

# STRATENOTES

Volume 1, Issue 7 -- April, 1993

## LEARNING COMMUNITY -- A TOOL FOR FACILITATING PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL GROWTH

In his book, *The Fifth Discipline*, Peter Senge argues that for any organization to thrive in today's world it must be a "learning organization." That is, an organization where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn. Organizations must view learning and growth as one of their primary tasks. In the absence of continual learning, stagnation and obsolescence set in and the organization's vitality and very essence diminish. Senge's notion has potential implications for an entire school district, an individual school, a class, a research center, or even a network of staff developers!

Let us focus our attention for a moment on the learning organization that all of us have created through the work that we collectively do as strategy teachers, staff developers, and strategy researchers. The 15th Anniversary Celebration on July 8th-10th in Lawrence will be the fifth such meeting that we have held. There are many of you who have been to all five meetings!! When you think of it objectively, why would anyone want to come to hot, humid Kansas in mid-summer? The factors that seem to continually bring us together are the things we gain from one another. There is almost a special "magic" that is created at each one of our summer meetings -- it's a time to share, a time to be listened to, a time for reinforcement, a time for laughs, a time to grow, a time to be stretched, a time to have our assumptions questioned, a time to be validated, a time to gain and give support. It is a time when we all feel that we are a part of something bigger than ourselves and a part of something very important to the process of a network of staff developers, we can apply what we learn about creating and maintaining a learning organization/community to the work we do within schools and with the educators with whom we work.

As we plan for the events of this July, we are sensitive to the dynamics of our collective learning community that usually results in great ideas for

improving educational practices for at-risk students. In short, as we have all committed ourselves to continual growth and learning, a special sense of community has emerged within our network.

During this past year, the KU-CRL has been studying the general notion of learning organization (and a closely related concept called "learning community"). We are eager to learn what can do as researchers and staff developers to be more effective in our work. We feel, in part, the answers lie in our wherewithal to increase our ability to work effectively as a team. Our study has suggested that there are some important ingredients that go into making up effective learning organizations/learning communities. We see these factors falling into three categories:

- Inputs are those things that each participant in a learning organization/community brings to the setting. The two most important ones are: a commitment to participate and a common set of knowledge (thus, meaningful sharing and dialoguing can take place).
- Working components are those features that characterize the work that is done by the learning organization/learning community. Among them are: a shared vision or a clear picture of the future/thing we wish to create; a designated time to interact and function as a team; commitment to genuine communication with each team member; shared work on significant tasks; and participatory governance structure that treats all as valued and equal team members.
- Shared outcomes are those benefits that emerge as a result of the effective work that is done together as a learning organization/community. There are three important ones: positive regard for each team member; shared rewards; and constant growth.

As we work with educators throughout the country, we are struck by the lack of a sense of community among many school staffs and even within many classrooms. Frequently, educators tell us how alienated and lonely they feel as a professional. Certainly, we know that the lives of at-risk adolescents are filled with similar feelings as they try to gain identity and meaning within secondary schools. Maybe there are lessons to learn from the community that somehow seems to magically

**SIM Training Network**



emerge through the work we do together. Hopefully, as we reflect on our work as a network of staff developers, we can apply what we learn about creating and maintaining a learning organization/community to the work we do within schools and with the educators with whom we work.

As we plan for the events of this July, we are sensitive to the dynamics of our collective learning organization/community and are trying very hard to build in those kinds of experiences that will cause us to grow and develop as a result of having been here. We sincerely hope you plan to be with us in July to take another step on our journey together. In any event, you may enjoy reading some of the things we have been studying about learning organizations and learning communities. Here are a few of our favorites:

Senge, Peter, M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York: Doubleday Currency.

Larson, C. E., & LaFast, F.M. (1989). *TeamWork: What must go right/What can go wrong*. Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA

Morgan, G., (1986). *Images of Organization* Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA

**Jean Schumaker  
and  
Eleanor Womack Nelson  
Honored**

Dr. Jean B. Schumaker, Associate Director of the KU-CRL, was recently inducted into the University of Kansas Women's Hall of Fame. Jean was recognized for her outstanding work in the field of education and for the impact she has had both nationally and internationally. She joins a very distinguished group of scholars who have been previously recognized for outstanding achievement at the University of Kansas. In addition, Jean was promoted to the rank of full professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Life.

Ms. Eleanor Womack Nelson, the KU-CRL's office manager, was selected as a finalist for the university's "Employee of the Year." Eleanor's worth to the Center is immeasurable. She works tirelessly to insure that the needs of both the KU-CRL staff and the Network members are met. She is pure gold -- we are so fortunate to have her on our team.

**Congratulations  
to both  
Jean and Eleanor!!!!!!!**

## STRATELINE

Phase 1 of getting Strateline up and running has been completed. Finding a system that supports both Macintosh and IBM computers has been a challenge. You can help us in two ways:

1) Please complete the Strateline questionnaire and return it ASAP. If you don't know the answer to a question, leave it blank and complete what you can. If you have a question or a concern write it down and we will get back to you. SIM trainers out in the field, we need your input to make Strateline meet your needs- A big THANKS! for those of you who sent back the questionnaire.

2) Call (913) 864-0618 with your computer and modem and try to access Strateline. Strateline can be called 24 hours a day. If you are able to access Strateline you can register and leave a message for the SYSOP (system operator). When you leave your message let us know if you have any problems. If you are unable to access Strateline, please call us at (913) 864-4780 or drop us a note in the mail and let us know what happened.

We had a few people call and ask us what equipment they need to use Strateline. To use Strateline you need a 1200 or 2400 modem, modem cable (this connects the modem to the computer), and a communication program (software). We recommend using any Hayes compatible modem for your machine type (IBM or MAC) and for software we have been using Hayes Smartcom, Hayes Smartcom II and Microsoft Works. Many times you can buy a Hayes compatible modem with software included with the modem. Since we can't try every modem or communications software available we are just sharing what has worked for us.

You will need to set your communication software to the following specifications when you use your modem:

Data bits: 8  
Stop bits: 1  
Parity : None  
Baud Speed: 1200 or 2400  
Duplex: Full  
Phone: 913-864-0618

Some people have called and needed advice on purchasing equipment because there was some extra money in their school budgets to purchase equipment. Please don't hesitate to call and ask for Pamela or Gerardo if you have any questions about using Strateline, setting up your computer and modem, using communications software, or purchasing equipment to use Strateline.

## **DR. ROBERT SLAVIN TO KEYNOTE THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY**

Our 15th Anniversary Celebration will begin with a keynote address and workshop by one of America's leading educators. Robert Slavin is currently Director of the Early and Elementary School Program at the Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students at John Hopkins University. He received his B.A. in Psychology from Reed College in 1972, and his Ph.D. in Social Relations in 1975 from John Hopkins University. Dr. Slavin has authored or co-authored more than 140 articles and 114 books, including Educational Psychology: Theory into Practice (Allyn & Bacon, 1986, 1988, 1991, 1994), School and Classroom Organization (Erlbaum, 1989), Effective Programs for Students at Risk (Allyn & Bacon, 1989), Cooperative Learning: Theory, Research, and Practice (Prentice-Hall, 1990), and Preventing Early School Failure (Allyn & Bacon, in press). He received the American Educational Research Association's Raymond B. Cattell Early Career Award for Programmatic Research in 1986, and the Palmer O. Johnson award for the best article in an AERA Journal in 1988.

### **NEW MANUAL RELEASED !!!**

Structuring cooperative work in the classroom involves teaching students interpersonal skills that will enable them to be successful, contributing, and supportive members of a group. The new publication for EDGE Enterprises, Inc., P.O. Box 1304 Lawrence, KS 66044, entitled, The SCORE Skills: Skills for Cooperative Groups, describes the procedures for teaching five social skills that are central to helping students work together in a pleasant, cooperative and effective manner to achieve successful outcomes in group situations. The cost of the book is \$10.00 plus tax and shipping.

**KU-IRLD**  
**Lodging and Transportation Information**  
**National SIM Trainers' Meeting**

Several hotels and motels have given us special rates for the workshops this summer. When making reservations you must mention that you are attending the Learning Disabilities Institute workshops in order to receive these rates.

**Eldridge Hotel (Conference Hotel) \$72**  
**701 Massachusetts**  
**Lawrence KS 66044.**  
**(913-749-5011)**

The following places are **not** within walking distance of the Eldridge Hotel where the meeting is being held. Prices are quoted for single and double occupancy.

**Days Inn** (913-843-9100 ) \$35-\$39 2309 Iowa.

**Holiday Inn Holidome** (913-841-7077) \$57-\$63 200 McDonald Dr.

**Halycon House** (913-841-0314) \$40-\$70 1000 Ohio Bed & Breakfast. Price reflects single rates. Lower prices include sharing a bath.

**Travelodge Motel** (913-842-5100) \$34-\$36 801 Iowa.

**Quality Inn** (913-842-7030) \$44-\$52 2222 W 6th.

**Westminster Inn** (913-841-8410) \$26-\$34 2525 W. 6th St.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Plan to fly into Kansas City's Midcontinent International Airport. Some travel agents will want to send you to Topeka located west of Lawrence, but transportation from the Kansas City Airport to Lawrence is much easier. The Kansas City Airport, located northeast of Lawrence, is approximately a one hour drive from Lawrence. You may want to rent a car or use the transportation service described below. If you are driving from the airport to Lawrence, take I-435 directed to Topeka and then I-70 west. Leave the turnpike at the east Lawrence exit if you are staying at the Eldridge. For other places, the west exit is more convenient.

The **A-1 City Cab Airport Shuttle Service** (call 1 800-736-1090 or 913-842-2432 for reservations) **You must make reservations.** The cost is \$18 one way and \$34 round trip. They make 15 trips daily beginning at 5:10 a.m. The last regular airport departure time is 10:15 p.m. They will wait for you until 10:45 p.m. but will charge \$55 for that trip.

Within the city of Lawrence, taxicabs are available. Fares are between \$4 and \$6 depending on the distance of your ride. **A-1 City Cab** phone number is 913-842-2432.

**STRATELINE**  
**Bulletin Board System (BBS) Computer Survey**

Please fill out the survey below. If you are unsure about how to answer a question please leave it blank.

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name Of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

How would you describe your computer expertise: (Circle One)

Beginning

Intermediate

Advance

Do you have access to a computer? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what kind of computer? Mac \_\_\_\_\_ Apple IIE \_\_\_\_\_ Apple IIGs \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
IBM \_\_\_\_\_ 286 \_\_\_\_\_ 386 \_\_\_\_\_ 486 \_\_\_\_\_ DOS \_\_\_\_\_ Windows \_\_\_\_\_

Disk Drive Size?: 3 1/2" \_\_\_\_\_ 5 1/4" \_\_\_\_\_ Hard Disk? No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, what size? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have access to a modem? No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what is the modem brand (i.e. Hayes compatible)? \_\_\_\_\_

Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Baud Rate: (Circle One) 300, 1200, 2400, 9600 Terminal Emulation: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the type of computer and telephone number for the modem: \_\_\_\_\_

What communications software do you currently use (i.e. Smartcomm)? \_\_\_\_\_

What time of day are you more likely to use the BBS? Morning \_\_\_\_\_ Afternoon \_\_\_\_\_ Evening \_\_\_\_\_

What other on-line networks do you currently use (i.e. America On-line, Genie, SpecialNet, FIRN)? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have access to Internet? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Do you currently use Internet? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, what is your e-mail address? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have access to BITNET? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Do you currently use BITNET? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, what is your e-mail address? \_\_\_\_\_

Questions or Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

What services, information etc., would you like to see on STRATELINE? \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for filling out this survey**

Please mail to : KU, Center for Research on Learning, 3061 Dole Center, Lawrence,  
KS 66045

# REGISTRATION FORM

## 15th Anniversary NATIONAL SIM TRAINERS' MEETING July 8-10, 1993 Lawrence, Kansas

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_ (required by federal tax laws)

Please send any future mail to my \_\_\_\_\_ home \_\_\_\_\_ work address

**Internationally known Dr. Robert Slavin will be the featured guest for the Thursday programs. All fees include both the Thursday luncheon, Friday Anniversary Dinner, and all workshop materials.**

Thursday, July 8 \$30.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
8:30 AM Registration-Program 9:00 AM

Friday, July 9 \$30.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday \$30.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Adjourn 3:00 PM

Total \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend the Thursday Luncheon

\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend the Friday Dinner

**Make check payable to KU-Special Education Service Unit.**  
Your receipt for registration will be available at the Trainers' Meeting

Mail to: Janet B. Roth  
The University of Kansas  
Center for Research on Learning  
3061 Dole Center  
Lawrence, KS 66045

**Please return by June 1, 1993**