



Pi
Lambda
Theta

NewsLetter

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Professional Learning Discounts: Large Change for Teacher Leaders

From California to Vermont, from Tennessee to Washington state, professional learning institutes and workshops have opened their doors to Thetans. The savings for current PLT members can reach 50 percent off the regular admission fees. Says PLT President Elizabeth Douglass, "We're pleased to offer Thetans this all-new benefit and we look forward to extending it to more venues and times so that members are not confined to the 'summers only' format that limits more traditional professional education."

The program kicked off earlier this summer at activities held in 11 states. Most events feature the National Staff Development Council's Powerful Designs strategies,

designed to help teachers work among themselves on their practice, using strategies and designs that cross subject-area and grade-level boundaries. Most important, NSDC designs—in contrast to conventional "sit-and-get" workshops—have been developed as "part of a clear, consistent philosophy of learning that colleagues can share schoolwide," says Ogden Hamilton, PLT executive director.

Right now five more events are scheduled at various sites, from late July through November. Learn more by visiting www.pilambda.org and clicking on the Professional Learning logo. Inside you'll find an interactive map that will quickly show you whether there's an upcoming professional learning activity in your area.

Officers Elected through '10; New Student V.P. Appointed

The spring 2008 campaign for the PLT Board of Directors concluded in early June.



DuBois

Dr. **Shirley G. DuBois** was elected to a second full term as PLT treasurer. A retired administrator with the Chicago Public Schools, she is a member of Lambda/U. of Chicago Chapter. She chairs the Beck Award Committee.



Hines

Dr. **Laurie Moses Hines** was re-elected to her second as vice president. An assistant professor of education at Kent State University in Ohio, she is a member of Western Pennsylvania Area Chapter.



Hu

Robert S. J. Hu was elected to a full term as vice president. He was appointed as a PLT vice president in January 2007 to fill a vice presidential vacancy. Hu, a veteran of 38 years as a classroom teacher, is a social studies teacher at Mililani High School in Mililani, Hawaii. He is a past president of Beta Zeta Chapter.



Hudson

Brandy Hudson, a 2006 initiate of Detroit Area Chapter, was elected graduate student vice president. Currently an algebra

teacher at Highland Park Community High School near Detroit, she is working toward a master's degree in mathematics education from Wayne State University.

All four officers will be installed in Orlando this summer and serve through the summer of 2010.

New Student V.P. Appointed

Shane Horn has resigned his post as PLT undergraduate student vice president to accept a position at the Tongshenghu International Experimental School in Hunan Province, China. He will teach social studies to English-speaking primary school students as well as intense language courses to graduating Chinese seniors who wish to study overseas in English-speaking countries.

PLT's directors have nominated **Sarah A. DeVan** of Delta Theta/Washington College Chapter to fill the vacancy created by Horn's resignation. DeVan, now entering her senior year at Washington, has served Delta Theta



DeVan

Chapter as a project chair, vice president, and most recently president. She serves on campus as the vice president of the college's Omicron Delta Kappa (leadership honor society) chapter and treasurer of Catholic Campus Ministry. A human development major and black studies minor, she is working toward an elementary education certification.

More Than Just the Sum of Its Parts: The Critical Skills Model

by Laura Thomas, Antioch Center for School Renewal

This column is the first in a series based on PLT's Professional Learning Program. Future columns will address topics such as Critical Friends Groups, facilitative leadership, and other designs that align with the standards of the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) and support results-oriented, job-embedded professional learning. Contributors to the series are active in NSDC, the Coalition of Essential Schools, the National School Reform Faculty, and other organizations recognized for their contributions to school reform through professional learning. PLT's Professional Learning Program offers significant member discounts on the type of professional learning discussed in these columns. To learn more, click on Professional Learning Values at www.pilambda.org.

These days, it's not uncommon for teachers to have more than a passing familiarity with such labels as *problem-based*, *project-based*, *experiential*, and *cooperative-learning* strategies. Each has its own set of followers, its



Thomas

own DVDs and instructional manuals, and its own set of specialists willing to present in-service training on the subject. Now, a group of educators in New England is combining the best in educational research to create the *Critical Skills Model*, an instructional model that can transform standard curricula into engaging, meaningful, rigorous problems students can solve. Requiring students to demonstrate not just the content but also the skills and dispositions required to become

productive members of our society can help them reach new levels of achievement.

Methodologies

The *Critical Skills Model* is a comprehensive design that creatively and effectively integrates four powerful teaching methodologies:

- Collaborative learning
- Experiential learning
- Problem-based learning
- Standards-driven learning

Working together, these methodologies provide teachers and students the means to simultaneously and intentionally

- build and sustain a strong, supportive classroom learning community
- target the curriculum in ways that provide both depth of understanding and meaningful learning
- develop critical skills and fundamental dispositions
- meet or exceed the demands of district and state frameworks and standards

Solving the Challenge

The primary vehicle for such learning is the *challenge*—a carefully crafted problem whose solution connects the curriculum to its real-world application. Challenges can be highly complex or quite simple; they may take minutes or weeks to complete; and they are driven by state, local, or national subject area curricula as well as by the formative assessment gained via ongoing student reflection. Elementary students might grapple with the problem of selecting the largest apple to present to the principal following a field trip; secondary students might seek alternative energy transportation options for the district or create a new grammar text that uses only a small set of short stories and newspaper articles. The exact challenges are as diverse as the teachers who create them and the students for whom they are created, but all share three components:

1. Students engage in solving the problem;
2. They exhibit their learning; and
3. They debrief their learning.

During this process, students are accessing, demonstrating, and undergoing assessment on both content knowledge and process skills, such as problem-solving, decision-making, communication, organization, critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, and leadership.

In Your Classroom

What would this look like in your classroom? Students in a Critical Skills classroom

- frequently work as learning teams
- actively solve meaningful problems
- make public presentations and exhibitions of their learning
- systematically reflect on what they are doing and learning
- focus on standards of quality for their work
- take shared responsibility and ownership of their learning and for the classroom community

At the same time, teachers in a Critical Skills classroom:

- model, guide, coach, and support the learning process
- design learning activities that are carefully connected and built upon one another
- incorporate targeted learning standards to guide the classroom culture, curriculum, and assessment

Teachers who use the Critical Skills program find that they can move their students to more rigorous work, that their students are able to solve problems more easily, and that discipline referrals in their classrooms decrease markedly. They find new clarity in their instructional practices and are more focused in their assessments. In short, the Critical Skills Model combines the best of the research, the best of our students, and the best of ourselves.

Reference

Critical Skills Program Level 1 Program Kit, 4th ed. (Antioch University New England, 2007).

Laura Thomas is director of the Antioch Center for School Renewal (ACSR) at Antioch University New England and co-president-elect of the New Hampshire National Staff Development Council chapter. ACSR is one of the growing number of professional learning providers that offer significant discounts to PLT members. ACSR's training aligns with the standards of the National Staff Development Council and supports purpose-driven, job-embedded professional learning.

Chapter & Member News



Congressman Wayne Gilchrest of Maryland's First District attended the Delta Theta Chapter/Washington College initiations on April 10. He shared his experiences as a teacher and offered advice on leadership and its role in the classroom. Pictured, from left to right: Congressman Gilchrest, Alexis West, Dr. Deb Marciano, Sarah Pierson, and Tricia Carroll.



Detroit Area Chapter held its spring initiation and scholarship presentations at the Plum Hollow Country Golf Club on May 3. Jean Wright (far left) welcomed (left to right) initiates Tamika Smith, Anita Lyons, Nicole Samuel, Kim Winston-Radden, and Sherry Andrews to the chapter. Initiate Shawn Forman was absent because she was graduating from Wayne State U. that day.



Headliners

DISSERTATIONS

Brad Ausman (Pennsylvania State University), "Effects of Prior Knowledge and Multimodal Presentation on Various Levels of Educational Objectives." Says Dr. Ausman: "The results suggest that, when participants have the entry level skills required, information supplied via textual animation, non-redundant audio, or a combination increases achievement at the conceptual level. . . . Practical guidance for practitioners would be to choose the most effective solution to implement within appropriate time and monetary constraints."



Norris

practitioners would be to choose the most effective solution to implement within appropriate time and monetary constraints."

Marty Norris (University of Central Florida), "The Prevalence of Bullying in Central Florida Middle Schools as Perceived by Students"



Tsai

Tina Tsai (University of Southern California), "Microgenetic Analysis of English/Chinese Early Writing Development." The microgenetic developmental approach was hybridized with the early literacy Piagetian approach to

examine the complexities of conceptual development in young children about the Chinese and English writing systems.



On June 12, Detroit Area Chapter's 2008 scholarship recipients assembled at Wayne State's College of Education Convocation. From left to right: Shauna Latham, Elementary Mathematics (*Helen Gordon Memorial Award*); Cassandra Rusie, Secondary English/History (*Jean Detmer Memorial Award*); Samia Abdulla, Elementary Science (*Dorothy M. Sibley Memorial Award*); Lindsay Hughes, Language Arts (*Dorothy Patnales Memorial Award*); Sandra Sovey, Kinesiology-Health Education (*Jorma Pike Memorial Award*); Kelly George, Special Education (*Helen Gordon Memorial Award*); Theresia Deubel, Special Education (*Beck-Seitz Award*); and Barbara Weiskopf, scholarship committee chair.

Beta Zeta Scholarship Lunch

Beta Zeta's second annual scholarship lunch was held on Saturday, January 26, at the Pacific Beach Hotel in Honolulu. The get-together included a silent auction, games, delicious food, and great prizes. We raised a net total of \$524.18. Many thanks to Bob Hu, Carlyn Kauwalu, and the fundraising committee for setting up and organizing such an enjoyable program.

—Ngoc-Thuy Nguyen, *Beta Zeta/U. of Hawaii Chapter*

Hard Work on Program Grant Pays Dividends

Fort Wayne Chapter of Pi Lambda Theta received a \$2,000 grant check from the Fort Wayne Branch American Association of University Women Trust, in a ceremony held April 16 at the Allen County Public Library. The grant was written to obtain funding for a special project, entitled Reading Books for International Students (RBIS). **Patricia Kohart**, committee chairman, **Kay Crowder**, originator of the project idea, **Carole Walker**, committee member, and **Shari Pentecost**, grant writer and ESL adviser, have worked over the past year to provide 30 sets of two different pre-K–3rd grade level reading/picture books to a variety of local elementary schools that work with Burmese immigrant populations.

The books are accompanied by a recorded CD containing a Burmese and/or Korean interpretation of each book, coupled with the English reading. Contributors of the Phase I test portion of RBIS were Sweetwater Sound, Inc., which provided CDs and copies; Jam Crib, who provided the recording time; chapter budget money, used for administrative costs; and interpreters: Tee Mu and Patricia. The donation of the Fort Wayne Branch AAUW Trust grant money will be used to fund the next phase of the project.

Mayfield Updates His Public

Mark A. Mayfield of Delta Kappa/Cal State U.-Northridge Chapter, who wrote in the Dec./Jan. issue about beating cancer and about his career change to teaching, reports that he has been hired as a first-grade teacher at the Full-Circle Learning Academy in Topanga, Calif. "You can google them at www.fullcirclelearning.org to find out what we're all about," Mayfield says. "I'm extremely excited starting



Mayfield

this new adventure in my life, and would like to thank you—my friends and colleagues—who helped me to achieve this success. This school is exactly the kind of school I was looking for, with the same philosophy that I have. Additionally, I'm getting the grade I was hoping for, and it's only a five-minute drive from my apartment—or a 10-minute bike ride / 20-minute walk, which I plan on doing to reduce consuming gas."

Mayfield adds, "You may check out a newspaper article about the school: [http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/08-07-2007/0004641443&EDATE=.](http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/08-07-2007/0004641443&EDATE=)"

PLT Chapter Presidents, 2008–2009

Alpha/U. of Missouri (Bethany P. Panian)
Alpha Alpha/U. of Arizona (Marilyn J. Ludwig)
Alpha Delta/UCLA (Dr. Patricia H. Streeter)
Alpha Gamma/Boston U. (Sonya Merian)
Alpha Omega/Bradley U. (Hayley L. McDowell)
Alpha Psi/Cal State U.-Los Angeles
(Aida L. Crosthwaite-Swan)
Alpha Sigma/Texas Woman's U.
(Crystal Drew Porter)
Alpha Tau/Ball State U. (Dr. Richard R. Hays)
Alpha Xi/U. of Tennessee (Tiffany Noel Redmon)
Beta Chi/Wm. Paterson U. (Dr. Alyce Bolander)
Beta Epsilon/ U. of Wisconsin (Joanne Walters)
Beta Eta/U. of Toledo (Claudine Meilink)
Beta Eta/U. of Toledo (Cynthia Jane Wamsley)
Beta Lambda/U. of Akron (Amanda M. Skocich)
Beta Nu/U. of Redlands (Bud A. Perry)
Beta Omicron/ Millersville U. (Adele S. Ruszak)
Beta Sigma/U. of Connecticut (Emily Andersen)
Beta Zeta/U. of Hawaii (Ngoc-Thuy T. Nguyen)
Central Ohio (Sharon S. Esswein)
Chicago Area (Anne M. Balzanto)
Cleveland Area (Frank J. Feola)
Delta Delta/Duquesne U. (Jeffery A. Hahn, Jr.)
Delta Epsilon/Iona College (Erin E. Doherty)

Delta Eta/Chaminade U. (Nicole M. Paishon)
Delta Iota/Alvernia College (James Nicholas)
Delta Kappa/California (Charles Kimzey)
Delta Theta/Washington (Sarah A. DeVan)
Delta Zeta/Virginia State U. (Brenda Phillips)
Delta/U. of Pittsburgh (Elizabeth A. Svirbel)
Denver Metropolitan (Rebecca Higinbotham)
Detroit Area (Francesca P. Payne)
Epsilon/U. of Minnesota (Ellen A. Rau)
Evansville Area (Mrs. Thelma J. Brown)
Fort Wayne Area (Mrs. Sheila K. Kiefer)
Gamma Chi/MidAmerica Nazarene U.
(Josephine D. Reno)
Gamma Eta/U. of Lowell
(Dr. Joseph W. Spadano)
Gamma Gamma/Indiana U.-Kokomo
(Elizabeth M. Douglass)
Gamma Iota/U. of Michigan (Julie Rutherford)
Gamma Mu/Massachusetts Coll. of Liberal Arts (Ann Scott)
Gamma Phi/U. of Pittsburgh (John J. Curlej)
Gamma Rho/Jackson State U.
(Tiffany Chanay)
Gamma Tau/Mt. Saint Mary's College
(Theresa R. Finley)

Gamma Upsilon/Salem State College
(Victoria L. Rebal)
Gamma Xi/College of St. Catherine
(Alexandra J. Howes)
Hawaii (Jessie L. Robinson)
Lambda/U. of Chicago
(Dr. Karen A. Freeman)
Long Beach Area (Tonita F. Tawzer)
Northern California (Dr. Susan H. Marston)
Omicron/U. of Nebraska (Molly M. Tessin)
Philadelphia Area (Barbara E. Pearl)
Philippines Area (Dr. Teresita U. Quirino)
Portland Metropolitan (Doris Wilken)
Rho/New York U. (Ingrid Montealegre)
Sacramento Area (Ryan R. Holoubek)
Santa Barbara Area (Dolores E. Konczal)
Santa Monica Bay Area (Moirra J. Lees)
Seattle Area (Lorraine Wagness, Lesley M. Murata-Paige)
Seattle Area (Lorraine M. Wagness)
Theta/U. of Iowa (David Byrd)
Toledo Area (Denise A. Frazier)
Virginia Area (Barbara J. Walker)
Western Pennsylvania
(Dorothy E. Conway)

The Pi Lambda Theta Educational Endowment has inaugurated its Georgia Sachs Adams program by awarding grants to **John C. Mohl** (Direct Honors, West Chester U.) and **Kimberly Hieftje** (Direct Honors, Indiana U.).

The Adams grants are designed to help PLT members with the costs of attending conferences to make scholarly presentations. The grants are sustained by an endowment fund established by a bequest from M. Lorraine Mathies to honor the memory of past PLT President Georgia Sachs Adams.

Georgia Sachs Adams (1913–1984) served as president of PLT from 1970 to 1973 and chaired the PLT Publications Advisory Board from 1975 to 1981. In 1980, she was named PLT's first Distinguished Pi Lambda Thetan. A professor of education at California State University-Los Angeles, she authored five books, including three college textbooks in measurement and evaluation. She was the founding sponsor of Alpha Psi/Cal State-Los Angeles Chapter.

M. Lorraine Mathies, the long-time head of the education and psychology library at UCLA, helped create and develop the original Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). An early national professional leader in the field of computer-based reference services, she also co-authored or co-edited several books. She chaired the PLT Publications Advisory Board from 1981 to 1983.

Mohl will receive \$1229 to present "Integrating the Teachings of Psychology into an American History Curriculum" at the 2008 conference of the American Psychological Association (Boston, August 14–17). A November 2004 Direct Honors initiate through West Chester (Pa.) U., Mohl is pursuing a master's in psychology to complement his master's degree in secondary education. He is currently implementing a curriculum of his own design, one that integrates the study of psychology in a high-school history course.

Hieftje has received \$750 for "Bereaved Parents and Meaning Making," her presentation at the 30th annual conference of the Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC), April 30–May 3, 2008, in Montreal. Her study, a qualitative one using secondary data, examines the reactions of two Canadian couples that had each lost a baby. Hieftje, a March 2006 Direct Honors initiate through Indiana U., is pursuing a Ph.D. in health behavior at IU.

The deadlines to apply for a Georgia Sachs Adams grant are April 1 and October 1 of each year. For more information, please visit www.pilambda.org and click on Scholarships/Grants/Awards.

Dagmar Krupinski, 2008–2009 Kathleen McCann PLT Scholarship

The Kathleen McCann PLT Scholarship was established within the PLT Endowment by Alpha Mu/U. of New Mexico Chapter in 1998. Each year it is awarded to an outstanding student of teacher education at the University of New Mexico.

The most important thing I can tell you about myself is that just a couple of weeks ago I celebrated my ninth birthday since having been diagnosed with breast cancer at age 43, and I am very happy to report that I continue to be alive and well and happy with the path(s) I have chosen to follow ever since that diagnosis.

One of my choices had been to return to New Mexico, where I had lived in the late 1970s to the mid-1980s. After a period of recuperation and full-time employment at Whole Foods Market in Santa Fe, I finally found myself not only able but longing to go back to school when my youngest child was a senior in high school. I began attending Santa Fe Community College in the summer of 2004, graduated from there with an A.A. degree in May of 2006, spent a couple of semesters at NMSU in Las Cruces, and am now in my first semester here at the University of New Mexico.

Now that I have been able to secure affordable housing here I have chosen to continue living in Santa Fe and commute to the UNM campus a couple of times per week, usually per commuter bus, which not only is significantly cheaper than driving on my own but also helps to reduce traffic congestion and pollution. Having successfully raised two children as a single mother who involved herself in various aspects of their schooling, I felt drawn to get a high school teaching degree, focusing on history/social studies and science.

I have chosen to focus as much as I possibly can on my studies, attempting to make do with as little as possible in order to be able to devote most of my waking time to school. That has meant I am not holding a job while the semester is in progress, though I do work in my old job at Whole Foods as a part-time seasonal employee. Therefore the additional assistance in the form of this scholarship is much appreciated!

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A listing of cities and states that are currently covered appears at www.pilambda.org.

PLT JobList

This service is available to all PLT members at www.pilambda.org. Employers can list their jobs on-line with JobList at no charge. Supplemental hot links are provided to education job listings on dozens of Web sites.

PLT JobMatch

PLT JobMatch taps Thetan Career Partners to help in a member's job search. PLT will distribute a member's résumé to the Career Partners in any one of more than 100 U.S. search areas each calendar year FREE. Distribute your résumé to additional search areas for a nominal fee. Find the national list of search areas and register on-line at www.pilambda.org, or call 1-800-487-3411.

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