classrooms at West Morgan High School in **Trinity**.
- **Meadows** presented an overview of SECAC services in Alabama during the spring conference for federal programs coordinators in **Montgomery**.
- **Meadows** and program specialist **Dallas Picou** conducted numerous workshops on

- best practices for instruction and No Child Left Behind in collaboration with the Alabama Regional Inservice Centers at various locations throughout the state.
- In collaboration with the Alabama A&M University Inservice Center, **Clausing** conducted a workshop on higher-order questioning skills and provided technical assistance to **Bibb County** Schools on how to develop and utilize a needs assessment.
- Louisiana**
- **Slack** assisted Louisiana Department of Education Reading First staff in monitoring and conducting Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessments in **New Orleans** Public Schools.
 - **Slack** met and planned with Louisiana Department of Education Reading First staff at a quarterly leadership meeting in **Baton Rouge**.
 - **Slack** conducted a reading workshop in the content-areas institute for middle and high school teachers in the Jefferson Davis Public School System in **Jennings**.
 - **Clausing** and program specialist **John Hanley** conducted program evaluations at two Signature Elementary Schools in **New Orleans** (Bauduit Elementary School and Andrew Jackson Elementary School).
 - **Clausing** and **Hanley** provided technical assistance to the Signature Elementary Schools program in **New Orleans**. Hanley met with teachers from Banduit Elementary School during a week of



Program associate Carolyn Clausing admires a "sloth" at Bauduit Elementary in New Orleans. The students converted a stairwell into a three-story rain forest as part of a culminating activity highlighting their science interactions theme.

- curriculum development at Audubon Zoo. He and Clausing also met with teachers from Harney Elementary School during a week of curriculum development at the Audubon Aquarium of the Americas.
- **Hanley** facilitated a meeting in **New Orleans** of Signature Elementary School principals and education staff from the New Orleans Museum of Art. The meeting introduced the principals to education resources available from NOMA. As a new "superpartner" in the program, NOMA will provide professional development, theme-based resources, docent-guided tours, and Van Go visits to each of the 10 Signature Elementary Schools in the city. SECAC was instrumental in developing this partnership.
 - **Picou** and **Meadows** presented a workshop on best practices for instruction to teachers at **Belle Chasse** Middle School.

Mississippi

- **Clausing** and program associate **Debra Meibbaum** visited classrooms at Sanders Elementary School in **Hollandale** to observe the implementation of questioning processes and thinking skills and the different types and levels of questions.
- **Meibbaum** and program manager **Marie Kaigler** presented "What Students Should Know and Be Able to Do in Middle School Math" to teachers in **Greenwood**.
- Three SECAC staff members made presentations during the Mississippi Department of Education Mega Conference in **Biloxi**. **Kaigler** presented "Classroom Management With Style and Grace," **Meibbaum** presented "An Overview of Effective Practices for Classroom Instruction," and **Slack** conducted a session entitled "Teaching Thinking Through Effective Questioning."

Nationwide

- **Slack** conducted a reading and questioning workshop at the International Reading Association Annual Conference in **Reno, Nevada**.

SEDL Fee-for-Service Activities

SEDL conducts fee-for-service activities to ensure more effective distribution and use of SEDL's products and services. The revenue generated from these services supports ongoing development. Services include training in school improvement, technology, reading, and mathematics.

- **Torres** facilitated a session on the rationale for lesson study, an embedded professional development process, at West Texas A&M University in *Canyon, Texas*.
- **Molina** provided two days of training in *Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*, as part of a fee-for-service agreement between SEDL

and Putnam City Public Schools. The training was part of a two-week summer training program for approximately 25 algebra and biology teachers.

- **Cuevas** facilitated a three-day workshop integrating technology into instruction using the Active Learning With Technology (ALT) portfolio in *New Braunfels, Texas*. The event was hosted by New Braunfels ISD and included approximately 30 teachers and technology coordinators from surrounding districts.
- **Slack** conducted a workshop on teaching thinking through effective questioning for K–12 teachers in *New Braunfels, Texas*. ■

SEDL Board Member Elected Vicar General of the Congregation of Holy Cross

Brother John Paige, CSC, a SEDL board member and dean of the School of Education at St. Edward's University, was recently elected vicar general of the Congregation of Holy Cross at the order's general chapter meeting held earlier this summer in Rome, Italy. Based in Rome, the 6-year term of vicar general is the highest position a Holy Cross Brother can hold within the congregation. Paige, who is leaving the SEDL Board of Directors, begins his new duties in October.

As vicar general, Paige will be the second-highest official in the order and will serve under Superior General Father Hugh Cleary, CSC. In addition to overseeing congregational planning and education ministry, Paige will represent the superior general as his delegate to the nearly 1,700 Holy Cross priests and brothers around the world. The Congregation of Holy Cross is a missionary congregation of educators that has focused its efforts in schools and parishes since its inception in 1837. Members continue to serve in high schools, colleges, and universities in 15 countries on four continents.

"This is an exciting opportunity to serve the Holy Cross order and the church," said Paige. "I look forward to it, although I have loved working on the SEDL board."

Paige was active within SEDL, serving on the long-term investment committee and meeting with local and state officials in Austin when needed. He says the relationship was mutually beneficial, with him often asking SEDL employees to come speak to his classes.

"It's been a nice opportunity for me to tap SEDL experts right in the area to enhance my own teaching," he says. "I've greatly benefited by my interaction with the organization, formally and informally."

Paige came to St. Edward's as an assistant professor of education in 1999 and was named dean of the School of Education 2 years later. Under his leadership, the School of Education expanded ties to the central Texas community through such programs as the Building Teams and Tools for Teaching (BT3) program (see p. 4), the Teaching Scholar program, and the only accreditation program in central Texas for religion teachers in Catholic schools. In addition to his work at St. Edward's, Paige is a commissioner-at-large of the Texas Catholic Conference Accreditation Commission and regional associate for the National Catholic Educational Association. He joined the SEDL Board of Directors in 2001.



Brother John Paige joined the SEDL Board of Directors in 2001.

SEDL

calendar

SEDL staff will present the following events during the upcoming months. Visit www.sedl.org/new/calendar.html for more SEDL events.

October

- 7 **Best Practices for Instruction**
Morgan County, Alabama
SECAC staff will conduct a workshop on best practices for instruction.
Contact: Dallas Picou or Lou Meadows
- 18 **Bully Proofing Your School**
Itta Bena, Mississippi
SECAC staff will provide information to school staff on improving conflict resolution skills.
Contact: Philip Gapinski
- 20 **Improving Reading Comprehension at the High School Level**
Quitman, Mississippi
SECAC staff will provide information on improving reading comprehension at the high school level.
Contact: Debra Meibaum

27–28

Reading Comprehension Strategies
Eastman, Georgia
SECAC staff will conduct two 1-day reading comprehension workshops at the Heart of Georgia Regional Educational Agency for elementary and secondary teachers.
Contact: Jill Slack

November

- 4 **Phonemic Awareness in the Early Grades**
Eastman, Georgia
SECAC staff will conduct a workshop focusing on the phonological continuum and effective methods for accessing and teaching phonemic awareness.
Contact: Jill Slack
- 10–13 **National Community Education Association Annual Conference**
San Diego, California
SEDL staff will host a booth and present “Readiness: School, Family, and Community Connections.”
Contact: Jill Dodge or Lacy Wood

SEDL LINKS

Wesley A. Hoover
President and CEO

Joan L. Buttram
Executive Vice President
and COO

Joyce S. Pollard
Director, Office of
Communications

Debbie Ritenour
Editor



211 East Seventh Street, Austin, Texas 78701-3253 • (800) 476-6861 • www.sedl.org

SEDL Links is a bimonthly newsletter of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. *SEDL Links* complements and draws upon work performed by SEDL under a variety of funding sources, including the U.S. Department of Education and other agencies of the U.S. Government. The publication is not supported with direct program funds related to any SEDL programs or projects. *SEDL Links* does not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Government or any other source.

You are welcome to reproduce *SEDL Links*, and you may distribute copies at no cost to recipients; please credit the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory as publisher.

SEDL is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and is committed to affording equal employment opportunities for all individuals in employment matters.

SEDL Links is available in alternative formats.