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Volume 5, Issue 3

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## Message from the President

October 2005

*Kathleen Roney  
 University of North  
 Carolina Wilmington*

Greetings, colleagues and friends.

On behalf of the Middle Level Education Research SIG allow me to extend heartfelt sympathies to those who have suffered from the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina. And, now as I write this message, more devastation is expected from the hands of Hurricane Rita. Those of you affected directly and indirectly are in our thoughts and prayers. As members of the American Educational Association, I urge you to read the Open Message on Hurricane Katrina available at <http://www.aera.net/opportunities/?id=829> Indeed, AERA has led the way in our helping our

colleagues in these devastated areas.

I look forward to greeting you in Philadelphia at NMSA's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference and Exhibit. Many of our MLER members are presenting their research, and I encourage you to support them by attending their sessions. Contained in this newsletter is a brief listing of some of these presentations. Additionally, NMSA's Research Committee is sponsoring a number of sessions which should be of interest to many of you.

Our business meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 5:15p.m. in room 113B of the Philadelphia Convention Center. We always have a full agenda, but I expect we will complete our business within an hour. And, of course, there are the "give aways" that add fun to our gathering!

Certainly, we want to thank Vince Anfarra, Gayle Andrews, and Steve Mertens for bringing to completion the first ever

*Encyclopedia of Middle Grades Education*. This was a huge project. Many of us have entries, and most of us will utilize the encyclopedia in our continued research, writing, and teaching. I understand it will be available for purchase at the NMSA booth.

We are excited, too, to announce that *Making a Difference: Action Research in Middle Level Education*, edited by Micki Caskey, is now available and will be sold at the NMSA booth in Philadelphia. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> volume of the *Handbook in Middle Level Education*, which is a handbook series sponsored by the MLER SIG.

Speaking of putting things in writing, Sue Thompson, MLER Vice President, is putting together a Procedure for Developing Policy for the AERA MLER SIG. We plan to have something available for distribution at our Business Meeting in Philadelphia.

Finally, allow me to remind you to think about nominations for the Middle Level Education Research Graduate Student Award. This award carries with it a cash award of \$250.00, one-year paid membership in the SIG, and a plaque. The application of this

award is available on the MLER website, <http://www.rmle.pdx.edu>

It is great to work with you, and I look forward to a good visit in Philadelphia. Best wishes, Kathy.

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## Report from the Program Chair

By Micki M. Caskey  
Portland State University

During the past several months, I have learned a great deal about the role and responsibilities of Program Chair. Naturally, my predecessors including our SIG President, Kathleen Roney, and Past-Presidents, Vince Anfara and Kim Hartman, helped to ensure a smooth transition. I discovered quickly that our leaders were only a phone call or email away.

Our MLER SIG meets twice a year, at National Middle School Association's (NMSA) annual conference in November and at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) in April. Please read the news about each event listed below.

## See you in Philadelphia



## Business Meeting at NMSA

The MLER SIG will meet at NMSA on Friday November 4, 2005, 5:15-6:30 pm in Room 113B at the Philadelphia Convention Center. Please plan to attend this important Business Meeting. If you have an agenda item, please contact Kathleen Roney by email at [roneyk@uncw.edu](mailto:roneyk@uncw.edu) Typically, our agenda includes:

- Membership information
- Reports from the President, Program Chair, and Treasurer
- Updates on recent MLER publications such as the Handbook series and the Encyclopedia
- Information concerning the SIG

Newsletter and Web Site

- MLER's Graduate Student Award
- Announcement of MLER sessions at AERA's annual meeting

Hope to see YOU there!  
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## Chat Session at NMSA

Prior to the business meeting, the NMSA Research Advisory Board conducts a Chat Session in the same room (Room 113B PCC) 3:45-5:00pm. The Chat Session provides a venue for informal discussions concerning various topic of research in middle level education. Many MLER SIG members participate in the Chat Session. Please come and join the conversation!

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## Research Sessions at NMSA

Please note that NMSA's Research Advisory Board sponsors a number of research sessions at NMSA's annual conference. Look for these sessions and other research sessions at the conference.

National Middle School Association's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference &



### Thursday November 3<sup>rd</sup>

~NMSA Research Poster Session [12:30-1:45 in 113B---PCC]

~What Research Says About... Students' Views of Good Teaching and Reform [2:15-3:30 in 113B---PCC]

~A New Tool: Middle Grades Education: Fundamentals and Research [2:15-3:30 in 113A---PCC]

~Action Research in the Middle Grades [4:00-5:15 in 113A---PCC]

### Friday November 4<sup>th</sup>

~What Research Says about... Principal Leadership in Highly Successful Middle Grades Schools [12:15-1:30 in 113B---PCC]

~Keeping Middle Grades Students on Track to Graduation [10:30-11:45 in 201B---PCC]

~*Research and Resources in Support of This We Believe*: Focusing on Curriculum, Instruction,

and Assessment [2:00-3:15 in 113B---PCC]

~Chat Session [3:35-5:00 in 113B---PCC]

### Saturday November 5<sup>th</sup>

~What Research Says About... High Implementation Middle Grades Schools: Methods and Findings [12:00-1:15 in 113B---PCC]

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## NAPOMLE at NMSA

The National Association of Professors of Middle Level Education (NAPOMLE) is sponsoring a Best Practices Session at NMSA in Philadelphia on Thursday from 2:15 to 3:30 in Room 201B. This is an opportunity for everyone to find out about teaching practices, course activities, unique aspects of a program, or other ideas relevant to those teaching middle level courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

NAPOMLE will have a business meeting on Friday from 2:00-3:15 in Room 112-A. We hope you can attend.

### **MLER SIG Officers**

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P. Gayle Andrews (2005-2007)

Steven Mertens (2005-2007)

Paul Deering (2004-2006)

Adrienne Dixson (2004-2006)

Richard Lipka (2004-2006)

Sandra L. Stacki (2004-2006)



## **Volume V Handbook of Research in Middle Level Education series**

### ***Making a Difference: Action Research in Middle Level Education***

This past summer Information Age Publishing released the 5<sup>th</sup> volume of *The Handbook of Research in Middle Level Education* series. Volume V, *Making a Difference: Action Research in Middle Level Education* was edited by Micki M. Caskey, Portland State University.

This volume provides an overview and twelve exemplars of action research in middle grades education. Authors include Joanne M. Arhar, Heidi Bulmahn Barker, Carole Basile, Penny A. Bishop, Nick Boke, Loyce Caruthers, Micki M. Caskey, Dorie Combs, Linda Crawford, Pritha Gopalan, Larry Gregg,

Steve Hoelscher, Ned Kirsch, Kathleen F. Malu, Patrick Montesano, Susanna W. Pflaum, Cynthia Resor, Laila Y. Sanguras, Dan R. Saurino, Penelope L. Saurino, Theresa A. Shrum, Sandra L. Stacki, Diane Stanton, Sue C. Thompson, Holly J. Thorton, Teri West, and Melinda Wilder. These middle school practitioners, middle level faculty, consultants, and other researchers describe explicitly how they used action research to improve practice.

Order your copy of *Making a Difference: Action Research in Middle Level Education* or other volumes in *The Handbook of Research in Middle Level Education* from Information Age Publishing (203-661-7602 or <http://www.infoagepub.com>).



## **2006 MLER Graduate Student Award**

Do you know an outstanding graduate student? Are you looking for a way to recognize his or her contribution to middle level education?

Please consider nominating graduate students for our MLER Graduate Student Award. We encourage you to nominate Masters, Specialist, and Doctoral students who have recently completed theses and dissertations. Please go to the MLER Web Site for specific information and application/nomination form at [www.middlelevel.pdx.edu](http://www.middlelevel.pdx.edu)

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact the SIG Awards Chair, Sandra L. Stacki at [sandra.l.stacki@hofstra.edu](mailto:sandra.l.stacki@hofstra.edu)

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## **AERA 2006 Annual Meeting**

**Friday, April 7 to  
Tuesday, April 11**

**San Francisco**



# **AERA Proposals**

This past summer, the MLER SIG received 49 proposals for the annual meeting in San Francisco. The number of SIG proposals increased significantly. Not only did the number of proposal swell, but also the number of reviewers grew considerably. This year, 40 members volunteered and served as reviewers for the 49 proposals---each needing three reviews for a total of 147 reviews! Final decisions concerning acceptance of proposals are underway. I will announce the accepted proposals at our Business Meeting in Philadelphia (listed above).

Thank you to those researchers who submitted proposals about their studies for our MLER SIG sessions. And, many thanks to our SIG members who volunteered their time and expertise to review the research proposals. Because of all of your efforts, our SIG will sponsor a set of important and informative sessions at AERA.

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The editors of the newsletter are searching for articles, news, book reviews, and other information that would be of interest to MLER SIG members.

Please send any items you would like to have considered for publication to Maureen Musser at [mmusser@willamette.edu](mailto:mmusser@willamette.edu) by January 1, 2006

The SIG Newsletter is published three times annually in January, June, and October.

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## **MLER Meets in Philadelphia**

Be sure to attend the MLER meeting at the NMSA Annual Conference in Philadelphia.

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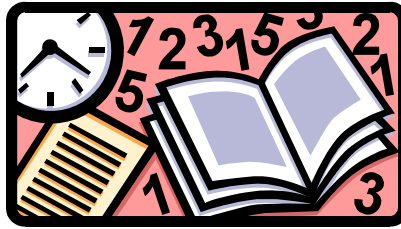




# Call for Submissions

## *Current Issues in Middle Level Education*

*Current Issues in Middle Level Education* is a peer-reviewed national journal committed to the dissemination of research-based, best practices articles based on the National Middle School Association's position statement on the professional preparation of middle level teachers (standards available at [www.nmsa.org/services/teacher\\_prep](http://www.nmsa.org/services/teacher_prep)). The editors invite you to submit research, research-based practice, inquiry orientation, theoretical, philosophical, or reviews of research that are appropriate for middle level professors and align with NMSA standards. *Submission guidelines are available at <http://www.kennesaw.edu/education/mge/napomle/>* A Publication of NAPOMLE



Visit our  
website

[www.middlelevel.pdx.edu](http://www.middlelevel.pdx.edu)

**MLER Listserv.**

**Interested in being part of the MLER listserv? Want to get all of the latest news and gossip? Don't be left out! Send an email to Vince Anfara at [vanfara@utk.edu](mailto:vanfara@utk.edu) and ask to be added to the MLER listserv.**

# NAPOMLE

Professors of Middle Level Education are invited to participate in a Middle Level Teacher Education Symposium to be held in Charleston, SC, May 17-19, 2006.

Join us in Charleston for a spring symposium. We will have Action Labs on partnerships, accreditation, and publication/research. We will also have state and national leaders presenting on the State of Middle School and how we can impact change. In addition, you are invited to present best practices you use and to share your ideas with colleagues.

Our hope is that you will bring your energy and ideas to join other middle level professors to promote the middle school movement. Our charge is to energize you with ideas and strategies for enhancing your program and your own professional development.

The symposium is sponsored by the North Carolina and South Carolina Professors of Middle Level Education. For more information contact Phyllis Pendarvis at: [ppendarvis@sc.rr.com](mailto:ppendarvis@sc.rr.com)

## Fall Update: MLER-SIG Web Site

By Micki M. Caskey,  
Portland State University,  
[caskeym@pdx.edu](mailto:caskeym@pdx.edu)

The MLER SIG Web Site continues to change with the seasons. These updates ensure that our membership has access to events and new publications, current information about our SIG and pertinent resources, and archival issues of *The Chronicle of Middle Level Education Research*. A quick tour of the web site reveals subtle, yet timely changes.

~**Conference** section provides information about annual conferences and meetings including 1) National Middle School Association's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference in Philadelphia and 2) American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting in San Francisco. This section also includes calls for proposals and identifies future NMSA and AERA events.

~**Constitution and Bylaws** section offers the entire text of these governing documents.

~**Directory** section lists MLER members and their contact information.

~**Graduate Student Award** section is the source of applications for the SIG's annual graduate student award. The application describes the award, eligibility, and submissions requirements for this prestigious award.

(Application deadline is January 15, 2006.) This section also acknowledges recent recipients of the graduate student award.

~**History** section links to *The History of the Middle Level Education Research Special Interest Group*, a 64-page text.

~**Membership** section is the contact point for those interested in joining the MLER SIG.

~**Officers** section provides a listing of the SIG officers, their affiliations, and contact information.

~**Policy Briefs** section includes two briefs and calls for additional ones. Please connect with Sue Thompson, Vice President, about your interest in authoring a policy brief.

~**Position Announcements** section lists higher education positions. This section will change each time an announcement is forwarded the web master.

~**Publications** section offers links to books, the newsletter, and papers/abstracts. This section also has calls for papers, information about

the five volumes of *Handbook in Middle Level Education* series, and the soon to be released, *The Encyclopedia of Middle Grades Education*.

~**Related Web Sites** section includes contact points for other organization's web sites. Among these are AERA, NMSA, RMLE Online, The National Forum for Accelerate Middle Grades Reform.

~**Research Interests** section houses a searchable database of middle level researchers and their areas of research.

~**Survey Results** section provides a report concerning the MLER SIG Survey.

~**Webmaster** links directly to my email [caskeym@pdx.edu](mailto:caskeym@pdx.edu).

Remember to visit the MLER-SIG Web Site at [www.middlelevel.pdx.edu](http://www.middlelevel.pdx.edu) often. It is a quick and easy tool to use, and can be changed to suit the needs of our membership. Please contact me when you have news or information to post on our website.

