

# Stratenotes

The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning • August 2009 • Volume 17, Issue 9

## Rethinking... SIM® conference gets a new look

The International SIM® Conference took on a very different look this year. Responding to changing needs of SIM Professional Developers, including requests for longer sessions to allow in-depth exploration of topics, we built a whole-new structure for the conference and rethought every aspect of our offerings. We liked the result, and judging by preliminary feedback, you did, too.

Day one featured five strands, each focused on a topic we identified as important to SIM Professional Developers. We relied on your responses to surveys to help us define these strands and the content. On day three, conference participants broke into affinity groups for concentrated work on more tightly focused issues. In between, day two offered multiple sessions in a more traditional format.

To lay the groundwork for navigating the changes before the conference began, we developed a new conference web site, <http://sim2009.kucrl.org>. Before the conference, the site contained the most up-to-date information about deadlines, planned events, and travel and venue details. We designed the site to be interac-

tive, giving you the opportunity to ask questions and suggest content you would like to see included in sessions. We also posted most session handouts the week before the conference, allowing you to download the handouts you were interested in to your computer before arriving in Lawrence and allowing us to move away from the tons of paper we have distributed during conferences in the past.

Since the conference ended, we have continued to update the conference web site. We have added more handouts to the conference download

**Learn more about the strands: select the Sessions link on the conference web site.**

page. (All active SIM Professional Developers have access to these handouts, whether you attended the conference or not. See the "conference download page" link at the top of the Sessions list; the password is **strategic**.)

Each affinity group has its own page on the site, where group members as well as SIM Professional



**Patty Graner welcomes participants to the 2009 International SIM® Conference.**

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**If you attended the 2009 International SIM® Conference and you have not completed an evaluation, please visit <http://sim2009.kucrl.org> and see the post titled "Tell us how we did!" for a link to our online survey.**

Developers who were not able to attend an affinity group may continue the discussions. We videotaped summaries by representatives of each affinity group, and those clips are posted on the affinity group's page to give an idea of what the group discussed and where the conversations will go from here.

We are editing additional video from the conference now. Look for Don Deshler's keynote address to be posted soon, and other clips will follow.

Initial results of our post-conference survey have been overwhelmingly positive. Of the 108 people who reviewed their overall conference experience, the vast majority expressed generally positive reactions to the changes in the conference format. Of course, even those who loved the experience made suggestions for improvement. We will con-

sider *all* comments and suggestions as we plan for next year.

Most participants also liked the USB drive we distributed at registration. The drive contained many of the handouts presenters used in their sessions and helped us eliminate, to a large degree, the mountains of paper we usually give out during the conference. A few people expressed their desire for paper handouts, and some technology glitches hindered others' use of the drives. Still, we consider the USB drives a success, so look for them again next year.

As we plan for the 2010 conference, make sure your voice is heard. Respond to any surveys we develop in the next few months. Watch *Stratenotes*, SIMTRAINER-L, and the conference web site for conference-related announcements.

We look forward to seeing you in 2010!

## Strategram publication to end

After 21 years, we will cease publication of *Strategram* in its current form after the final issue of this publication period (Volume 21: No. 5 is due out in August; No. 6 will be out in September).

We will spend the next few months designing a new, web-based replacement for *Strategram*. We anticipate that some of the material published in past issues will find a new home at this site, joined by new content developed specifically to take advantage of the web's multimedia capabilities.

If you would like to be informed of our progress on this project, please follow us on Twitter (@StrateTweets) or watch for announcements on the Center's web site, <http://kucrl.org>.

## Twitter with us!

Following the example set by the Center's Stratepedia team, we have set up two new Twitter accounts to foster continuing communication about SIM and Center activities:

**@StrateTweets:** Communication about the Strategic Instruction Model from the Center for Research on Learning, University of Kansas

**@KUCRL:** Communication from the Center for Research on Learning, University of Kansas

Don't forget to follow the Stratepedia Twitter feed, too:

**@Stratepedia:** Web development shop at the Center for Research on Learning, University of Kansas.

If you're new to Twitter and need some guidance, visit the Stratepedia blog, <http://blog.stratepedia.org/>. Click on Archives, then scroll down the list on the right side of the page until you see the Twitter link. Aaron Sumner and his team continue to build this resource.

## More SIM Resources

### SIMville Sign-On

User name: Network

Password: strategic

### Stratedirectory Online

<http://directory.kucrl.org>

### Stratepedia

<http://stratepedia.org>

### Stratereaders

part of Stratepedia

### CRL on the Web

<http://www.kucrl.org>

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Contributors:  
Donald D. Deshler | Patricia Graner |  
Mona Tipton

Communications Director: Julie Tollefson  
Art Director: David Gnojek

The University of Kansas  
Center for Research on Learning  
Joseph R. Pearson Hall  
1122 West Campus Road, Room 521  
Lawrence, KS 66045-3101  
Main Office: 785.864.4780  
Order Desk: 785.864.0617  
Fax: 785.864.5728  
E-mail: [simpd@ku.edu](mailto:simpd@ku.edu)

# SIM® Leadership Award

## Pam Leitzell



This year's recipient of the SIM® Leadership Award, Pamela Leitzell, is everything a leader should be: warm and welcoming, knowledgeable and capable, confident and unassuming. People are drawn to her as much for her thoughtful, serious approach to her work as for the humor she brings to tough situations.

"People love her," says close friend and colleague Sue Woodruff. "She's fun to be around, and yet she's focused."

Pam is the team leader of a Striving Readers project in Massachusetts, a project that will help the Center for Research on Learning understand how to apply the Content Literacy Continuum® in large, urban schools. Pam's role requires her to coordinate with administrators, coaches, and teachers throughout the district.

"Pam has really excelled at being able to communicate effectively,"

says team member and fellow SIM Professional Developer Michael Faggella-Luby.

During the course of one day at the Massachusetts project site, Pam seamlessly transitions among many roles. She problem-solves with administrators, consults with coaches, and models instructional methods in the classroom.

"That kind of flexibility at each of those levels is a rare skill," says Michael, who also lauded Pam's ability to identify and use the strengths of her team members. "Having Pam lead this project has been very fortunate for the success of the project."

Pam also brings a sense of calm control to projects, even under adverse conditions.

"Pam has always been able to handle situations in a very quiet manner," says SIM Professional Developer Winona Lowe, a member

of Pam's team. "I can't say enough about how well she does that."

Despite outer appearances, Pam says, she becomes as flustered as the next person. She just works hard not to show it.

"Keeping your cool is an important trait when you're in the business that we're in of trying to create some change in an organization," she says. "I think that really distracts from the work at hand when we give in to our own stress and tensions."

Pam's leadership skills propelled one of the Center's earliest CLC projects to long-lasting success. She

*The SIM® Leadership Award recognizes individuals who have shown exceptional leadership and excellent service to the Strategic Instruction Model® by helping educators become strategic teachers and, as a result, students become strategic learners. Recipients are standout leaders in the SIM International Professional Development Network, sharing their energy and knowledge and inspiring their colleagues to greater achievements. We recognize their achievements, their courage despite adversity, and their unwavering belief in the power of individuals to join together to make a difference in the lives of students.*



and her mentor, Sue Woodruff, firmly established SIM and CLC in Holland, Mich. As one of the district's "first generation" of SIM Professional Developers, Pam mentored many people across the middle and high schools. The district—now in its fifth generation of SIM Professional Developers—continues to thrive, though Pam has moved to other projects.

"She embodies so much of what good leaders need to influence people over a sustained period of time," says Don Deshler, director of the Center for Research on Learning. "We are so fortunate to have her within our network."

The potential for enabling schools to improve education across the board inspires Pam, who as a special education teacher was accustomed to making a difference one child at

a time.

"Being able to work on these projects has been just an amazing experience," she says. "The whole issue of schoolwide change is very exciting."

Though she chose a career in education for practical reasons—the country needed teachers and the special education field was just opening up—Pam found her passion in watching kids learn, think, and grow.

Her introduction to SIM came at the instigation of a persistent special education director, who urged her to attend a workshop on the *Test-Taking Strategy*.

"This strategy made so much sense. I couldn't get it out of my head," she says. "When I tried it, it worked so well, I thought there might

be something to this."

The most motivating factor, though, was seeing her students succeed. What's more, word of SIM's usefulness spread quickly through school as students began applying strategies in their other classes.

"Good things like that, it's hard to keep a secret," Pam says.

Pam shares credit for her achievements with the people with whom she's worked—good people tend to make you look good, she says. She calls the SIM Network one of the greatest additions to her life in the last few years.

"I've met the most amazing people," she says. "I continue to come in contact with people who are exciting and passionate and care about what they're doing. How could that not impact me and change my life?"



Don't miss the next issue of Stratenotes!

SIM® Impact Award:

Connecticut Technical High School System

# Gordon R. Alley Partnership Award

## Sue Vernon

This year, we honor Sue Vernon, whose enthusiasm, energy, creativity, and drive to improve the lives of children have resulted in groundbreaking contributions to the field of education and to the Center for Research on Learning.

Sue—author of the *SCORE Skills*, the *Community Building Series*, the *Cooperative Thinking Strategies*, and more—is a highly valued partner in the work we have accomplished in the past 25 years.

“We’re tremendously indebted to the work that she has contributed to the whole effort that we’ve been engaged in over the years,” says Jean Schumaker, president of Edge Enterprises and former associate director of the Center. “I think her work has contributed much to the nation.”

The roots of Sue’s relationship with the Center stretch back a couple

years before the Center was even established. She was a teaching parent in a group home in Colorado, and Jean was a consultant. A few years later, Sue decided to move back to Kansas and pursue a doctorate in developmental and child psychology, with Jean as her advisor.

“I realized within about a week of starting my graduate work how fortunate I was that I arrived here at the Center when I did and that I was able to work with such an incredible group of people,” Sue says.

Chriss Walther-Thomas, then a doctoral student in special education, worked with Sue on cross-discipline projects, often centered on family issues. Sue brought different perspectives and experiences that complemented Chriss’s own.

“I think being in different doctoral programs allowed us to really learn



from each other,” says Chriss, now chair of KU’s Department of Special Education. “She embodies all of the great qualities of being a partner—a partner you can count on for getting the work done and having a great time in the process.”

When Sue arrived at KU, she brought an interest in social skills instruction based on her work with adjudicated adolescents in a residential treatment program designed to teach life skills that would enable the youths to improve their social and academic behavior, return to their

*Gordon R. Alley, one of the founders of the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning in 1978 when it was known as the Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities, was a master at mentoring the young and inexperienced assistant professors who were assembled to conduct the institute’s first research studies. He generously shared his expertise and time to enable others to reach their goals and taught that partnership is vital to successfully conducting large-scale research and development efforts. Dr. Alley passed away in 1997 as a result of a tragic accident several years earlier. To honor his legacy and ensure that the trail he blazed never be forgotten, we give the Gordon R. Alley Partnership Award to other professionals who contribute to the work of the Center in the same spirit.*

homes, and avoid negative contact with authorities in the future.

"I was amazed at the receptivity of the kids for learning new skills, and it was so exciting to see them succeed," Sue says.

Early projects with the Center gave her the opportunity to observe many students in many classrooms. She was appalled by what she saw: put downs, name calling, threats.

"The kids were just flat-out mean to each other," she says, even with researchers sitting next to them. "It became pretty clear that that might be a good avenue of research."

Sue's dissertation research on the benefits of social skill instruction was the first study affiliated with the Center to be conducted in general education classrooms and was the first in a series of advances Sue's research made in education.

Not only did her research contribute new knowledge to the field and lead to publication of the *SCORE Skills*, it also instilled in Sue a strong commitment to quality.

"I learned the importance of making sure that you finished with a product that you were proud of," she says. "Part of that is getting it right,

knowing that what you've put down on paper is what you want to send out to the world forever."

Don Deshler, director of the Center and vice president of Edge, points to the development of the *BUILD Strategy*, one of the *Cooperative Thinking Strategies*, as typical of Sue's approach to her work. The researchers were up against a tight deadline and had reviewed the script multiple times. They felt confident everything was ready to go. Late one night, Sue e-mailed to stop the presses. As she reflected on her interactions with teachers, she concluded the product was not quite what they needed.

"She was just insistent on us doing what was necessary to make it as good as we could possibly make it," Don says.

In recent studies, Sue has demonstrated that both students and teachers can learn new skills using computerized programs. Before she began studying the effects of interactive multimedia programs, all of the work conducted with students by the Center or Edge Enterprises involved live instruction.

Sue's strong leadership and creativity landed her at the helm of the

Edge Enterprises research branch, where she ensured the smooth operation of research projects and the quality of their results.

"You can't imagine a person being more loyal than Sue in terms of dedicating herself to research in the whole area of social skills instruction and making sure that really good products get created and really good research gets done to support those products," says Jean.

Sue's newest products under development are interactive multimedia applications for teaching at-risk students how to give persuasive, informative, and narrative speeches and for teaching complex social skills to adjudicated or at-risk adolescents.

The fruits of Sue's labors have become integral components of the Strategic Instruction Model®, and the SIM International Professional Development Network has been instrumental in introducing educators to Sue's products and in influencing the direction of Sue's research.

"I often reflect on how truly fortunate I am to have partnerships and friendships of the professionals associated with CRL," she says.





# Using your conference web site

## 1. Main content

This is where the bulk of the material on each page resides. The content might include session descriptions, notes, downloadable materials, photos, and video clips.

## 2. Comments

Comments and discussions appear in this area. Each comment is tagged with a date and name and will appear in chronological order. Click the “reply” button in red to respond to another comment.

## 3. Leaving a comment

Posting a comment is easy! We only require that you supply your name and e-mail address. Once you hit submit, your comment will be sent to us for approval. After we’ve approved one comment from you, your future comments will appear instantly. Your e-mail address will not be visible to anyone other than the administrator, but it will help us ensure that you’re not a spambot!

## 4. Keeping up to date with comments

If you post a comment and want to be notified about any follow-up discussion, we have enabled a couple of ways to do this. You can check the box in this section to be notified of follow-up comments by e-mail. Or, you can click on the red link to subscribe to the RSS feed for the post. This will ensure that follow-up posts appear in your RSS reader for easy browsing.

## 5. Affinity groups

We have set up a web page for each affinity group formed during the conference to allow interested individuals to continue discussions or start new discussions related to the topic. Visit often to share ideas and materials.

## 6. Read all of the discussion topics

The “popular discussion” section lists the posts that have drawn the most comments. The “recent discussion” list lets you look at several of the most recent comments at a glance.

## 2009 and Beyond:

## Maximize Your Conference Experience

David Gnojek, Julie Tollefson, and Amber Nutt

The screenshot shows the homepage of the 2009 International SIM Conference website. The browser address bar displays 'http://sim2009.kucrl.org'. The website has a red header with the 'SIM Strategic Instruction Model' logo and navigation links: HOME, ABOUT, REGISTRATION, PRE-CONFERENCE, SPEAKERS, SESSIONS, and CONTACT. A main content area titled 'Take the conference home with you' contains several paragraphs of text and a video player. To the right, there are sections for 'KU-CRL LINKS', 'SIM 2009: AN INTERACTIVE CONFERENCE', 'AFFINITY GROUPS', 'POPULAR DISCUSSIONS', and 'RECENT DISCUSSION'. A comment section at the bottom allows users to leave comments and subscribe to an RSS feed. Numbered annotations (1-6) are placed on the page to highlight specific features: 1 points to the main content area, 2 to the comment section, 3 to the 'LEAVE A COMMENT' form, 4 to the RSS subscription link, 5 to the 'SIM 2009: AN INTERACTIVE CONFERENCE' section, and 6 to the 'POPULAR DISCUSSIONS' section.



## 2009 Conference Session DVD Order Form

DVDs of several of this year's conference sessions are available for purchase at a **cost of \$10 per session**. Please use this form to order.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

VISA/Mastercard #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Personal Card ☐ Business Card

If business, name of institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature authorization: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check here if you need videotapes instead of DVDs.

### Wednesday

- ☐ **Keynote Address: Rethinking SIM®, Literacy, and Professional Development**—Don Deshler
- ☐ **Poster Session**

### Thursday

- ☐ **Adolescent Literacy Reports**—Michael Faggella-Luby
- ☐ **Content Enhancement Supplements**—Bev Colombo and Leslie Herod
- ☐ **Designing Advanced and Integrated GIST Devices**—Keith Lenz, Peter Lenz, and Sherri Wagner
- ☐ **Fusion Reading™: A Classroom Experience**—Mike Hock, and Irma Brasseur-Hock
- ☐ **Integrating Makes Sense Strategies™ into the Content Literacy Continuum®**—Edwin Ellis
- ☐ **A Journey of School Change**—Donald Latham, Holly Drake, and Kendall Hunt

- ☐ **Mini Pearls** (Belinda Mitchell, facilitator): *Frames R Us*—Beverly Downey; *Tips for Fundamentals of Paraphrasing and Summarizing*—Lily Wooley; *The Implementation Fidelity Matrix*—Ed Ellis; *Front-Loading Writing Strategies*—Gail Cheever; *Strategic Tutoring Goes Electronic*—Paula Lancaster
- ☐ **Motivating Students with Math Games**—Doug Adams
- ☐ **Strategy Instruction Via Computer**—Paula Lancaster and Jean Schumaker
- ☐ **Stratopedia and the Social Web**—Aaron Sumner and Amber Nutt
- ☐ **STRUCTURE Your Reading**—Barbara Ehren
- ☐ **Taking Stock of Content Enhancement**—Jan Bulgren and Keith Lenz
- ☐ **Teachscape Modules for SIM Professional Development**—Patty Graner
- ☐ **Using Social Media in Professional Development**—Aaron Sumner and Amber Nutt
- ☐ **The Word Mapping Strategy**—Monica Harris

Number of sessions selected @ \$10 each: \_\_\_\_\_

Total for Order: \$\_\_\_\_\_

DVDs will be mailed to you after the conference.

Make checks payable to KU-CRL.  
Mail to KU-CRL  
Joseph R. Pearson Hall  
1122 West Campus Road, Rm. 517  
Lawrence, KS 66045-3101



# CALENDAR 2009-2010

## Oct. 5-7, 2009

Instructional Coaching Institute,  
Level 1, Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://instructionalcoach.org/>

## Oct. 8-10, 2009

Instructional Coaching Institute,  
Level 2, Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://instructionalcoach.org/>

## Oct. 9-10, 2009

CAL-SIM, California State University,  
Northridge

**Note: Educator & Administrator  
tracks only. This conference is  
not a SIM Professional Developer  
update.**

Keynote: Don Deshler  
Contact Dr. Beth Lasky, 818-677-  
2725, [beth.lasky@csun.edu](mailto:beth.lasky@csun.edu).  
Registration: [www.kucrl.org/institutes/](http://www.kucrl.org/institutes/)

## Oct. 12-14, 2009

Instructional Coaching Conference  
Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://instructionalcoach.org/>

## Oct. 23-24, 2009

Northeast SIM Update  
Radisson Hotel Providence Airport,  
Providence, RI  
Reservations: 401-739-3000  
Group Name: Northeast SIM  
Conference. Group Rate: \$119  
Coordinator: Alice Henley, [henley@ctserc.org](mailto:henley@ctserc.org)

## Jan. 20-21, 2010

Florida Update (25th Anniversary)  
Altamonte, Springs, Fla.  
Contacts: Mary Ann Ahearn,  
[ahearnm@nefec.org](mailto:ahearnm@nefec.org), and Valerie  
Watson, [watsonv@nefec.org](mailto:watsonv@nefec.org)

## Jan. 28-30, 2010

Instructional Coaching Institute,  
Level 1, Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://instructionalcoach.org/>

## Feb. 25-27, 2010

Southeast SIM Update  
Holiday Inn Historic District  
Charleston, SC

## June 1-5, 2010

SIM Learning Strategies Class for  
Preservice Educators  
Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://www.kucrl.org/institutes/>

## June 1-5, 2010

Teaching Content to All: Effective  
College Teaching, Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://www.kucrl.org/institutes/>

## June 15-18, 2010

SIM Reading and Writing Strategies  
Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://www.kucrl.org/institutes/>

## June 15-18, 2010

More SIM Strategies, Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://www.kucrl.org/institutes/>

## June 21-25, 2010

Institute for Potential SIM Professional  
Developers in Learning Strategies  
Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://www.kucrl.org/institutes/>

## June 21-25, 2010

Institute for Potential SIM  
Professional Developers in Content  
Enhancement, Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://www.kucrl.org/institutes/>

## June 21-25, 2010

Florida Potential Professional  
Developer Institutes for Learning  
Strategies and Content  
Enhancement, Orlando, Fla.  
Contacts: Mary Ann Ahearn,  
[ahearnm@nefec.org](mailto:ahearnm@nefec.org), and Valerie  
Watson, [watsonv@nefec.org](mailto:watsonv@nefec.org)  
Non-Florida residents register  
through KU-CRL.

## June 22-25, 2010

Introduction to Teaching with  
Content Enhancement  
Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://www.kucrl.org/institutes/>

## June 23-25, 2010

SIM for Administrators  
Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://www.kucrl.org/institutes/>

## July 13-16, 2010

International SIM Conference and  
Preconference, Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://sim2009.kucrl.org>

## Aug. 9-11, 2010

Instructional Coaching Institute,  
Level 1, Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://instructionalcoach.org/>

## Aug. 12-14, 2010

Instructional Coaching Institute,  
Level 2, Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://instructionalcoach.org/>

## Oct. 4-6, 2010

Instructional Coaching Institute,  
Level 1, Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://instructionalcoach.org/>

## Oct. 7-9, 2010

Instructional Coaching Institute,  
Level 2, Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://instructionalcoach.org/>

## Oct. 11-13, 2010

Instructional Coaching Conference  
Lawrence, Kan.  
<http://instructionalcoach.org/>

## INSIDE:

- **Conference review**

Preliminary results say the new structure for the 2009 International SIM® Conference was a hit, 1.

- **Leadership Award**

This SIM Professional Developer leads with humor and a passion for watching kids think, learn, and grow, 3.

- **Partnership Award**

This highly valued partner enriches our work and brings needed change to the field of education, 5.

## 2009-2010 Strateworks Renewal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate where you prefer to receive mail: ☐ home ☐ work

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please add me to the SIMTRAINER-L e-mail discussion list

VISA/MasterCard Number: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Personal Card

☐ Business Card

If business, name of institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature Authorization: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail completed form and your **payment of \$35** (U.S.) to KU-CRL, Joseph R. Pearson Hall, 1122 West Campus Road, Room 517, Lawrence, KS 66045-3101

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