



LACM SIG NEWS

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 4

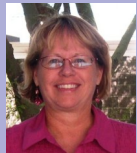
MARCH 2010

LACM SIG:

To provide a forum for the discussion of learning center goals, practices, supervision, and evaluation among learning assistance center managers and staff.



Penny Turrentine
LACM SIG Co-Leader



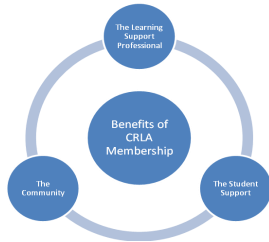
Dorothy Briggs
LACM SIG Co-Leader



CRLA Conference
November 3-6
Salt Lake City

The Benefits of CRLA Membership At A Glance

By Laura Everett,
UA THINK TANK
Tutor Coordinator



CRLA Membership creates a cycle of growth and continuity between the learning support professionals who join, the students who are employed by them, and the overall community. Professionals who join are part of a community of peers who participate in the CRLA national conference and publish in the Journal of College Reading and Learning, Special Interest Groups. By networking with others in the field, members share professional values, research and knowledge, thus developing a shared vocabulary of learning support. Peer tutors and mentors, who are often students themselves, also benefit when their professional supervisors are members of CRLA. If their learning center has International Tutor Program Certification and/

or International Mentor Program Certification, they are trained in a standardized format which is recognized by all member institutions.

Often, this is their first or second job experience, so they are learning, not only tutoring or mentoring skills, but also basic job etiquette.

These skills will eventually benefit the community as a whole by developing well-rounded, employable young professionals with expertise not only studying, but helping others learn in their chosen field.

At times, the tutoring or mentoring experience will inspire a career in educational support, producing a new generation of learning support professionals.

The What, Where, Why and How????

By Dorothy Briggs

Do you have questions about the ins and outs of your job? Have you looked to our Wiki for resources? Have you added your own resources and thereby helped another person in our network? If these questions haunt you, you only need to look at the Wiki for answers!

Check it out! The Wiki is located at: <http://lacmsig.pbworks.com/>

I would like a mentor since I'm new to learning center management. Are there any people willing to assist me?

I'm doing a workshop for students on academic probation. Any ideas?

My tutor training is dry. What can I do to spice it up?

What is the website of an outstanding resource for strategies to use with students with learning disabilities?

I'm getting pressure from my institution to explore an online tutoring model. What should I know as I start to look into it?

Fun in the workplace? I don't think so. Well... maybe. OK, I'll try it!

What should learning space look like? We are getting spaces taken away. What do I need to fight for and what can I let go of?

Salt Lake City at Night



Ralph W. Gerard. *"There is first the problem of acquiring content, which is learning. There is another problem of acquiring learning skills, which is not merely learning, but learning to learn, not velocity, but acceleration. Learning to learn is one of the great inventions of living things. It is tremendously important. It makes evolution, biological as well as social, go faster. And it involves the development of the individual."* ("The New Computerized Shape of Education" in W.Z. Hirsch (Ed) *Inventing Education for the Future*. San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co.,



My Motivation for Tutoring By Olga Mwaba-Manda



Olga comes to us from Zambia. She tutors reading and writing in Pima College's West Campus Learning Center.

Imparting knowledge is a challenging task. I never imagined that one day, I'd be among those that did that, let

alone enjoy it. "Terrifying", "impatience", "high expectations", were among the many negative words I associated with imparting knowledge. Well, I was wrong! I guess I focused too much on the heavier stuff and that you'd have to be extremely brilliant to do it. I did not allow myself to think for even one minute, that there were many ways of imparting knowledge. Above all, I forgot that I was a people-person and loved to help people. It's what I live for! You must be wondering what on earth I am going on about. Tutoring! That too is imparting knowledge you know.

Tutoring is fun, and yes, it can be stressful and frustrating at times, but it is at the moment when you're about to start pulling teeth and almost hit something, when your tutee is just not "getting it", when it gets challenging and eventually rewarding. "There are times when I'd like to take a student and throw them out the window," one colleague remarked after a particularly frustrating time with a student. Actually, I think tutoring is noble. It's good to be smart, but you need not be a PHD, ok at least you need to know something... just a little of something enough to make you helpful.

I tutor at the PCC West Campus Learning Center. It's a fun place! There some nice people, then there are some

crazy people, and then there are some totally insane people. I won't name them, they know who they are. But we all have to deal with each other!

I enjoy tutoring students and trust me we get all kinds, shapes and hues. One thing tutoring has helped me with, is to utilize and hone some of my inherent skills that were perhaps lying dormant, and discovering other new ones. But I get a kick out of tutoring because it gives me an opportunity to help somebody who could use my help. As far as I am concerned, I believe in asking even the most stupid questions, for others however, asking for help from anybody about anything can be a very difficult thing, especially when there are cultural, racial, age and gender considerations. So it takes a bunch of courage for them to come to the Learning center to ask for help, and they may not like it at all, especially when they are required to do so by their instructors.

In this particular case, it is in writing English language, understanding grammar. Some students need help with researching their assignments, conceptualization, organization and presentation of ideas,

critical thinking, others just want a little confidence boosting etc. To some people, all this comes very easy, but not so for everybody. This can be frustrating for those that want to do their work correctly and get good grades, or simply be properly understood by others.

My greatest motivation is that while helping students, I also learn from them, I realize my own gaps and deficiencies. Therefore, it gives me an opportunity to polish up. I am never one to miss an opportunity that will take me further!

My co-workers are crazy people at best, but they allow me to draw on their skills and knowledge when I get stuck on something I am working on with a student. Never mind that this is face-saver, but it is a huge plus for me. It brings out the best in me. Being able to work with others as a team, you know, like a well-oiled machine, for the benefit of those needing help from us is comforting. Learning on others for greater good is a good thing.

The best motivation for tutoring, for me, is when I see a student make progress from one level to the next, bringing a different/new problem each time they return. Finally they "graduate" (as I call it). They stop coming to the learning center, you just meet them in the hallways, enthusiastic about their learning or work. Some remember you and would take time to say "thank you" for the zillionth time and tell you what they are doing. They really don't have to, but seeing that new or restored self-confidence, enthusiasm and determination about them, because you took time to listen to, understand, help them gives me a sense of purpose. This can be as little as brainstorming ideas or just reassuring them that they are on the right track or gently nudging them

back on to the right track with whatever work they might be having

trouble with. Believe me, this goes a long way. And this is where I get my kick from tutoring. My only hope is that by helping them in the very small way I do, they too, one day, will be able to help someone else that needs help.



Comments on the theme for the 2010 CRLA Conference in Salt Lake City from our President-Elect, Ann Wolf



I believe that this theme draws us back to the work that the CRLA Board members, chairpersons, volunteers and members do to keep our organization healthy and growing as we look to the future. It is important to reflect on what we are involved in as members of CRLA, and it is my hope that everyone who sees the logo will go back to the website and read our mission statement and guiding principles and think about how to put them into practice in their own professional lives.

From: www.crla.net.

Anonymous "I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand."



Salt Lake Temple at Night

The International Tutor Program Certification Committee is actively seeking qualified Program Evaluators

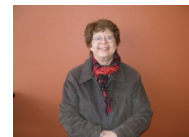
**Are you a current CRLA member?
Is your tutoring program certified?**

Please consider using your expertise to help other programs.

**For more information or to volunteer, please contact:
Olga Thurman, Coordinator of ITPC Publicity and Recruitment,
olgath@epcc.edu or 915-831-2740**

Good Teams-Good Work

By Hollis Fingold



Hollis is a reading and writing tutor in the West Campus Learning Center at Pima Community College

In any office when people work

together as a team it benefits everyone; the staff and the customers are more comfortable and more relaxed. In most cases teams don't just happen—they need to be built. Team building techniques, and the subsequent teamwork that is achieved, is much of the reason why the atmosphere in the Pima Community College, West Campus Learning Center is conducive to effective tutoring, a cheerful, cohesive staff, and why our customers, (students) overcome their fear of asking for help in an unfamiliar place.

“Breaking the ice” is always the first step. Dr. Penny Turrentine, head of the WC Learning Center, offers a great team builder that has been extremely effective, both practical and fun, and is especially good for new team members. It is the potluck lunch, which precedes our monthly tutoring training meeting. We chat over a meal with everyone who works at the center and get to know each other in a casual, personal way; we discover personalities, lifestyles, and new friendships. This is especially valuable to shy new tutors, and staff members. We also discover who the good cooks are and who should just bring the napkins. With a full stomach and camaraderie we do tutor training to which a portion is dedicated to team building. *One exercise is detailed below.

Tutors from diverse disciplines, from mathematics to reading and accounting to French, regard each other as teammates working as a single unit with one unanimous goal—to help our students achieve to the best of their abilities. We often see tutors assisting one another to assure that our students receive the most expert information. We regularly see tutors together, before or after work, discussing ways to improve skills and ideas for

helping problematic students. The professional camaraderie that comes from Dr. Turrentine's team building exercises and leadership are valuable to staff, students, and teachers.

The Learning Center is a place of great diversity. Students come here from different cultures, countries around the world, different races, religions, and languages congregate at the center. Our tutors, also from many walks of life, have a range of educational backgrounds, some are students, some retired, and the center's ambiance even brings some tutors here to work as volunteers. Some have been here for a few years and some are brand new to Pima, to tutoring, and to the Learning Center. This is another reason why team building is so important. We all learn from one another and help each other, which also influences the students in a positive way. Some now come to the center in small groups to go over assignments together.

*We were broken up into two teams. The exercise was to design and build some sort of shelter to protect the entire group from the weather using only paper, scissors, tape and one another. Each team puzzled over the different possibilities of how to build the structure and, as a group, built it. It was a hands-on demonstration to illustrate how, when people work together without allowing personal competition or personalities, to deter them from completing the project and do a better job.



Salt Lake Temple at Night

General Facts about Salt Lake City

- *Elevation:* In the valley, the city's elevation is 4,330 feet above sea level, and in the foothills reaches 5,200 feet. The Wasatch Mountains to the east are 11,500 feet tall, and the Oquirrh Mountains to the west are 9,500 feet high.
- *The Great Salt Lake,* 17 miles west of the city, is only about 45 feet deep, and its water is 5 to 15 percent salt. The Lake is 48 miles wide and 90 miles long, making it the largest lake in the U.S. west of the Great Lakes. The Great Salt Lake is part of an ancient lake known as Lake Bonneville that used to encompass part of Nevada, which today is made up of salt flats.
- Salt Lake City was founded in 1847 with the arrival of Brigham Young and the Mormon pioneers who sought religious freedom. The settlement was originally called Deseret, and within three years of their arrival, the Mormons founded the University of Deseret, which is now the University of Utah
- *Weather and Climate in Salt Lake City*

Salt Lake City's semi-arid continental climate is largely moderated by the Great Salt Lake. During the hot, dry summers, humidity stays low and the nights are cool. Highs in July and August are in the lower 90s. Winters are cold, but not severe, with December and January highs reaching the upper 30s and lows in the 20s.

Salt Lake City is a haven for skiers and winter sports lovers. In less than an hour, visitors can reach nine major ski resorts, three cross country skiing areas, and the U.S.'s only recreational ski jumping complex. Salt Lake City is known for its dry powder snow, and many consider it to be the best snow in the world.