

# SCIRA Fall 2015 Newsletter

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Kristin Kaczmarek

### Co-Presidents

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## Note from the Presidents

By Kris Patel & Kristin Kaczmarek  
Co-Presidents of SCIRA

DEAR SCIRA FRIENDS,

Kris Patel and I (Kristin Kaczmarek) are excited to be your new co-presidents for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years. Kris has headed back to the classroom, teaching 7th grade language arts, and I am back in my first grade classroom. We look forward to joining you throughout the year to improve our practice as educators through quality but cost-friendly professional development.

Kris and I are keen to bring some new changes to SCIRA this year. Beginning with our winter 2016 conference, we will be moving forward with on-line registration only (no mail in registration). You can still use a PO, a credit card, or mail in a check to pay, but all registration will be done on-line. For our fall conference, with Georgia Heard, you can still register by paper (you can go to our website and download the form or use the link below). Here are some key points for registration beginning in 2016:

1. All registration will be done online beginning in 2016.
2. You can pay by credit card, check (mail in), or PO.
3. If using a PO, you will need to register online (click mail in check for payment).
4. Registration will close 2 days before the event - you can still attend the event but will need to pay at the door for \$10 additional (only checks can be accepted at door).

**We are also moving forward with a paperless newsletter.** We hope that by going paperless we can not only save paper and money, but also bring you a newsletter that contains links you can easily use to register for our conferences and to find out more about what's happening in Illinois and at the national level with literacy. Please let us know what you think of our first digital newsletter. And PLEASE feel free to forward our newsletter to colleagues and administrators!

We both hope you have had a terrific start to your school year and look forward to seeing you at our fall conference on October 28th with Georgia Heard.

Happy teaching,  
Kris & Kristin

## Looking Back... While Moving Forward

It's that time of year... when the old name tags get thrown out and we painstakingly print out new tags from our coveted class lists. We all look back and think back to last year during our clean out, but each August we also all begin that renewal cycle as we print out new tags, hang up new decorations, and look forward to new smiling faces.

SCIRA also continues to look back while looking and moving forward. This summer at the IRC summer board meeting we spent time preparing for our three 2015-2016 school year professional development conferences.

We look forward to bringing to you: Georgia Heard (fall), Dr. Camille Blachowicz & Dr. Char Cobb (winter), and Kate Roberts and Chris Lehman (summer). We continue to strive to provide you high-quality professional development at a reasonable price!



We also spent time looking back in the SCIRA archives (which we greatly thank Claudia Katz for lovingly keeping these archives for us for years and years). As we looked back, we realized what a truly amazing organization SCIRA has been; from donating to world literacy organizations, to funding grants to local teachers, to always providing high-quality professional development. Paging through the archives inspired us to make a list of speakers from years past. As the list grew we were truly awed by the names.

So as we look forward to our presenters for the 2015-2016 school year, we also share with you just some of our past presenters!  
What a list it is!!!!

**SCIRA SPEAKER HISTORY (how many did you attend?)**

Summer 2015 - Lester Lamanick & Kelly Gallagher

Winter 2015 - Troy Hicks

Fall 2014 - Dalph Fletcher

Fall 2014 - Ralph Fiegeler  
 Summer 2014 - Ellen Keene & Dan Fegelson  
 Winter 2014 - Tim Shanahan  
 Fall 2013 - Sunday Cummins  
 Summer 2013 - Doug Fisher  
 Winter 2013 - Kristin Ziemke  
 Fall 2012 - Junko Yokota  
 Summer 2012 - Linda Hoyt  
 Winter 2012 - Margaret McKeown  
 Fall 2011 - Laura Belchenko  
 Summer 2011 - Richard Allington / Peter Johnston  
 Winter 2011 - Jerry Johns  
 Fall 2010 - Taffy Raphael  
 Fall 2009 - David Pearson  
 Summer 2009 - Debbie Diller  
 Winter 2009 - Michael Ford  
 Fall 2008 - Mary Ann Poppard  
 Summer 2008 - The Sisters  
 Summer 2007 - Donna Ogle, Laura Beltchenko, & Nell Duke  
 Winter 2007 - Donald Bear and Shane Templeton  
 Winter 2006 - Camille Blachowicz & Connie Obrochta  
 Fall 2005 - Jack Prelutsky  
 Winter 2005 - Harvey Daniels  
 Summer 2004 - Nancy Johnson & Bonnie Campbell Hill  
 Winter 2004 - Tony Stead  
 Fall 2003 - Steven Stahl & Margaret Richek  
 Winter 2003 - Debbie Miller  
 Fall 2002 - Dr. Richard Gentry  
 Fall 2002 - Richard Peck  
 Summer 2002 - Aileen Kennedy  
 Winter 2000 - Junko Yokota & Susan McMahon  
 Summer 1999 - Susan Davis Lenski  
 Spring 1999 - Janet Wong  
 Winter 1999 - Carol Avery (Panel: Tim Shannahan & Becky Barr)  
 Winter 1999 - Sharon Taberski  
 Summer 1998 - Linda Gambrell  
 Spring 1998 - Donald Graves  
 Winter 1998 - Joanne Hindley  
 Fall 1997 - Dr. Michael Ford  
 Summer 1997 - Darrell Morris  
 Spring 1997 - Richard Vacca  
 Fall 1996 - Camille Blachowicz and Peter Fischer  
 Summer 1996 - Regie Routman  
 Winter 1996 - Bob Barton  
 Fall 1995 - Kathy Short

Summer 1995 - Andrea Butler (MaryJane Miller)  
Unknown Year - Marie Clay

**Fall Conference**  
**Wednesday, October**  
**28th 4pm - 8pm**  
**Georgia Heard**



## **Nonfiction & Wonder**

As a writer, a poet, and a founding member of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, Georgia Heard continues to bring a poet's ear and a teacher's know-how to every aspect of writing instruction. She is the author of numerous books on teaching writing including *A Place for Wonder: Reading and Writing Nonfiction in the Primary Grades*, *Finding the Heart of Nonfiction: Teaching 7 Essential Craft Tools with Mentor Texts* and *The Revision Toolbox: Teaching Techniques That Works* (second edition).

[Georgia Heard's Website](#)



NLU (National Louis University) Wheeling Campus  
1000 Capitol Drive  
Wheeling, IL 60090

## Mail-in Registration Form

## Georgia Heard Conference Flyer

### NLU Course Information and Registration

#### **RECEIVE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COURSE CREDIT**

#### **Attend the SCIRA Fall Conference:**

#### **Georgia Heard - *Using Mentor Texts to Teach Nonfiction Writing***

**October 28, 2015, 4:00-8:00 pm**

**National Louis University - Wheeling Campus**

Students interested in one hour of graduate course credit may attend the SCIRA Fall Conference in Wheeling, October 28, 2015, and complete the requirements of this course.

#### **Course Calendar & Requirements:**

**Register separately for the SCIRA Fall Conference** by going to: <http://tinyurl.com/nqwn5r9>.

Please note that there is a separate fee to register for the conference.

1. **Register for the Graduate Course** by completing the course registration form.

- **Email** completed registration form including credit card payment section before or during the conference to Mary Hoch at [mary.hoch@nl.edu](mailto:mary.hoch@nl.edu) **OR**
- **Mail** completed registration form with tuition payment of **\$360**, check payable to National Louis University or

completed credit card payment section to: **Mary Hoch, Reading Center Director, National Louis University, 850 Warrenville Road, Lisle, IL 60532 OR**

- **At the Door** return completed registration form including payment to **Debbie Shefren**.
- 2. **Attend** SCIRA Conference, Wednesday, October 28th, 4-8 pm and workshop session directly after the conference, 8-10 pm at the conference site.
- 3. **Attend** the workshop session, at NLU's Wheeling campus, **Saturday, November 14th, from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm.**
- 4. **Read, summarize, analyze, and apply** ideas from the assigned professional text.
- 5. **Maintain** a reflective journal during the conference.
- 6. **Develop** a thematic unit of study supported by the Common Core State Standards.
- 7. **Complete** any other assignments given by instructor.

### **November 21, 2015**

- o All assignments due via email to Debbie Shefren.
- o Materials must be received as an electronic document.

**Questions?** Contact Mary Hoch at mary.hoch@nl.edu or 630-874-4533.

[Click here to download information and registration form.](#)

## **Summer Conference Recap**

"You can't write well without reading with a reader's eye." This was one of Lester Laminack's overarching themes during our first day of the summer conference. Lester constantly reminded us, writers ARE readers. In his lively, entertaining style he was able to give us a lot to think about. Lester has determined that the average college freshman is required to read 900 pages a week, and we aren't preparing students for this by the time they graduate high school. Students need to use texts from real authors in order to learn to write. Lester showed us many examples of how we could use read alouds to teach the Common Core standards in authentic ways to all grade levels. He also explained the importance of building schema in order for robust comprehension to happen.

The following is a link to the Google+ page for the conference.

The following day, Kelly Gallagher also discussed the importance of reciprocity in reading and writing. Gallagher reminded us of the declining scores, and much like Lester concludes that this is happening because children are not reading enough. He gave many suggestions for building reading lives that last in our students. Kelly also discussed how writing moves students into deeper levels of comprehension. Students should take time to stop in the middle of a novel to write what they are thinking. Gallagher gave many examples of ads, websites, texts, and news with biases and helping students become critical readers by noticing these biases. He also showed us three different ways of modeling writing, side by side, emulating the structure, and wide open. We walked away with so many ideas to implement in our classroom and help our students read like writers.

As always, the conference left us rejuvenated and excited for a new school year (after a much needed summer break)! Thank you to all who came for your energy and enthusiasm.



## About ILLINOIS READS

Under the auspices of the Illinois Reading Council, ILLINOIS READS will be a yearly statewide project to promote reading for all Illinois citizens. Beginning with read aloud books for babies, 6 books will be selected for each additional age band through adult readers. A variety of topics and themes will be chosen for each age band. The work of Illinois authors will be especially highlighted. There will be a mix of hard covers and paperbacks, with several Spanish-language titles and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)-related books and the work of Illinois authors will be especially highlighted.



Working with the Illinois State Library, State Librarian, Jesse White, is the Honorary Chair. The Illinois Reads will focus on reading at home and in the classroom. Illinois Reads will also emphasize summer reading as a way to not only bring the family closer together but also to combat what is known as "summer learning loss" in children. Residents from Rockford to Carbondale and from Quincy to Danville will be able to partake in Family Literacy Nights sponsored by their local IRC chapters.

As part of Illinois Reads, which will culminate in a statewide celebration of literacy during Secretary White's Family Reading Night in November, classrooms, public and school libraries, community groups, and community bookstores throughout the state will feature the titles of 36 books in six separate age groupings. Please watch the Illinois Reads website for more information to be posted or consider becoming an

Illinois Reads Ambassador today!

[For more information click this link.](#)



## SCIRA GRANT

SCIRA supports the work of classroom teachers to foster the literacy growth of their students. If you are interested in applying for a grant, please see the form below for guidelines, dates, and contact information.

**2015-2016 grant application now available.**

**Click here to view and fill out**

.. . . .

# the grant application form.

**\*\*\* Please note that you cannot save your work in Google docs.\*\*\***

If you do not plan to complete the application all at once, we recommend you compose and save in Word and then copy and paste your responses into the Google doc application once you are ready to submit.

[Download the SCIRA grant brochure here.](#)

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