



2015 Conference: Diversity, Equity and Democracy in Education

The National Network for Educational Renewal invites educators, researchers, and community members from around the world, working in the context of K-12, higher education, arts and sciences, and the broader community, to attend the 2015 NNER Conference. This year's October conference takes place at California State University, Chico in beautiful Chico, California.



For your planning

The conference begins at 2:00 on Thursday, October 1st with pre-conference activities including a Tripartite Council meeting (Thursday morning) and a Governing Council meeting (Thursday afternoon before the opening session). There will also be a session for those attending the conference for the first time and others not familiar with the NNER mission. We are excited about the pre-conference options, one of which is a visit to Rosedale Elementary Two-Way Immersion School. The conference ends at 11:45 on Saturday, October 3rd.

2016

The 2016 NNER conference will be held October 27-29 at the Sheraton Hotel in Arlington, Texas, sponsored by the University of Texas at Arlington. We will have more details and promotional materials to distribute in Chico and put on the NNER website.

2015 conference sessions provide valuable opportunities

BREAKOUT STRANDS

Education for Everyone

How does where I live
impact how I live?

Digital Media & Social
Justice

Racial Justice

Immigrant
Communities

Policy Implications for
Education in a
Democracy



Strands for breakout and plenary sessions will provide opportunities for attendees to learn from and with one another in areas critical to the NNER's mission, as we continue to work toward improving equity and excellence for all learners.

•**Education for Everyone**

The focus of this strand draws from the seminal work *Education for Everyone: Agenda for Education in a Democracy* by Goodlad, Mantle – Bromley, and Goodlad, which calls for a reconsideration of the role a critical education plays in the project of democracy.

•**How does where I live impact how I live?**

Places provide us a sense of who we are and we may attach meanings associated with a place to ourselves

•**Digital Media and Social Justice**

This strand invites presenters to share their efforts in using digital media as a tool for social justice.

•**Racial Justice.**

This strand focuses on the theoretical and practical understanding of the political economy of schools and the dynamics in which they are embedded, with a specific focus on issues of neoliberalism, race, and social transformation.

•**Immigrant Communities**

This strand invites us to explore the microcosm of a child's experience within a classroom, given current political and educational trends in our society.

•**Policy Implications for Education in a Democracy**

This strand highlights the current environment in which we work and seeks options for policy change to create a more just and humane context for learning for all.

Thanks to the NNER
Local Conference
Committee:
Annie Adamian
Kim Jaxon
Ofelia Landeros
Ann Schulte
Maria Sudduth
Maris Thompson

Nebraska theater reopens thanks to hard work by “NNER students”

by **Malena Ward**

Kearney **Hub**

(reprinted with permission)

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LEXINGTON — It's time to go to the movies in Lexington once again. The newly renovated Majestic Theatre re-opened Friday night with “Pitch Perfect 2” showing on the big screen. The re-opening celebrates the 100th anniversary of the theater's original opening in 1915 and is the realization of a goal students in the Lexington High School class of 2015 set when they were in middle school. They have worked nearly a third of their lives to see the theater re-open. “Some people doubted us, but I always told myself and others not to give up,” recent graduate Odwar Quinonez said. “It gave us power to do more hard work.” “It's amazing to see how much it's changed,” recent graduate Kevin Tobias said. He who came to work on opening night. “We never gave up. We saw the potential in it, and seeing it all now, it's worth it. Five years is a long time to wait, but it's worth it.” As the clock ticked closer and closer to a 7:30 p.m. showtime, student volunteers, who were part of the project from the beginning, coordinated last-minute details. “It's just the little things that make us happy right now because there have been so many big



things,” high school counselor Michele McKeone said, who is an adult sponsor for the project.

Re-opening the theater has been an \$800,000 endeavor, McKeone said, made possible by numerous donations and grants, including \$175,000 from the

Sherwood Foundation, a \$225,000 Community Development Block Grant and two awards from Dawson County Tourism. Funds were solicited during the Lexington Community Foundation's annual key event and during Give Big Lexington, a community day of giving. The community foundation administers funds collected to pay for the project. “I'm just so proud of it. This is exactly what I thought it would look like. It's been a long time coming, but it's worth it for sure,” McKeone said.

There are 15 families in the theater's “cast and crew,” Erin Heineman, CFO for Lexington Public Schools, said. Heineman was hired to oversee the theater. Those 15 families are trained on how to run everything and they will lead and support the volunteers who come in to help each weekend. The Majestic welcomes individual and group volunteers such as businesses, sports teams, scouts or anyone in the community who wants to help out for a weekend. “I'm excited to see the community come in,” Heineman said. “I felt like this would be a way that I could help, so I threw my name in. I like organizing and getting the business side of it done.”

The Falkenburg family owned and operated the theater from its inception until the doors closed in 2009. A year later, when a group of middle school students brainstormed to plan a community betterment project, they said what they wanted most was to bring the theater back. The revitalization was initiated by participation in a program called National Network for Educational Renewal, introduced by University of Nebraska at Kearney professors Peter Longo and John Anderson.

The NNER students, as they became known, approached the theater owner and asked if they could help re-open the theater by working as volunteers, but the owner declined. Instead, they were told the theater could be purchased.

That set in motion many youth-led money making projects and community awareness campaigns. Students designed and sold T-shirts, sold flash drives and sold concessions. They also had an annual lip sync competition. When the student group finally had the \$75,000 needed to buy the theater, it approached the Lexington Board of



Education

to join the project on the student's behalf and assume ownership to create a nonprofit volunteer-operated theater.

Paulsen Inc. of Cozad was hired as contractor, and the \$592,000 bid package included making the building handicap-accessible, constructing a new roof and new restrooms, relocating in the lobby area, installing heating and air conditioning, and doing electrical work. Students helped with demolition and cleanup to prep the site. Students enrolled in a Principles of Construction Class taught by Jim Hoyt worked on the project for two back-to-back class periods a day, doing work such as framing and dry walling while learning about other aspects of construction through observation.

“It's actually pretty awesome. I didn't think it would turn out so great,” Manuel Vasquez, 15, said. He is entering his sophomore year of high school and came to volunteer on opening night. Other new items in the theater are a digital projector and a 20-foot by 11-foot screen. Student input led to the selection of new red rocker-style seats with movable armrests that have cup holders. “It passed my expectations,” 18-year-old Fayeann Underwood said. “It looks really nice.”

The interior color scheme with a green wall was influenced by the exterior. A fresh coat of paint will be applied to the downtown building's front as the weather permits. Later, an awning may be added and the marquee will be spruced up.

“We're excited,” Heineman said. “I'm excited to see the community come in. Some people have come in to sneak a peak. For them to see the final, completed project, I think they will be amazed to see the transformation.”



Wayne Reed, co-chair of the Equity and Social Justice Committee, updated the board on the committee's current work that includes developing a clear and consistent definition for social justice and having a presence on the NNER web page. He noted that the committee has a goal of including representatives from each NNER setting. He also updated the board on the committee's work with the 2015 conference planning committee. The group also recommended renewing the NNER setting renewal and leadership development grants, given that the first round of funds have all been allocated and the resulting work has benefited local settings and the NNER.

WYOMING HOSTS EVENT & SUMMER SYMPOSIUM

On Thursday, June 25, 2015, the Wyoming partnership hosted an event called Kids, Schools, and Communities that Help Them Prosper. It featured Robert Putnam's *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*.

Conference registration was free, refreshments and meals were included.

The event was intended to celebrate simultaneous renewal for K-12, community college, and university teachers and administrators, educators in supporting agencies, school board members, legislators, and all who care about kids, schools, and their

communities and want to support them. NNER summer symposium attendees were encouraged to attend as well. The well-attended conference included rich conversation from a variety of perspectives on how to ensure that all students do have access to quality learning experiences in this era of economic disparity in school funding and support.

For the first time since its inception, the NNER Summer Symposium was held outside of Seattle. The Wyoming School-University Partnership presented a proposal to the NNER board to host the symposium in Laramie, WY. The board approved the proposal and worked with WY colleagues to plan the logistics to hold the session in an NNER setting. Thirty-two participants

from throughout the NNER attended the symposium facilitated by executive board members. In addition, Bernard Badiali facilitated work on developing and sustaining quality partner schools and Audrey Kleinsasser and Shannon Smith facilitated a Socratic Seminar using the Wyoming book, *Hair Up and Heal Over*. The participants did democracy walks and drives around the area studying public places and who we are as a public. Wayne Reed and Angela Jaime, co-chairs of the NNER Equity and Social Justice committee, facilitated a session on working with diverse groups. The board agreed that work on diversity and working with diverse voices should become part of the summer symposium content.

NNER to provide content for Kappa Delta Pi Record special issue

by Nick Michelli

City University of New York

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THE KAPPA DELTA PI RECORD
IS A PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL
REACHING MORE THAN 25,000
READERS.

In many ways, the NNER and its members share values with KDP regarding education, democracy and social justice.

Some of you may remember that the Fall 2004 issue of the Record carried the title Education in a Democracy. It featured the work of the NNER with articles by many of our members. Through a contact Ann Foster made we have been invited again to be responsible for an issue of the journal. We decided to work on the journal issue to be published in October 2016, just before the next presidential election. The issue will be dedicated to the work and influence of John Goodlad through the NNER.

Kappa Delta Pi is interested in promoting democracy in the our society—especially given the extreme divides of income and the achievement gap—examining contemporary meanings and applications of democracy in today's world, and social justice including the rights of LGBT individuals and gender issues.

I have been asked to edit the issue, and I invite your proposals for articles. There will be several kinds of articles, a few of which are

spoken for. The dedication to John Goodlad will constitute the "For the Record" column, which I will write, One of KDP's Laureates will write an article on social justice, and Ann Foster and Greg Bernhardt will write a book review of Robert Putnam's latest book, Our Kids.

There is plenty of space for approximately nine other articles, and we invite you to make a proposal. The categories for these include

Five feature articles about 2,500 to 3,500 words with a focus on the theme of advancing democracy and social justice in practice, applied to K-12 and university education. We welcome articles reporting research applied to theme as well as analytical articles that report on experiences. Articles with multiple authors, especially from K-12 and University partners, are welcome.

In addition, about 3 shorter articles focusing on KDP Record's traditional departments, which might include Curriculum Connections, Around the Globe, Programs in Practice, Gateways to Experience, and specific research reports.

Finally, we will publish at least one article by an educator on "telling our story" in a 600 word personal, heartfelt story of learning or teaching with a democracy related theme.

Most submissions, with the exception of book review or

personal stories, require careful peer review by educators in and outside of the NNER.

We will need proposals for articles by the end of October, with a description of the category for the article, a summary of what is proposed, as well as a statement of its importance to KDP, NNER, and this issue of the Record. These submissions should come directly to me for review. By mid-December, after a larger peer review, final invitations to submit will be issued. In mid-January we will submit the list of proposed articles with the names of authors to KDP.

By April 1 we will need initial manuscripts for invited articles following KDP's author guidelines (available [here](#)), in preparation for the next step, electronic submission for peer review.

Comments from reviewers will be sent to authors by mid-April, and final revisions will be due mid-May, 2016.

Feel free to ask questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Nick Michelli
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EDSJ Committee looking to Chico and beyond



The Equity, Diversity & Social Justice Committee (EDSJ) is actively preparing to participate in this year's annual meeting at Chico, California, joining colleagues from across the nation in conversations on the conference's critically important theme *Diversity, Equity & Democracy in Education*. As a way of contributing to these conversations, the EDSJ Committee invites all conference attendees to a session entitled Join the Conversation! Building Democracy Through Partnerships of Equity, Diversity and Social Justice, to be held Friday, October 2, 10:30 a.m.-11:45 a.m. At this session, we plan to introduce the EDSJ Committee and its work, inviting representatives from all NNER settings to share their efforts in schools, institutions and communities.

Additionally, the EDSJ Committee is scheduled to meet for dinner on Thursday, October 1st, 6:45 p.m.-8:45 p.m. and to conclude the conference with a strategy session on Saturday, October 3, 12:00 p.m.-1:30 p.m. Further details on any of these events can be obtained from either of the EDSJ Co-Chairs, Angela Jaime (jaimea@uwyo.edu) or Wayne Reed (wreed@brooklyn.cuny.edu).

Since last year's annual meeting in Cincinnati, the EDSJ Committee has become an active contributor to NNER's work and mission. In December 2014, the Governing Council officially identified the EDSJ Committee as a standing committee, giving EDSJ a participatory role in NNER's governance structure. The Committee currently has sixteen members representing twelve settings from across the country. One of the Committee's early goals has been to increase the number of sessions with social-justice themes at the annual meeting. Through the tireless efforts of EDSJ member Ann Schulte and her colleagues at Chico, the theme of this year's conference, *Diversity, Equity and Democracy in Education*, offers greater opportunities than ever for new, previously marginalized voices, to join the dialogue and strengthen NNER's ongoing commitment to schools, institutions and communities.

In June 2015, Angela Jaime and Wayne Reed were invited by NNER's Executive Committee to facilitate one of the opening sessions at NNER's Summer Symposium in Laramie, Wyoming. Focusing on racial justice and cross-cultural dialogue, the session offered opportunities for practitioners and educators from a range of racial and cultural backgrounds to engage in the kind of thoughtful, reflective discourse that is so needed to replace historical racism with healthy democratic practice in schools. In light of the crisis facing our country and the important work of the Black Lives Matter movement, one of the EDSJ Committee's priorities in months ahead is to support diversity initiatives and multicultural education in all the NNER settings.

The EDSJ Committee greatly anticipates gathering at the Chico conference, October 1-3, to build our own sense of community and to engage in the kinds of important conversations that sustain our educational work in various settings throughout the year. As a fledgling effort, we invite all NNER members to spread the word about the EDSJ Committee's efforts and to share ideas, thoughts and feedback to support this collaborative endeavor.

See you in Chico!

Wayne A. Reed, Co-Chair, EDSJ Committee

UConn to edit this year's NNER Journal

by **Urna Semper**
and **Trenz Pruca**

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The editors and editorial board for the 2015 – 2017 issues of the NNER Journal has moved from our colleagues at the University of Texas at El Paso to our colleagues at the University of Connecticut. The editors and the editorial board are listed below

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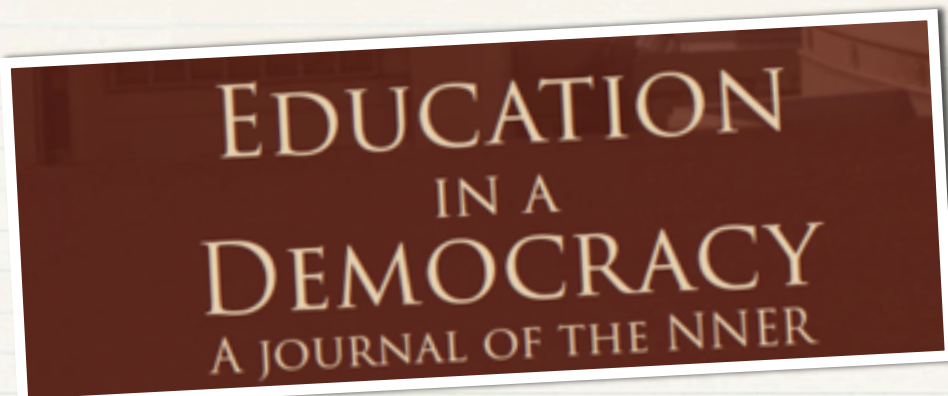
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Connecticut

Miura Yoko, Wright State
University



Brooklyn College Academy sets graduation standard

by Urna Semper
and Trenz Pruca

At CUNY partner school Brooklyn College Academy in Brooklyn, New York, where 73 percent of the students at the school qualify for free or reduced lunch, students are beating the odds by graduating 100 percent of African-American students last year, preparing them for college and career.

Principal--and 2009 Goodlad Award winner--Nicholas Mazarella and his assistant principals have set up systems to track the punctuality, dress code standards and grades of every student, but they say the key to their success is in the painstaking building of relationships between adults and students. They have also overseen the addition of an early college program. Juniors are allowed—and take advantage of—the opportunity to take classes at Brooklyn College; average BCA students graduate with 25 college credits.

Much credit is due to the efforts of a student-sustained fraternity, the Sophisticated Well-Articulate Gentlemen's Group (SWAGG), which was founded in 2013 at Brooklyn College Academy High School, a partner school to CUNY.

At that time, ten students came together to provide mentorship, brotherhood and community service for peers and their communities. With the help of the school administration and their advisor, SWAGG was born. The young founders felt it was imperative that they pass on the lessons that they learned and allow younger generations to be given the same opportunities that they were given. Twenty-one new members were inducted into the organization in 2014, and 13 more in 2015.

Graduating members have gone on to 4-year universities such as Howard University, Hampton University, Albany University, Norfolk State University, Bethune-Cookman University, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Hunter College. Two members have gone on to attend the University of Southern California and Trinity College as Posse Scholars. The graduating SWAGG Class of 2015 follows suit with a 95% graduation rate, with members attending 4-year universities such as the University of Bridgeport, Albany University, New York University, and Brooklyn College.



Members of the Sophisticated Well Articulated Gentlemen's Groups at Brooklyn College Academy support each other socially and academically.



National Network for Educational Renewal

SETTING	STATE/PROVINCE
California State University, Chico	California
Colorado State University and the Poudre School District Partnership	Colorado
University of Connecticut	Connecticut
Illinois State University	Illinois
The Brandon School-University Partnership (The Brandon School Division and Brandon University)	Manitoba
Metropolitan St. Louis Consortium for Educational Renewal*	Missouri
MU Partnership for Educational Renewal	Missouri
Nebraska Network for Educational Renewal*	Nebraska
Montclair State University Network for Educational Renewal	New Jersey
University of New Mexico	New Mexico
CUNY and the New York City Department of Education	New York
Miami University Partnership	Ohio
Ohio University	Ohio
University of Cincinnati	Ohio
Wright State University Network for Educational Renewal	Ohio
South Carolina Network for Educational Renewal*	South Carolina
Winthrop University-School Partnership	South Carolina
Arlington University-School Network for Educational Renewal (AUSNER)	Texas
University of Texas at El Paso	Texas
University of Washington	Washington
Western Washington University	Washington
University of Wyoming and Wyoming School-University Partnership	Wyoming

*denotes multiple IHE site settings

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*Please submit suggestions for
 articles, information about
 people, and events in NNER
 settings to Ann Foster at:
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