

President's Message



As I prepared my third and final President's message for the DDEL VOICES newsletter, I had the opportunity to reflect on the challenges and accomplishments of this past year. The executive board, along with CEC as a whole, has engaged in serious conversations about how the organization can best serve our diverse membership. Revisiting DDEL's

mission, vision, and core values (see page 2) informs how our leadership team approaches the critical strategic plans for the future of the division. We are now exploring ways that we can effectively collaborate with other divisions and members across CEC to improve the quality of life of individuals with exceptionalities from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic communities. We have also engaged in numerous discussions about how to increase membership participation.

One of the highlights of my year as President was the opportunity to meet many of you in person during the Cookies and Coffee Reception in San Antonio. DDEL is planning another reception for the CEC 2014 Convention and we hope to see you there. Until then, I strongly encourage you to get involved, reach out to our board members and ask how you can contribute to the important mission of our organization! Please take the time to visit our new web address <http://community.cec.sped.org/DDEL/HomePage>. Tachelle Banks, our webmaster, has been hard at work transitioning our website to the new CEC microsite; you can find pertinent information about DDEL through this on-line resource.

I would like to acknowledge the dedication of the DDEL Board whose time and effort has been instrumental during this past year. As the outgoing President, I would like to welcome our incoming President, Satasha Green and congratulate our two newly elected board members: Troy Gonzales as President-elect and Andrea Jasper our new Treasurer (see page 3). Finally, I want to thank all of you for the opportunity to serve as the President of DDEL. I look forward to seeing the ongoing growth and development of this premier professional organization.

-Liz Cramer

DDEL would like to hear your VOICE...

If interested in contributing to future newsletters please consider the following categories:

"Voices from the Classroom" featuring an innovative strategy, approach, activity, or accomplishment conducted in a classroom serving culturally and linguistically diverse exceptional learners.

"Voices from the Field" featuring programs, research studies, organizations, or opportunities involving culturally and linguistically diverse exceptional learners and/or those who are serving this population.

"Research Spotlight" featuring studies related to CLD learners.

Please email a summary of up to 500 words, indicating one of the above categories to the newsletter editor, Mildred Boveda:

mbove001@fiu.edu

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DDEL's Mission:

To improve, through professional excellence and advocacy, the education and quality of life for individuals with exceptionalities from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic communities.

DDEL's Vision:

DDEL is an education organization renowned for its leadership in advancing knowledge and practice, and shaping policy to enhance the quality of life for diverse individuals with exceptionalities. DDEL's commitment to forging partnerships results in solutions to persistent and emerging barriers to social justice. DDEL is recognized globally for its expertise and advocacy.

Core Values

Diversity, social justice and equity
Inclusiveness
Advocacy

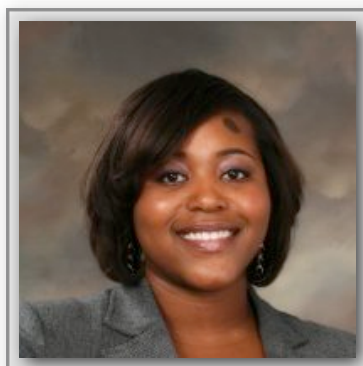
Inquiry leading to the development of practices that attend to unique learner characteristics

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWLY ELECTED
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS!**



President Elect

Troy Daniel Gonzales, Ed.D.
Program Director at Saint Mary's
University of Minnesota



Treasurer

Andrea Jasper, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Special Education
Central Michigan University



PHILADELPHIA, PA. APRIL 9-12, 2014

Registration and Hotel Information:

<http://www.cec.sped.org/convention>

In our next issue of VOICES we will highlight sessions and include more details about the Student Research Forum, DDEL Subcommittee meetings, Reception and other scheduled events.

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Instructional Practice in Special Education

A CEC/DDEL Collaborative Webinar took place on October 10, 2013. For those of you who were unable to attend, please visit <http://www.cec.sped.org/Professional-Development/Events-Calendar/2013/10/WEB1326> for more information about how to access the webinar:

In this webinar you will learn about five components of culturally and linguistically responsive instruction for exceptional learners, including: IEP considerations, supporting language development, cultural considerations, meaningful participation of families, and coordination of programs and services. In addition, this webinar will offer guidelines for selecting culturally responsive instructional materials, and creating a positive learning environment for culturally and linguistically diverse exceptional learners.

After completing this program, you will be able to:

- Identify the components of instruction for exceptional learners that are responsive to their disability in the context of their socio-cultural and linguistic identities.
- Identify considerations for IEP development to ensure services are appropriate for exceptional learners and families from diverse communities.
- Discuss specific strategies that are responsive to the socio-cultural and linguistic characteristics of exceptional students and families.
- Describe criteria for selecting materials and approaches that are appropriate for use in diverse settings

We would like to thank Shernaz Garcia, DDEL Past President and Archivist, for graciously donating her time and expertise for this seminar.

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

A CONVERSATION WITH KARLA HERNANDEZ-MATS

As a special education teacher in her ninth year at Miami-Dade County Public schools, DDEL member Karla Hernandez-Mats directly experienced the challenges involved in assessing students with disabilities. In addition to working with students of diverse abilities and learning needs, the majority of her students were English language learners. Her critique of Florida's high stakes assessments became increasingly keen after Florida implemented a teacher evaluation system that she felt was inadequate for evaluating all teachers. To voice these and other frustrations with the public school system, Hernandez-Mats created a vlog in which she detailed her experiences in the classroom. Word of her vlog entries spread, and she was eventually featured in a 20 minute segment with StateImpact, a reporting project of NPR member stations. Today, as the newly elected Secretary-Treasurer for the United Teachers of Dade (UTD), Hernandez-Mats is actively involved in engaging practitioners, policy-makers and community members in order to improve learning conditions for all students in the fourth largest school district in the nation.

During her teenage years, Hernandez-Mats participated in a number of humanitarian trips to her parents' native Honduras. In Tegucigalpa, she visited schools, hospitals and orphanages. For the first time, she had the opportunity to work with individuals with disabilities. These experiences made a strong impression, and she subsequently pursued a career in special education. In 2011,



Karla Hernandez-Mats, Secretary-Treasurer of United Teachers of Dade
karla@utd.org

Hernandez-Mats' colleagues voted her teacher of the year at Hialeah Middle School. Two years later, she made history by becoming the first elected executive board member of UTD who was of Hispanic descent.

When asked how her tenure as a special education teacher informs her current work she says, "it's interesting that you ask me that, because Fed, Tom and I each have a direct link to special education". She goes on to explain that the president of UTD, Frederick Ingram, has a son who is currently receiving special education services. First Vice President Tom Gammon has an adult son who has Fragile X syndrome; he participated in the district's special education program throughout his school years.

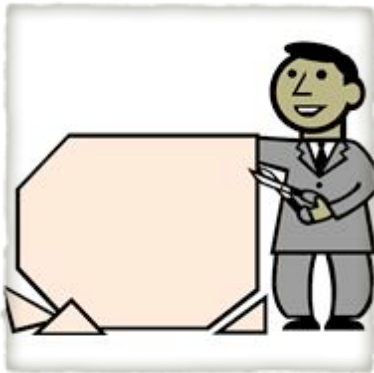
"Of course, I have the perspective of an educator," she continues. "I understand exactly how it is for teachers and support personnel who work within a range of settings. From inclusion to self-contained classrooms, it's not always easy". Hernandez-Mats and her colleagues are conscious of keeping issues pertaining to students with disabilities and students from culturally and linguistically diverse background at the forefront of their advocacy efforts. "Whether it's working on contract negotiations or talking in Capitol Hill, we just cannot ignore the range of diversity within our public schools".



UTD Executive Board Members (left to right): First Vice President Tom Gammon, President Frederick Ingram, and Secretary-Treasurer Karla Mats Hernandez.

CAN CORNER

CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACTION NETWORK



Donna Sobel, DDEL's CAN Coordinator, has shared the following information with the membership:

Reports come out daily highlighting changes in education and early learning, sorting through these reports to help build your case with elected officials. Here are a few tips/resources you can rely on:

- [CEC's Policy Insider](http://www.policyinsider.org/) summarizes numerous reports and highlights the impact on children and youth with exceptionalities. If you're looking for a particular issue, use the search function to see what comes up! <http://www.policyinsider.org/>
- For a comprehensive list of OSEP funded centers with a wealth of resources and data, check out [the Technical Assistance and Dissemination Network \(TA&D Network\)](http://tadnet.public.tadnet.org/) which is a network of approximately 45 Centers funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). These projects provide information and technical assistance to states, schools, educational professionals and families on topics such as autism, deafness, disproportionate representation, dispute resolution, learning disabilities, parenting children with disabilities, positive behavior supports and transition. <http://tadnet.public.tadnet.org/>
- The Infant and Toddler Coordinators Association just released the 2013 [annual state survey](http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/pdf/2013-Status-of-Part-C-Data-Systems.pdf) about the status of IDEA's infant and toddler program nationwide. <http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/pdf/2013-Status-of-Part-C-Data-Systems.pdf>
- Need employment data about individuals with disabilities? The [U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Policy](http://www.dol.gov/odep/) has a wealth of information. <http://www.dol.gov/odep/>
- The [National Council on Disability](http://www.ncd.gov/) is an independent federal agency committed to disability policy leadership on a wide range of issues. <http://www.ncd.gov/>
- [OSEP](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html) - The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is dedicated to improving results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities ages birth through 21 by providing leadership and financial support to assist states and local districts. <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html>

MULTIPLE VOICES

Guidelines for Preparation and Submission of Manuscripts

Multiple Voices for Ethnically Diverse Exceptional Learners (MV) is the official, peer-reviewed journal of the Division for Ethnically Diverse Exceptional Learners (DDEL) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). The journal publishes original research; conceptual and theoretical articles; critical analyses, reviews and syntheses of literature; and material, test, and book reviews. We seek works that explicitly address the interrelationships between culture, language, and exceptionality in educational systems, policy, research, and/or practice. Topics may include (but are not limited to):

Early childhood through post-secondary education

Disproportionate representation

Prevention and early intervention

Identification and assessment

Instruction/intervention

Programs and services for exceptional populations and their families

Family and community empowerment

Recruitment and retention

Personnel preparation

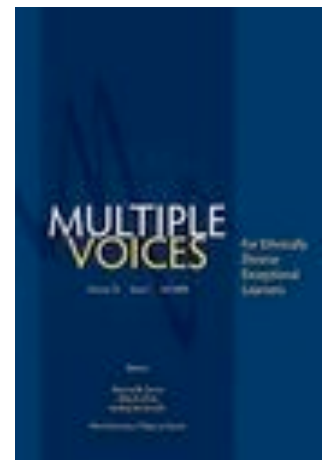
Policy and law

Authors should submit manuscripts that conform to APA style (6th edition) and not exceed 30 pages (including references).

MV is published twice a year in the fall and spring.

For additional information, including manuscript guidelines and subscription rates, please visit our web- site at

<http://community.cec.sped.org/DDEL/publications>



DDEL Membership Benefit:

DDEL members have electronic access to current and past content of the division journal, Multiple Voices for Ethnically Diverse Exceptional Students. Please be advised that your access will be active until your CEC/DDEL membership expires. Renewing your membership will ensure uninterrupted access. If you have any questions, please contact Charity Gillman, DDEL Membership Chair, ddelearner@gmail.com