

MNADE NEWSLETTER

Spring 2003

A revived newsletter!

After a long absence, the MNADE executive board has committed to producing a newsletter for our members and potential members in Minnesota.

We are mailing hard copies to all members, but you can also find it on our new website (see related article). Please do make your colleagues aware of these two ways to connect with colleagues around the state.

Just a click away...

Cathy Wambach (and her son) are working on a MNADE website. As soon as it is up, we will post the address on the MNADE Listserv.

We hope this will facilitate access to important MNADE information, as well as provide links to other related professional organizations.

Please encourage your new colleagues in developmental education, learning assistance, ESL, disability services, and

advising to consider joining MNADE.



Fall 2002 Conference Report

We had a one day conference on September 27, 2002 at the lovely new Science Museum in St. Paul. A highlight of the day was listening to our new state senator, Mee Moua, give the keynote speech.

As you may know, Senator Moua won her seat in the special election held to find a replacement for Randy Kelly's seat when he was elected St. Paul mayor. Ms. Moua is the first Hmong person to be elected for public office in the United States. We were delighted when she agreed to speak with us.

Selected contents of her keynote address are included on the next page.

In preparation for giving the speech, Senator Moua had the opportunity to learn quite a bit about developmental education

in Minnesota from our MNADE president, Susan Hipp. We thank Susan for her part in the education of a legislator! We all have work to do in this regard!

A Word from our President

“Hold Fast!” These are challenging times. Most of us are uncertain at this moment as to what the state budget crisis will really mean for our developmental programs and classes. However, I do believe that we must “Hold Fast” to our commitment to serve those who have no voice. We must continue to fight to have the opportunity to provide access for all students seeking higher educational opportunities.

Does it sound like I feel threatened? I do. What actions should we take? We must inform our legislators of our meaningful work. Senator Mee Moua outlines the steps to take in her keynote address, included in this publication, from the MNADE Fall Conference.

All in all, personal stories work best when contacting individual legislators. Start collecting, recording, and sharing yours. We

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must educate our own administrators as to the role we play in increasing retention, diversity, and access for the under-prepared and underserved.

We must connect with area high school teachers in our disciplines to help develop complimentary systems. My work on Century's College Readiness Committee has shown me the need for greater communication and clarification of our practices and expectations.

We must get the word out to students and parents that reading, writing, and math are crucial for future academic success. Finally, we must continue to talk and share, via this organization and others, all of the best practices we are using to engage learners and make meaningful access a reality for our students.

How can we possibly, given our already demanding schedules, add these items to our workload? Well, I believe the time has come to reprioritize our endeavors and raise access to the top of the list. For legislative information check www.leg.state.mn.us. Please, do what you can.

I look forward to seeing you in September at Sugar

Lake Lodge.

Susan Hipp

Senator Mee Moua

September 27, 2002

Excerpts from her Keynote Address

“Thank you for inviting me to speak here today. The work you all do here for students is really vital to the success of our entire state. You know better than anybody that having a well-trained, highly skilled workforce is critical to the success of Minnesota's economy.

“As I was preparing my comments, I was reminded of my own history. As many of you may know I left my home in Laos when I was very young and lived with my parents in a refugee camp in Thailand. We lived there for four years, before moving to America. Having the support of my teachers and a strong family environment was critical in my success. No doubt many of the students you work with on a day to day basis will look back at your efforts with the same fondness and appreciation that I do.

“Frankly, I must tell you that before accepting this speaking invitation, I

hadn't given much serious thought to the role you play in so many students' lives, even though I took part in many of the services you provide. What I realized in preparing for this speech—and what I really began to realize as a first term state senator—is that the education system needs to be seamless. Legislators and others involved in education have begun to make the connection that success in preschool means success in K-12 means success in college. We are beginning to call the system “P-16.” And this is crucial...

“... We know that many of the students in the MnSCU system need some level of remedial education upon entering college. Of course some of these are refresher classes, while others are classes for students who have a developmental learning disability.

“Of course developmental education is not just refresher courses, and it's not just for students with learning disabilities. But that was my perception when I first heard the term “developmental education.” I was surprised to learn that developmental education includes such things as tutoring, mentoring, academic and

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career counseling, and “regular” course work. I think distinguishing what “developmental education” is remains a crucial point for not just policy makers to grasp, but also for the general population...



“... But what about the students who just don’t have the study skills necessary to succeed? Or those who don’t know how to read a book and glean the relevant information from it? This begs the questions—at least it did for me—“what happened” and “why?” What aren’t students getting in high school that they should be? Is more money the answer? Better teachers? Better home environment? Or does the responsibility rest solely with the students?

“Naturally, like overall success in school, the responsibility lies in part with all these factors. But I think the first thing to grasp—and this is vital for legislators to understand—is that graduating from high school does not mean you are ready for college. Even students who are on a college-track may not have the study habits and other

needed skills to be successful in college. So our understanding of “developmental education” is flawed because we assume that Hey! If you graduated from high school then you are expected to go to—and succeed—in college. Before we can create this seamless P-16 system, we need to change the way in which we think about college preparation.

“...So what is the best way to convince your legislator of the importance of funding developmental education? Like most things in life, who you know is at least as important as what you know. Legislators are people too, and you should get to know yours.

“Next, providing information about your issue is very important. A simple letter or phone call from an advocate can go a long way. I will add that form letters and mass mailings are *not* effective. I am much more likely to be persuaded by a nice letter from a constituent than 200 postcards on the same issue from citizens outside of my district.

“Finally, probably the most effective method to communicate a message to

your legislator is to meet one on one with them. More importantly, having students who have gone through the process speak first hand about their experience would be an excellent way to communicate your message. Personal testimony is often times more influential than any amount of facts and statistics. And of course always send a written follow up thank you note and confirmation of the legislators opinion.

“There, now you should all be ready to become lobbyists on behalf of developmental education!

“...I know I’m preaching to the choir, and I trust you’re all here today because you know how important an educated workforce is to our success as a State and nation. While we begin a new budget cycle this January, your work here is in many ways much more important. As we work to solve the budget deficit, many of us are watching to ensure that these programs are kept from the chopping block. Indeed, we don’t have a choice.

“The time spent and dedication by individuals like you can literally be the

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difference between dropping out of school and being elected to the state Senate.

“Thanks for inviting me here today. It’s been an honor. Good luck.”

A CRLA Note

A huge thank you to all Minnesota participants in the November 2002 College Reading and Learning Association conference! Twenty nine Minnesota colleagues were presenters and more than twenty two volunteered their time and energy to work the conference in some capacity. We received many compliments for our efforts.



NADE Conference in Austin

The national conference was held in Austin, Texas

this year. Minnesota was well represented by presenters from the University of Minnesota and Minneapolis Community and Technical College. We would love to see more of our state colleagues submit proposals to national conferences. We know you are doing great things on your campuses; it is time to share them!

New Officers

At the fall conference the membership elected two new officers to the MNADE board. We welcome Dana Britt Lundell as our new president elect. Dana is the director of the Center for Research in Developmental Education and Urban Literacy at the University of Minnesota-General College.

Also joining the board is our new secretary, Mary Thurow. Mary is the co-coordinator of the Learning Center and math specialist at Minneapolis Community and Technical College.

Continuing on the board are president Susan Hipp (Century College), treasurer Jim Wilmesmeier (St. Cloud State University), membership

chair Barb Schewe (Anoka Ramsey Community College), and past presidents Gretchen Starks Martin (St. Cloud State University), Cathy Wambach (University of Minnesota-General College), and Linda Russell (Minneapolis Community and Technical College)

Subscribe to our Listserv!

It is easy to join our MNADE listserv. Follow these instructions, and then let’s get talking!

To subscribe, send an email to

LISTSERV@tc.umn.edu.

Leave the subject line blank and turn off the signature again if you use one. In the message type
SUB MN-NADE
FIRSTNAME
LASTNAME.

To unsubscribe, send a message to the same address, and type the message: signoff MN-NADE.

Fall 2003 MNADE Conference

Please plan to attend our fall conference on September 25-26 at Sugar

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Lake Lodge in Grand Rapids. The fall leaves should be spectacular! You might even want to extend your stay to include the weekend.

The next piece is the call for proposals...the ball is in YOUR court.

Call for Conference Proposals

MNADE 2003 Annual Conference
September 25-26, 2003
Sugar Lake Lodge,
Grand Rapids,
Minnesota

Trends and Initiatives in Developmental Education:

Past, Present, and Future

The Executive Board of MNADE invites proposals for 1-hour sessions on best practices, trends, and initiatives in developmental education in the state of Minnesota. Presenters are encouraged to share information about their Development Education programs and students, demonstrate successful practices,

discuss current policies and research, or provide perspectives on future trends in the field.

Proposals:

Proposals should include names of presenters, a primary contact person (including phone, address, and e-mail), session title, and brief description of the proposed presentation (250 words max). Also indicate your audiovisual needs (overhead projectors available). **Please consider sending your proposal as an email attachment.**

Send to:
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Due Date: May 1, 2003

Full conference details will be forthcoming in April, 2003. For more information about Sugar

Lake Lodge visit their web site at

www.sugarlodelodge.com

