



From The Executive Director

As the incoming Executive Director, I want to extend my warmest greetings to you and your schools! After a very busy period of transition with Mary Virginia Sanchez, who led the Association so successfully for twenty-three years, I am officially in the role since July 1st! I am looking forward to networking with respected friends and colleagues in the region, to forging new relationships, and more importantly, to supporting your efforts towards improved educational opportunities for the students that we serve.



▶ **Mary Virginia Sanchez,**
Executive Director 1989-2012
Sonia Keller,
Executive Director, July 1st, 2012

We are starting out the year with exciting new initiatives geared towards enhancing communication, involving your schools more directly in the staff development initiatives organized by the Tri-Association, and providing your students with a powerful leadership opportunity! Please refer to the section, "What's New", for details.

This issue also features our award recipients for this year, news from around the region, important recruiting information and thought-provoking articles written by three

of the consultants who will be with us at our Annual Educators' Conference coming up next month.

A very special thank you to our Sponsors, Corporate and Associate Corporate Members for supporting our newsletter through their ads.

In a few weeks we will convene in Cartagena for the 31st Annual Educators' Conference. I look forward to seeing many of you in one of Colombia's most beautiful cities. My best wishes for a very successful school year!

Sonia Keller, Ed. D.
Executive Director

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WHAT'S NEW ?

New Tri-Association Website

A dynamic state-of-the-art webpage features modules that will enable us to communicate efficiently and collaborate across the region. The modules include a news and forms manager, eNotify, school/staff directories, a Job Search Board and a communications portal called (Tri-Collab). A revolving photo gallery and the flags from the countries that make up the Tri-Association, serve as a colorful backdrop to the home page. A special thank you to the schools that sent pictures for this gallery. Please note that we still have a few schools that need to send in their directory updates. Please let us hear from you if you are in this group! Our

goal is to use this website as the main tool for information about all Tri-Association business so I need your help in order to keep the site updated!

Our new web page was developed by the web solutions company, **finalsite**. This project was possible as a result of their sponsorship, and the technical support provided by Ms. Florencia Fernandez, the Webmaster at the American School Foundation of Monterrey. I am indebted to Rob DiMartino, one of the Directors at finalsite for his support, to Florencia for her technical assistance, and to The American School Foundation of Monterrey for their flexibility with this project!

THE TRI-ASSOCIATION
THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN SCHOOLS
OF CENTRAL AMERICA, COLOMBIA - CARIBBEAN AND MEXICO

Quick Links ▾ Search

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Our Mission

The Association of American Schools of Central America, Colombia, Caribbean and Mexico seeks to improve the quality of teaching and learning opportunities for the schools in this region by exploring ways to achieve better understanding through international education, provide an avenue for communication and cooperation among member institutions, and facilitate cooperation with national, state, local, and non-governmental agencies in the field of international education.

Success for all Students

CURRENT NEWS

New Executive Director
Sonia Keller assumed the position of Executive Director this past July 1, 2012.

With Deep Appreciation
Our deepest appreciation goes to Mary Virginia for her leadership and support of the students and educators that are part of the Association.

[read more news »](#)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September, 2012

SUN SEP 23	Registration to "Upward and Onward"
MON SEP 24	Annual Educator's Conference. "Upward & Onward"
TUE SEP 25	Annual Educator's Conference. "Upward & Onward"

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Join us in Cartagena!
Upward and Onward
Tri-Association Annual Conference

GIN
GLOBAL ISSUES NETWORK
April 19th-21st

TRI-Association
Global Issues Network

Please visit us at www.tri-association.org

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Staff Development Advisory Council (SDAC)

The SDAC is a group of educational leaders from the region who will work directly with the Executive Director and serve as a liaison between your schools and the Association. This group will provide feedback on Staff Development initiatives, help set the focus for conferences, and support sustainability for new implementations within the region. Members were selected based on an application process that went to all of the schools in the Tri-Association.

A warm welcome to the SDAC Members for 2012-14

- **Leah Yepez**

I.B. Diploma and Curriculum Coordinator, Fundacion Colegio Americano de Quito, Ecuador

- **Christine Brown**

Deputy Head, The Carol Morgan School, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

- **Ana Maria Duque, Ph.D.**

Curriculum Coordinator, Colegio Bolivar, Cali, Colombia

- **Dan Yamasaki**

Grade 5 Teacher, Colegio Panamericano, Bucaramanga, Colombia

- **Tom Lickety**

Secondary Director for Curriculum & Instruction, Escuela Internacional Sampedrana, San Pedro Sula, Honduras

- **Monica Sanchez**

Special Services Coordinator, Marian Baker School, San Jose, Costa Rica

- **Julie Villand**

Director of Instructional Programs, American School Foundation of Guadalajara, Guadalajara, Mexico



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MISSION

To empower young people to collaborate locally, regionally and globally in order to create sustainable solutions for global issues.

“YOUNITY”

The 1st GIN Conference in our region will be hosted by the Country Day School in San Jose, Costa Rica in April 19-22, 2013.

(√) Mark your calendars and start mobilizing your students to participate in this opportunity to connect and empower by learning and addressing our most pressing global issues! Learn how you can involve your school in this initiative geared towards mobilizing our youth locally on behalf of seeking solutions to global problems!

In the following article Linda Sills, the GIN Program Developer shares practical information on GIN, and how YOUR school can become involved!

Announcing the first Tri-Association's Global Issues Network Conference “YOUNITY”

To be hosted by Country Day School in San Jose, Costa Rica April 19-21, 2013

Global Issues Networks (GINs) are successfully connecting students as they research and seek sustainable solutions to global issues around the world-currently in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, North America and South America.

GINs are groups of students and teachers, working internationally, to develop solutions for global issues. GINs challenge students and teachers to immerse themselves in a chosen issue and to collaborate with peers and other international members to create networks, to think and act critically and creatively. GINs work towards creating innovative sustainable solutions to address real-world global issues.

How do I get information about GIN efforts already underway around the world?

Go to <http://www.global-issues-network.org>

A student alumnus of GIN talks honestly about getting involved- Please watch and share!

<http://www.global-issues-network.org/video/elicia-cousins-participates>

How do we begin to prepare for first GIN Conference in our region?

It is good to begin by reviewing your efforts to date by addressing environmental/global issues with your school community. Then you can begin to form a GIN group made up of students and teachers. You will choose one or two projects for your presentation/s. You will closely monitor and document your efforts in the coming months. For many of you, it will not be creating more work but celebrating and sharing your ongoing efforts.



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Many countries have their own accrediting bodies, and degree recognition differs from country to country. Prospective students who reside outside of the United States are advised to review accreditation requirements for their own country to confirm recognition of their Walden program of choice.

*Only one tuition-reduction benefit may be applied to tuition and fees.

How do we prepare to attend the conference?

The GIN group should meet regularly. Schools are invited to send a GIN team (or two) to the conference. Each team is made up of 2-6 students from Grades 7-12, so the maximum number of students a school could send would be 12. Two adult advisers must accompany your school's students, whether you send one or two teams. A third team may be possible if the numbers allow closer to the end of registration. We will accept a total of 400 students and advisers to participate in the conference.

What are the key responsibilities of the team?

Each student team is asked to prepare an interactive workshop (wireless will be provided at the conference) on their project/ efforts to address a global issue with sustainable solutions. The team will present this workshop to 20-30 other delegates. Also, each team of

students needs to make a short (2 minutes or less) film about their project to be shown at the conference and posted to the website.

What is the format of the student/team presentation?

- 1 Based on an essential question.
- 2 Interactive-wireless will be available in every room
- 3 40 minutes in length divided into presentation, activities and discussion

What are the other components of the conference?

- 4 Keynote speakers from around the world will also present and meet with students.
- 5 Presentations from all student teams and speakers involved in global issues.
- 6 Alumni (recent graduates) panel will also present on their path to creating ways to address Global Issues.

- 7 Global Village groups will be formed to allow for important open discussions on the issues and the solutions. This also strengthens the networks.
- 8 Global Issues Fair will offer students the chance to talk with people creating change in the community.
- 9 Film Festival will screen the film made by each team on their project so that every team's efforts are shared with the entire delegation. These films will then be posted on our GIN/TRI-ASSOCIATION website to be constructed.
- 10 Registration Costs?
Every effort is being made to hold costs down so that the focus is on the process and experience of GIN.
 - Hotel cost will be held down with breakfast included
- Registration is still being worked out but assume it will be very fair.
- Registration will open in January. (400 participants maximum)
- All meals will be provided
- All local transportation will be provided
- 11 More background on the Global Issues Network?
Inspired by J.F. Rischard in his book, High Noon: Twenty Global Problems and Twenty Years to Solve Them, the GIN Network has grown to become a dynamic, engaging, and relevant forum through which students are working together to address some of the weightiest issues facing human societies and our delicate global ecosystem. With support from the Tri-Association leadership and the involvement of GIN organizers from other regions of the world, the first GIN Conference in

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our region will provide an opportunity for regional schools to connect with each other as well as with the broader global GIN community.

12 How can I get additional information?

There will be a couple of presentations on getting involved in GIN planned for the upcoming Tri-Association Annual Conference "Onward and Upward" in Cartagena 9-24 to 9-28. Linda Sills will also have an exhibitor table at this conference to answer more questions and will have a presentation on Thursday from 4:00-5:00.

A website to create the network and to support the conference is under construction by the GIN Team. Meanwhile, schools are encouraged to support school-based environmental clubs and action

groups and to inform them about the GIN network and our upcoming future regional conference.

Please have your students participate!

Contacts for Questions:

Linda Sills: GIN Program Developer

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Joshua Knudson: CountryDay School GIN Team

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Sonia Keller: Executive Director of Tri-Association

skeller@tri-association.org



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The Tri-Association 2012 Award Recipients

Congratulations to the following organizations:

- **Paul. G. Orr Award**

Children of Haiti Project

- **Middle School Global Leadership Award**

American School of Tampico, Tampico, Mexico
(sponsored by TieCare)

- **Community Service Award**

Lincoln International Academy, Managua,
Nicaragua (sponsored by SUNY at Buffalo)

*"Never doubt that a small
group of thoughtful,
committed, citizens can
change the world. Indeed, it is
the only thing that ever has."*

Margaret Mead



On Tuesday January 12, 2010 at 16:23 p.m. a 7.0 magnitude earthquake hit the island of Haiti with devastating effects! A group of socially minded educational leaders responded to the tragedy by

mobilizing the international community in support of an educational initiative to help Haiti's most vulnerable population: the children.

The Children of Haiti Project was thus born, and today it runs a program for children ages 4-7, which provides a formal education five days a week in a clean and safe environment for eighty-eight children. One might think that educating only eighty-eight children out of the thousands upon thousands that are in need is like throwing a pebble that creates one tiny ripple in an enormous pond. However, that effort is making all the difference in the lives of these eighty-eight children!

Today the needs of the Children of Haiti are more pressing than ever! Help us create more ripples by joining this important cause!

Go to www.childrenofhaitiproject.org

You can also donate at the upcoming Tri-Association Conference in Cartagena.

It is our privilege to present the Paul G. Orr Award to the Children of Haiti Project for portraying the ideals of this Award, and in recognition of its vision, social conscientiousness and stewardship on behalf of Haiti's most vulnerable population.

After the meeting in AAIE, Forrest Broman, Chairperson of the COHP Board of Directors, wrote the following article:

AAIE Silent Auction Raises Funds for the Children of Haiti Project (COHP) on Eve of School's Second Anniversary

During their annual conference in Boston last February, AAIE (Association for the Advancement of International Education) conducted a silent auction to benefit the students being served by the Children of Haiti Project (COHP), an educational, health and nutrition program for 88 children living in a tent camp in Haiti. Supported by over 35 international schools, several regional associations, and other international organizations, COHP is completing its second year of operations in April.

AAIE raised over \$7,300 in this effort, providing sponsorship of three COHP students as the small school in Port-au-Prince approaches its second anniversary



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and seeks funding for its third year of operations. Several agencies including Search Associates, Tie Care, (a leading insurance agency for international educators), EARCOS (East Asia Regional Council of Schools), Village Camps, Search Associates, SUNY (Buffalo), The International Educator (TIE), and the PTC (Principals' Training Center), have also renewed their pledges for year three.

Notably, fifteen of the schools in ASOMEX, the regional association of American schools in Mexico, recently pledged to support one COHP child for COHP's third year as well. The Association of American Schools of Central America, Colombia, Caribbean & Mexico, also known as the Tri-Association, has been particularly helpful in supporting the Children of Haiti Project. Last fall at their annual conference in Monterrey, COHP board members Frank Anderson, Jeff Keller and Pat Handly-Johnson raised significant funds through the sale of post card pledges.

Following a recent visit to Haiti, COHP, board member Frank Anderson said, **"I observed the entire day of well-organized morning and afternoon class sessions -- positive things are happening!"**

Despite all the positive gains the new school is achieving, Anderson cautions, **"We need to all be reminded that globally Haiti is 'yesterday's news'. We have already accomplished much for the involved precious youngsters whom we service, but so much more needs our attention."**

Chairman of the COHP executive committee, Forrest Broman stated, **"COHP is developing as designed, to represent a way in which international schools and their supporting agencies can unite to make a significant difference in the lives of targeted children living in destitution and poverty."**

Further information on COHP, and how your school can help support its children, is available at childrenofhaitiproject.org



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— Priyank Mathur, American Embassy School, New Delhi ('04) and Boston University ('07)

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Their Passion Earns Them The Award

The Global Leadership Award

Lula Garcia

*MS Science Teacher
The American School of Tampico*

Representatives of the Atlantic Rising Project visited the American School of Tampico two years ago to share their passion for the environment. These visitors arrived by boat to the port as they navigated the Atlantic Ocean raising awareness of the negative effects of global warming. ATS Middle School students were so strongly influenced by the three young sailors that they created a group named ECOSTUCO and, more than enthusiastically, became environmentalists who reached beyond the school walls.

ATS Green initiatives are greatly commendable, but so are the initiatives of many other schools like ours. So what makes these projects worthy of awards granted by the Mexican Government and more recently by the Tri Association? Students' passion and the fact that these programs are entirely run by students are two outstanding and highly commendable characteristics. It has definitely been the drive of these kids that has prompted a culture change at ATS.

ATS students promote global awareness and responsibility within the community through role modeling. One of the largest and most established projects at ATS is the recycling program. Paper, plastic and batteries are the most popular recycled materials. Students are very enthusiastic about their vegetable garden on campus which allows the reduction of their carbon footprint while they produce ingredients for a healthy salad. The local beach is a favorite place for students to clean and to educate visitors on the effects of humans on the waterfronts. ATS students are well known in the city for the 3R's Campaign. Each beach cleanup, each environmental campaign, each rescued animal or harvested vegetable is a step towards making this a better world. While their conservationist efforts are certainly an asset to the local environment, students also produce a profit by commercializing recycled materials. It is educational, fun and gives them money!

Students have identified the need to learn more and teach others how to properly dispose and recycle electronic waste and the impact on the environment of not doing so. That is where the future goals are being set. The beginning of the school year is filled with the excitement for achieving new and ambitious objectives. Students as well as their parents and teachers are extremely motivated by the unexpected honor of being the recipients of The Global Leadership Award. Such recognition boosts the spirits as the students take pride in being acknowledged as responsible and influential members of their community.



REGIONAL NEWS

We welcome our New Invitational Members:

Colegio La Candelaria - Knightsbridge Schools International

Bogota, Colombia
(Gloria Zapata, Director)

Panama Pacifico Academy

Panama City
(Wendy McArthur, Director)

Metropolitan School

Panama City
(Nick Reeves, Director)

New Directors in the Region

Steven Hupp

Returns to the region as the Director of Colegio Maya in Guatemala City

Rajiv Bhat

Comes to the region as the Director of the International School of Panama

Gregory Hedger

Returns to the region as the Director of Escuela Campo Alegre in Caracas, Venezuela



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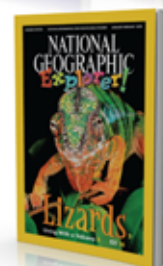
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6 LEVELS
GRADES 1 - 6



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2012-13

"ONWARD & UPWARD": ANNUAL EDUCATORS' CONFERENCE

Location: Cartagena, Colombia
Date: September 24-28, 2012

ASOMEX DIRECTORS

Location: Hotel Cartagena Hilton
Date: September 25, 2012
Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.

ASCCA DIRECTORS

Location: Hotel Cartagena Hilton
Date: September 28, 2012
Time: 2:30-6:00 p.m.

TRI-ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING

Location: Atlanta, Georgia
Date: November 27, 2012
Time: 12:30 -1:30 p.m.

ACCAS

General Business Meeting
Location: Atlanta, Georgia
Date: November 27, 2012
Time: 3:30-5:00 p.m.

AAIE CONFERENCE: "PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE IN A DIVERSE WORLD"

Location: San Francisco
Date: February 14-17, 2013

TRI-ASSOCIATION'S LITERACY INSTITUTE II: "LIFTING THE LEVEL OF LITERACY INSTRUCTION TO MAXIMIZE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT"

Location: American School Foundation
Monterrey, Mexico
Date: March 3- 8, 2013

TRI-ASSOCIATION BOARD

Location: Hotel Cartagena Hilton Business Center
Date: September 25, 2012
Time: 12:00-2:00 p.m.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Location: Hotel Cartagena Hilton
Date: September 26, 2012
Time: 5:00-6:00 p.m.

2012 AdvancED LATIN AMERICAN CONFERENCE: "CREATING THE FUTURE: LOCAL FOCUS, GLOBAL IMPACT"

Location: Atlanta, Georgia
Date: November 27-29, 2012

TRI-ASSOCIATION ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Location: Atlanta, Georgia
Date: November 27, 2012
Time: 2:30-3:30 p.m.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS' MEETING

Location: Washington D.C.
Date: December 13-15, 2012

NAIS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Location: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Date: February 27-March 2, 2013

GIN (Global Issues Network)

Conference: "YOUNITY"
Location: Country Day School, San Jose, Costa Rica
Date: April 19-22, 2013

ASOMEX CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2012-13

	EVENT	HOST SCHOOL	DATE
1	Math Counts (Teachers Training)	ASF	Sep. 21-23
2	Directors Meeting	Cartagena, Colombia	Sep. 24
3	Tri Association Conference	Cartagena, Colombia	Sep. 24-28
4	Security Directors Summit	JFK	Oct. 11-12
5	Tennis/Golf (Middle School)	ASPV	Nov. 2 - 6
6	Track and Field All Categories	TBD	TBD
7	Business Managers	ASF Guadalajara	Jan. 17-19
8	Volleyball (Inf. & Juv. A,B,C, Boys & Girls)	ASFG	Jan. 25-30
9	Soccer (Juv. A Boys & Girls)	ASFG	Jan. 25-31
10	Basketball Inf & Juv A Boys & Girls	CAP	Feb. 7 - Feb. 12
11	Soccer (Juv. C Boys & Girls)	CAP	Feb. 7 - Feb. 12
12	Soccer (Juv. B Boys and Girls)	JFK	Feb. 28 - March 3
13	Basketball Juv. B & C Boys & Girls	ASF México	April 19-23
14	Arts Festival & Creative Writing	Peterson	April 26-27
15	Directors & Athletic Directors Meeting	Cancún	May 17-19

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ASOMEX INVITATIONAL EVENTS

1	Student Leadership Conference	AIM	Sep. 22-23
2	Destination Imagination (Manager training)	ISR	Oct. 12 - 13
3	Destination Imagination (Manager training)	AS Puebla	Oct. 19-20
4	Spanish Teachers Training	AS Puebla	Nov. 7-9
5	ISRMUN	ISR - Monterrey	Nov. 8 -10
6	Young Authors	Colegio Inglés	Nov. 8-11
7	Debate and Dialogue Competition	ASF México	Nov. 30 - Dec. 1
8	Swimming (all groups)	TBD	TBD
9	Math Counts (Team Training Competition)	ASFG	Jan. 18-20
10	Model U.N.	AS Puebla	Jan. 23-25
11	CIMUN (Grades 6-9)	Colegio Inglés	Feb. 6 - 8
12	Model U.N. (6th-12th grade)	ASF Monterrey	Feb. 14-16
13	Soccer Rápido (fut 7) Juv ABC	Cancún	Feb. 21-23
14	DI National Tournament	ISR - Monterrey	March 2
15	Math Counts Competition Grade 7-8	Westhill Institute	March 8-10
16	DI National Tournament	AS-Puebla	March 16
17	Environment (grades 7-12)	Cancún	April
18	CAN MUN Grades 9-12	Cancún	Nov. 16-17
19	SUNS (7-9)	Saltillo	Dec. 6-8

ASSCA CALENDAR 2012 - 2013

EVENT	SCHOOL/PLACE	COUNTRY	DATES
AD CONFERENCE	Not scheduled for this year		
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE	Lincoln International Academy	NIC	Sept. 20-23
TRI-ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE	Cartagena de Indias, Colombia	COL	Sept. 24-28
LARGE SCHOOL BASKETBALL	American School of Guatemala	GUA	Oct. 10-14
SMALL SCHOOL BASKETBALL	Marian Baker School	CRC	Oct. 24-28
INVITATIONAL PANAMUN	International School of Panama	PAN	Oct. 24-26
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRIN. MEETING	Escuela Internacional Sampedrana	HON	Nov. 1-4
KNOWLEDGE BOWL	International School of Panama	PAN	Nov. 14-18
ES PRINCIPALS CONFERENCE	Marian Baker School	CRC	Nov. 5- 8
KNOWLEDGE BOWL	Escuela Americana	SAL	NOV. 10-14
MUSIC FESTIVAL	Escuela Internacional Sampedrana		Jan. 31-Feb. 3
LARGE SCHOOL SOCCER	American School of Tegucigalpa	HON	Feb. 27-Mar. 3
SMALL SCHOOL SOCCER	Colegio Maya	GUA	Mar. 13-17
INVITATIONAL CROSS COUNTRY	Country Day School	CRC	Apr. 4-7
INVITATIONAL VOLLEYBALL	American Nicaraguan School	NIC	Apr. 10-14
INVITATIONAL G-I-N CONFERENCE	Country Day School	CRC	Apr. 10-21
SECONDARY SCHOOL PRIN. MEETING	St. Augustine School	NIC	Apr. 25-28
GENERAL DIRECTORS MEETING	Miami	USA	May 1-5

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“Taming the Wild Text”

by Pam Allyn

A top-10 list of strategies to help the struggling reader become fierce, unafraid, and strong.

We learn to do well what we learn to love; it's as true in reading as in anything else. For 10 years, I've guided a reading program for boys at the Children's Village, a residential school in New York City for children in foster care. These boys have been through bruising school and home experiences that have made them feel extra ordinarily vulnerable as readers. Many have told me that they've never once experienced pleasure in reading. But over the years, as we've built a culture for reading, I've seen many of these strugglers make a breakthrough; they stop seeing their struggles as a barrier to success and begin to see them within the larger picture of the challenges all readers experience as they learn to find pleasure in print.

One of my students told me that the first time he ever experienced joy in reading was when I read to him from *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak. With his

eyes full of tears, he said, *"I feel a lot like Max sometimes, all alone. But he makes me feel brave again."*

The truth is, we're all struggling readers. At some time today or tomorrow, you'll be reading something and you'll feel the print sliding away from you, your sense of power over the page slipping, your comprehension becoming murkier as you press on. It doesn't feel good. There are children who feel this every day, whether looking at a street sign or a simple picture book. When the world of print lacks deep meaning for a child, the reading experience becomes like wandering in an unfamiliar universe.

These are the kids in our classrooms who search hungrily for distraction. You know them well. They'll look for any escape—using the bathroom or talking to a friend—as soon as reading time begins. Unlike Max in *Where the Wild Things Are*, who stands with his sword ready to fight the wild things, these students avoid encounters with text at all costs.

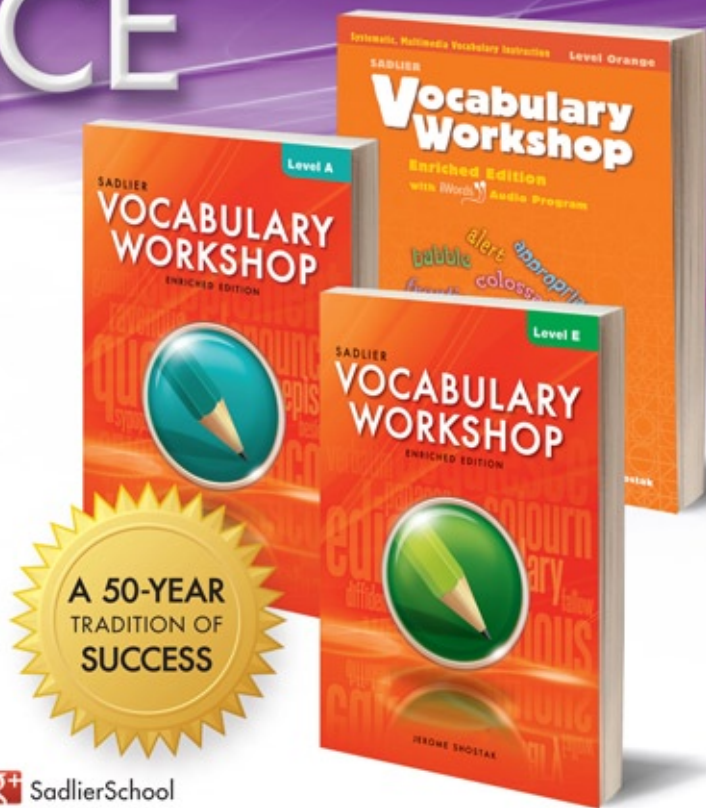
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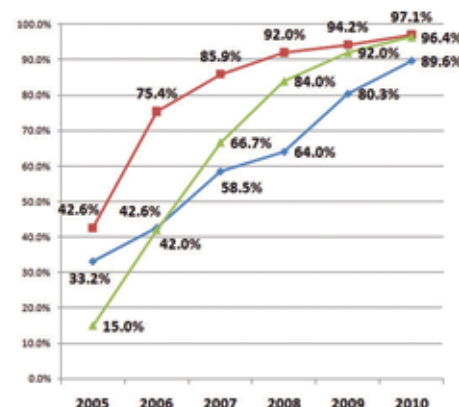
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For language is a wild thing. Whether the words are unfamiliar, the story unusual, or the text about complex and layered information, the wild elements of language present one challenge after another to a struggling reader.

It's vital that we nurture a love for reading in all children from a young age—especially those who find reading daunting—so we eliminate the danger of illiteracy for them. The National Center for Education Statistics notes that U.S. public school students who reported reading for fun almost every day scored higher on average on the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress than did students who reported doing so less frequently. Students who reported never or hardly ever reading for fun scored lowest.¹ Adults who never become competent readers have difficulty not only with finding work or keeping jobs but also with writing letters or e-mails, filling out forms, and assisting their children with homework.

Ten Actions for Creating a Reading Culture

From my observations at the Children's Village and my decades of work with vulnerable readers, I have built a top-10 list for how teachers can create a classroom culture that

ensures that all students fall in love with reading. From that love, students will build reading muscles for lifelong strength. Through these actions, we can help each struggling reader arm himself or herself for the joys of engaging with the wild thing of printed text—and taming it.

1. Don't judge the reader.

Environments that offer many reading materials at different levels and in different forms—without judging any form as superior—enable students to find the materials that work best for them. Today's reader is exposed to more media, in all forms, than any reader before. Avid readers, and some budding readers, will read anything: cereal boxes, magazines, posters, video game instructions, graphic novels. It's essential that teachers acknowledge these forms of reading as "real" and not simply validate and praise award-winning chapter books, for example.

Ask students to describe times when reading felt good to them, what they were reading at the time, and why it felt good. Don't dismiss their descriptions of the sports page, a great website, or a manual for how to build a castle. Embrace all these as signs of an inspired reading life.

Today's readers use different forms of media—e-mails, text messages, blog posts, and so on—to communicate. Name these communications as reading, too, and celebrate any minutes a child spends absorbing print. Using these methods of communication in the classroom can make the reader more aware of his or her ability as a literate person and spur confidence to read more.

Finally, never judge the older reader who needs to read books at lower levels to build stamina and fluency. Too often we fixate on titles read, when in fact the key to lifelong literacy is reading frequently and ingesting a high number of words.

2. Offer a range of materials.

Students may be reluctant readers not because they lack basic skills, but because they haven't been exposed to materials suited to their interests, ability, and temperament. A 2008 survey by Scholastic and Yankelovich² found that despite the abundance of information and reading materials out there, "55 percent of the children surveyed agreed with the statement 'There aren't enough really good books for boys/girls my age'" (p. 47). A key reason that children ages 9–17 don't read more books for fun is that they have trouble finding books they like. Only 15 percent said they don't read for fun

because they "don't like to read."

These findings imply that we must introduce kids to a wide range of reading materials. Finding books and other reading resources that will match your most struggling readers' interests and passions might be easier than you think. Many educators have created websites, blogs, and Facebook pages that discuss ways to engage reluctant readers and suggest books to tempt them.³ Looking at the websites of Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and indie booksellers, one can often find new titles. Local librarians—those trustworthy and stalwart supporters of reading—if asked, will also provide lots of guidance.

3. Provide time for dialogue.

Just because students appear to be reading independently doesn't mean teachers can forsake the social aspect of reading.

Often, reluctant readers are given less time than fluent readers to be social and interactive about reading because they're thought to need more practice time. The absence of this vital dialogue only contributes to struggling readers' feeling of isolation and rarely inspires them to pursue more challenging texts.

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Dialogue is a window into another person's reading experience and is an effective way to get people excited about reading. And dialogue doesn't always mean traditional discussion about comprehension or plot summaries. It can also mean asking students what they're wondering about or what they're hoping will surprise them as they read on. Or encouraging students to use Twitter or text messaging to share ideas from their reading. Rather than a dry Q and A with the teacher having the "right" answer and students guessing at it, dialogue should accomplish some genuine purpose.

With boys at the Children's Village, I led a unit of study on social issues and debate. Boys met in small groups and read articles on subjects that interested them; then each of them developed a question to pursue together, incorporating their different points of view.

When a teacher and student read together or talk one-on-one about a reading selection, they can enter into a safe, nurturing dialogue that builds a literacy bond. And one way to create dialogue among peers is to create text clubs. Talking about graphic novels, comics, short stories, or poems offers struggling readers a chance to explore big ideas in depth through text that's not necessarily "big."

We can model how we delve into text of all sorts and develop our own complex thinking through reading a few pages in a comic book or a one-page blog post. Read aloud from easier texts and celebrate the genius of Dr. Seuss or Arnold Lobel, valuing their sophisticated approach to language even in texts that are easier to read.

4. Give readers a tool kit.

Max's sword is his tool and his protection; he's ready to face the wild things because he's got what he needs. Our struggling readers often feel defenseless around print. Let's arm them with everything they need. We give vulnerable readers a chance to jump over hurdles when we equip them with resources like alphabet charts, word boxes, word walls, or a key ring holding cards printed with commonly challenging words and pictures or clues to meaning. Many digital devices can help, such as word lists and other reading-relevant applications on cell phones or smartphones, e-readers, and tablet computers.

5. Let readers read at their comfort level.

Too often, parents and teachers assume a student is at a certain reading level because of his or her age; they may even say things like *"this is where he should be now."* Instead, we should assess the independent reading level of each

student and guide him or her to read texts at that level as well as texts at a slightly lower and slightly higher level. This practice encourages comfort with many different reading materials and validates the fact that authentic readers read at a variety of levels.

Books slightly below the student's reading level encourage that student to read faster and more confidently. Such books should never be underestimated, and a student should never be ashamed to read them. Texts at a slightly higher level should be on subjects or by authors whom students truly love, motivating them to push themselves as readers and thinkers.

Students should never be locked into one level. In one classroom, I encountered a student unhappily reading the Junie B. Jones series. I asked him why he was reading it if he didn't like it, and he said, *"It's at my level; it's all I'm allowed to read."* This book is never going to motivate this kid. I'd much rather he read one book about something he loves, like sharks, skimming the parts he doesn't quite comprehend, to build his sense of himself as a reader who asks questions, gets excited about new information, and wanders through new territory.

6. Dive deep.

Literature gives us all an opportunity to think about the world we live in and react to it in a deeply personal way. Talking to students about their reactions allows them to express their feelings in safe and nonthreatening ways. Start by having students share their favorite reading places—and celebrate the sheer fact that they chose to read.

Struggling readers need ways to discuss books deeply with dignity; this helps them see that a text doesn't have to be super-long to be worth a deep response. You might read simpler texts aloud to demonstrate weighty thinking. For example, read from a picture book like *Fox* by Margaret Wild, then ask students to sketch their response to one part that moved or inspired them and share the response with a partner.

Thoughtful dialogue makes the reading experience social and deepens comprehension. Challenged readers often welcome going through a process I refer to as the LitLoop: reading, writing, speaking, and listening—some of the time with others who are reading the same material. Rather than waiting for a show of hands from your active participants, let all students communicate about a book through journaling and blogging within your class or across different classrooms. This inspires reluctant readers to share ideas.



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Two ways to engage readers are to highlight purpose (when reading feels hard, a struggler wants to know why he or she is doing it) and to broaden audience. Reading the same text with other students in different grades, schools, or countries and sharing experiences through writing (often using technology) combines both methods and is extraordinarily motivating. I've arranged for a class of students in Harlem, New York, to regularly chat through Skype with students in Kibera, Kenya. The New York students' motivation for reading their assigned poems is extremely high now because they know they'll be talking about these poems across many miles.

7. Value browsing and rereading.

Browsing and rereading are signs of a strong reader. Rereading builds comprehension; a person is reading differently every time he or she comes to the text. Find moments to praise your students who spend time browsing, and compliment them on rereading.

Encourage learners to reread a favorite story in another form; for instance, many classic texts have been rewritten as graphic novels. Poems such as *"Honey, I Love"* by Eloise

Greenfield have been retold in picture books. Finding stories told in different guises can appeal to the struggling reader who's looking for ways to enjoy reading across multiple genres.

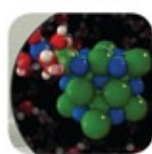
8. Build stamina.

"Quick reads" give a challenged student a successful reading experience without making that student wait weeks to feel successful. Using a timer is a great way to get a resistant reader to commit to small increments of reading. For some reason, setting the timer to odd times, such as 13 minutes, really helps! And keep your commitment; don't ever add time even if your readers seem totally settled in. The students will come to trust that you keep your word and will be able to add more minutes as they build their reading muscles.

Challenge reluctant readers to read further on topics they enjoy and have explored already rather than to try new topics, which requires wading through a lot of new vocabulary. Reading within one's *"passion zone"* is motivational. Tell students that practicing reading fast will help them build stamina and that reading different texts on

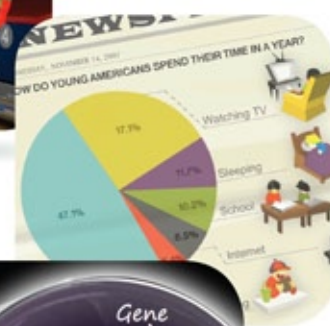


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one subject will help them learn how people talk about the same ideas in different ways.

Kyle, one boy at the Children's Village, loved cars, so those of us working with him created a collection of texts at different levels that reflected this passion—a poem, a magazine article, a website, and an excerpt from *The Phantom Tollbooth* in which the main character sits in an amazing little car. Kyle read from that basket for hours.

9. Teach students to curate their own reading lives.

In this era, reading is varied and rich with possibility. We should empower students to choose what they read and to see themselves as readers who sample widely across genres. Show kids different ways to keep a record of the material they read—from writing book lists on bookmarks to keep in their current paperback, to saving book titles in a computerized database, to creating e-files of books that include information about the author, characters, and other books in a series. Upload these files onto a wiki or class blog so others can dip in. Encouraging students to use their mobile devices to record the authors and titles of books they liked (or didn't) motivates them.

10. Remember, joy matters.

Most reluctant readers have experienced a great deal of anxiety and stress around reading in their lives. What will it take for such readers to experience the joy of reading? Getting to joy is important, because the prize of reading competence comes at great cost. What too many challenged readers remember, even once they read well, is the hardship and loneliness of that long trek uphill.

Let's create a world for all readers that's full of the joy of discovery, imagination, and information. The only way to do this is to make the world come alive with stories students will love and texts that connect to their passions. Let's hand reluctant readers the sword with which to conquer the wild things of language—and learn to love reading.

Endnotes

- 1 National Center for Education Statistics. (2011). *Reading 2011: National Assessment of Educational Progress at grades 4 and 8*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- 2 Scholastic & Yankelovich. (2008). *Kids and family reading report: Reading in the 21st century: Turning the page with technology*. New York: Scholastic.
- 3 Anita Silvey; Leonard Marcus; Franki Sibberson and Mary Lee Hahn; and Mr. Schu are a few advocates with blogs or websites that provide guidance on children's reading.

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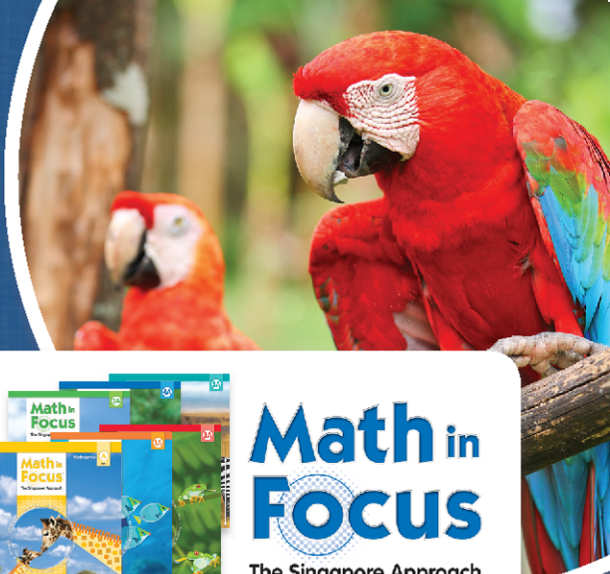


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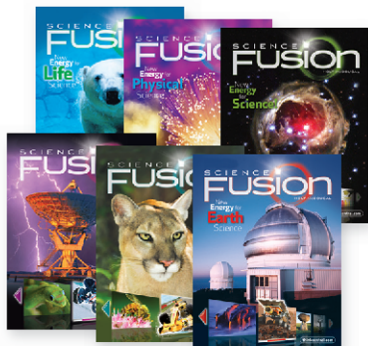
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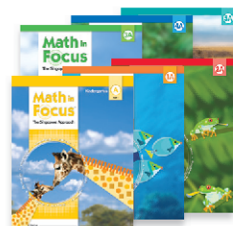


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Forests and Trees

by Jennifer Abrams

Happy July! Time to breathe. Time to sit in silence. Hear the surf. Hear the birds. Still oneself. And just be. Being hasn't received a lot of space in my life but it has been ever more present and appreciated. Because adding more 'being' helps me go macro.

By way of defining the landscape, for me, macro is the 'forest'; micro is the 'trees.' The forest has captured my attention lately and it has been refreshing! Surprising. Life giving. As a 'go to' view, I normally look through the trees. Implementation? I am your gal. Figuring out how many minutes an activity will take in a workshop? I am there. Getting the logistical 'to do' list together? Count me in. I am known as a detail person. Maps, time frames, schedules? I got your back. Specifics are my thing. They are a strength.

But to really embody my goal to care big, I need to go macro. Last week in a session on coaching, a nurse said, "You care. What about?" I responded, "About many things. Give me the topic and I will tell you why it is important to care about it." In this context, I was working with hospital personnel on coaching skills. I could tell each one of them why they made a difference and how their peer coaching work could help others be the best at whatever they do; environmental services, admissions, patient billing, nurses, diabetes education, IT. Each person contributes to the whole of a patient's care.

In Columbus, OH, I went 'forest' during my workshop on active participation. Beyond knowing student engagement is great for the dendrites, what else are we doing by having students speak and write and work together? How about this for an answer?

"If we expect our youth to become adults who

exercise reflective judgment, [take] responsibility for themselves and their community, and... take part in shaping their country... then the environment in which they are schooled must teach them how to do that – it must give them practice in real responsibility, real dialogue and real authority." - Scott Nine – Executive Director of the Institute for Democratic Education in America quoted in Parker Palmer's *Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit*. That's a macro view in my book.

At the end of the month I am going to work with speech language therapists on the importance of finding their voice and their need to share their expertise in possibly new and bolder ways back at their school sites so "effective communication is accessible and achievable for all." In August, lead mentors and I will work together as they look ahead to orientation and how they will express to their new teachers the relevance and value of reflection and collaboration.

In my life I am sensing a pattern...

While some might groan at meetings where building vision and stating a mission are the work, for me, going macro provides inspiration, empowerment, vitality, dynamism, energy, spirit and connection to the Work with a capital 'W.' Here's to sunny days with time to go macro. Enjoy the view.

As always, if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to email me at

Jennifer@jenniferabrams.com

I look forward to hearing from you!



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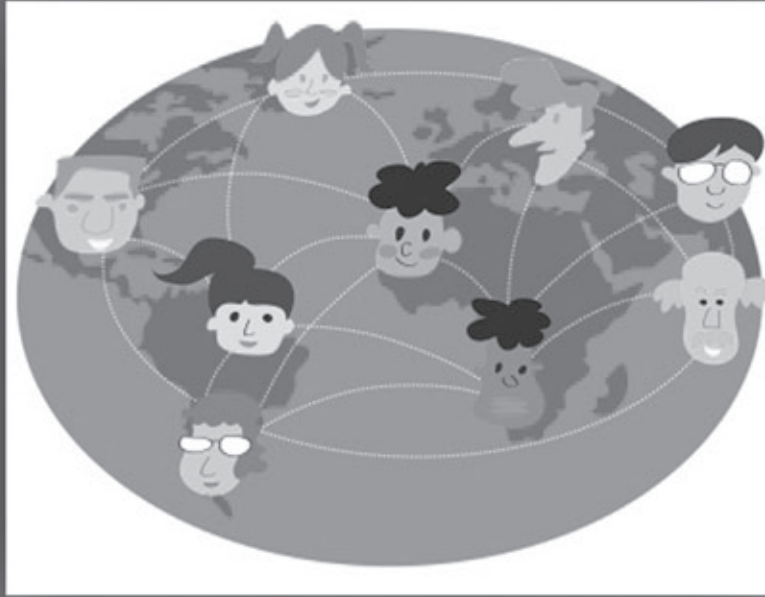
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Learning in a Caring Culture Called Tribes

By Judi Fenton

I began my overseas career a seasoned educator from the United States. I entered international education totally sold on the Tribes process. However, it wasn't until I began teaching in China, and subsequently in the Dominican Republic, that I realized truly how important resiliency and the Tribes process was. The need to be resilient and to feel connected is especially important for students whose support systems are fragmented.

During my first year in China I team-taught a small group of middle and high school students in grades 6-11. Five of my students had brothers and sisters in the class. Instruction was in English, yet only 25% of my group were native English speakers. I quickly realized the task ahead of me went well beyond teaching my students content using the English language. My students desperately needed to feel included... to feel a part of a community. Brothers and sisters in the same classroom, high school students mixed with middle school students, adolescents, multi-cultural diversity, language barriers... a challenging combination. Would the Tribes process be effective here?

Each morning I held a community circle and each day my students worked in cooperative groups using the Tribes TLC learning experience format as a guide to lessons. The Tribes agreements proved to be a powerful tool, as they gave all students an understandable framework with which to relate. It didn't take long for the students to begin to support one another and for my non-English speaking students to begin to feel safe. Not surprisingly, the right to pass was the agreement most used at first; it ensured safety. I'll never forget

the joy my class felt when my most timid student, a boy from South Korea, risked speaking for the first time during community circle! The following year, as a ninth grader, this same boy ran for a student body office and won. The protective factors of caring and support, positive expectations, and active participation were fully realized through the implementation of the Tribes process in my classroom. I saw the effects of this daily. The Tribes agreements used by brothers and sisters at school spilled over into their homes. High school students modeled kindness and sincerity when working with middle school peers. Strong, lasting friendships

"We, as educators, must find that balance between the world of the mind and that of the heart and soul. It is the mind that preoccupies my time and that will take us to the information age. But it is the heart and soul that will allow us to remain connected to my own humanity, that will build that bridge between us...and create a good society."

By Paul D. Houston

were forged. High levels of trust and mutual respect led to rapt attention when classmates shared information about their home countries. Students new to the classroom were embraced and made to feel welcome and safe. Laughter and learning developed as the norms.

It wasn't until the students became completely immersed in the stage of inclusion that I began to realize their full potential, not just as honorable caring citizens, but as human beings capable of building bridges to world peace and global interdependence. My students were from many different cultures, with differing political perspectives. Yet they had become best friends, had mastered attentive listening, shared a common language, and demonstrated respect for differing points of view. When the class began moving into the stage of influence, I made a conscious effort to step back and transfer responsibility to the group. As the students gained more experience in solving problems and in resolving classroom conflicts, they began to branch out, bringing issues from outside of the classroom to community circle. Problems that occurred on the bus and playground, as well as issues from the housing units where they lived, were discussed and resolved. Their ability to approach conflict in a non-aggressive manner was key to their growth as future leaders.

From our international schools will come young adults most likely to live and work abroad

throughout their careers – resilient, fully bilingual, politically astute young people who possess world awareness and cross-cultural understanding. Having practiced and internalized the Tribes TLC collaborative skills in an atmosphere of mutual respect, they will also possess the problem solving skills, pro-social behaviors, and autonomy necessary to function as citizens of a multi-cultural, global society.

Will my students become global leaders? Will they be instrumental in bringing about world peace? Not all of them, but I feel certain some will. As their teacher, I know in my heart that they are different. Along with their global perspective, I know that these students possess the ingredients needed to achieve a balance between the mind, the heart, and the soul... the very ingredients needed to build bridges between nations.

For more information, see the Tri Association Pre-Conference Institute description and/or visit the Tribes website at www.tribes.com

Author's note: *This article is written for teachers and administrators who understand the fear and vulnerability many new students feel when they step into a classroom in a foreign country for the very first time, and the importance for **all** students to feel connected and accepted as caring, capable, young people.*

If the article piques your interest, I hope you'll join me during the Tri Association Pre-Conference Institute to learn, first-hand, how to implement the Tribes process in your classroom or school. Join me. I promise it'll be interesting and fun!

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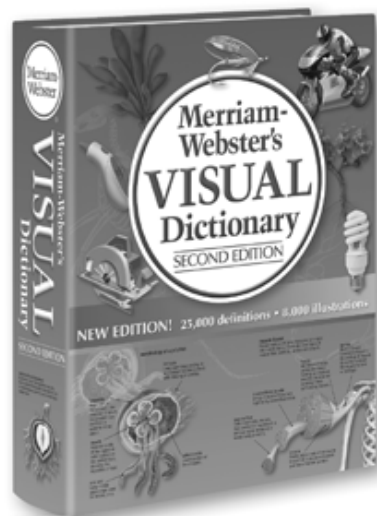
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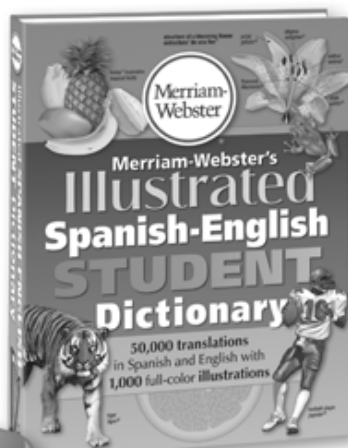
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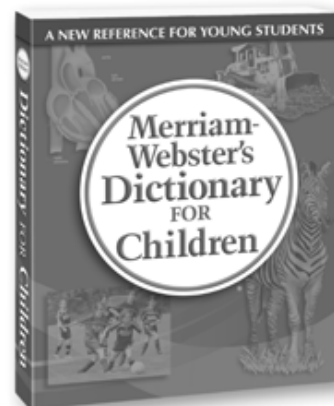


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OVERSEAS RECRUITING FAIRS 2012-2013

DATE	LOCATION	ORGANIZATION
January 4-6, 2013	Melbourne, Australia	Search Associates
January 4-7, 2013	Bangkok, Thailand	ISS
March 8-10, 2013	Bangkok, Thailand	Search Associates
December 2-4, 2012	Atlanta, Georgia	ISS
Jan 18-20, 2013	Hong Kong, China	Search Associates
February 5-7, 2013	Waterloo, Iowa	University of Northern Iowa
January 25-27, 2013	Toronto, Canada	Search Associates
April 20-22, 2012	London	CIS
February 7-10, 2013	Cambridge, Massachusetts	Search Associates
January 25-27, 2013	Kingston, Canada	Queen's College
April 27-29, 2012	London, England (Spring)	Search Associates
February 10-14, 2013	San Francisco, California	ISS
February 16-18, 2013	San Francisco, California	Search Associates
June 15-17, 2012	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	ISS
February 23-25, 2012	Dubai, U.A.E.	Search Associates
December 7-9, 2012	Johannesburg	Search Associates
January 8-11, 2013	Bangkok, Thailand	Search Associates
January 17-20, 2013	London	CIS
January 24-28, 2013	London, England	Search Associates
June 22-24, 2012	Bethesda, Maryland	Search Associates
November 5-6, 2012	Leadership	

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► **From the Executive Director**

A special note of appreciation to
the schools and individuals who
contributed articles and pictures
for this issue of the newsletter.
I encourage you to share the
wonderful work taking place in
your schools by sending us your
news! This newsletter is published
three times a year; in the Fall,
Winter and Spring. The deadlines
for submission of entries are:

- September 1st
- February 1st
- May 1st



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