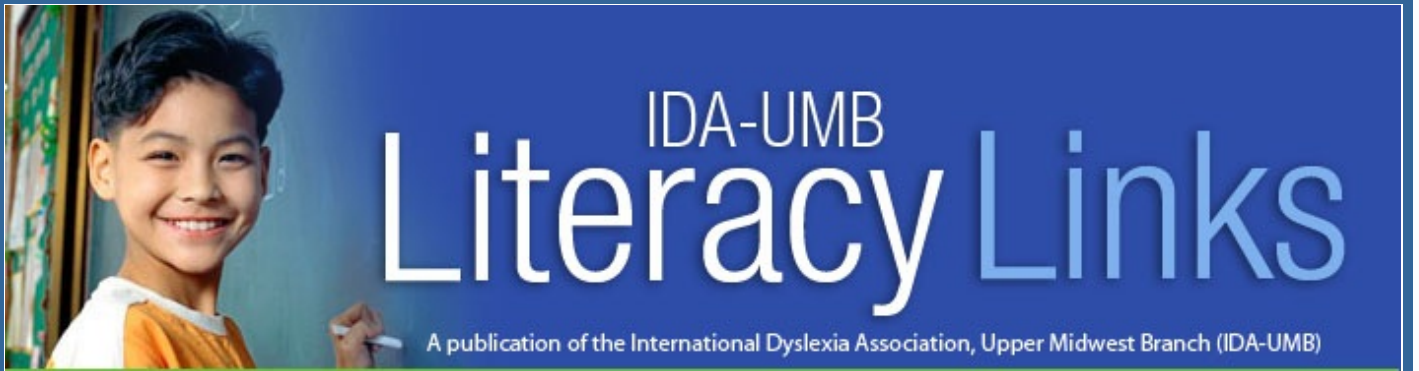


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To suggest article ideas for "Literacy Links," contact editor@ida-umb.org.

May 2011

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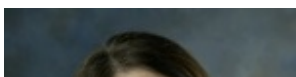
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DR. C. REID LYON WOWED!

IDA 37th Annual Conference Challenges the Status Quo



IDA's 37th Annual Conference held March 21 & 22 at the



"Part of our strategy . . . is to offer real value to our members and the community as an information provider. Offering quality speaker events is one way we do that. "

*Cindee McCarthy
President, IDA-UMB*

University of St. Thomas was well received by attendees, particularly the keynote speeches presented by Dr. C. Reid Lyon, according to an attendee survey.

Lyon, distinguished professor of education policy and leadership at Southern Methodist University, and distinguished scientist in cognition and neuroscience at the University of Texas (Dallas), discussed current data from multi-disciplinary studies addressing cognitive, linguistic and neurobiological factors essential to proficient reading. He also reviewed early intervention programs and the application of Response to Instruction (RTI) models with the audience of parents, advocates and educators.

Lyon addressed the crowd in morning and afternoon keynotes and signed his books *Why Kids Can't Read: Challenging the Status Quo in Education* and *Learning Disabilities: From Identification to Intervention* for lunch goers during Saturday's luncheon. Also available for sale at the conference were Souday System kits.

"We've had consecutive years of really top-notch presenters," says Cindee McCarthy, president of IDA-UMB. "We'll continue to bring in key researchers and educators to our conferences. Part of our strategy as an organization is to offer real value to our members and the community as an information provider. Offering quality speaker events is one way we do that."

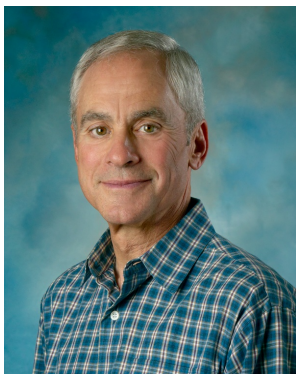
Conference attendees enjoyed three all-day workshop offerings on Friday, and silent auction and vendor exhibits on Saturday in between breakout sessions. If you have a suggestion for future topics, presenters or keynote speakers, please contact us at editor@ida-umb.org.

NEW MEMBERS, POSITIONS TO IDA-UMB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

June typically brings to the upper Midwest a sense of relief as all danger of snow dissipates and summer finally begins. For the IDA-UMB board, June officially kicks off new or renewed roles for directors. This year, two new members were welcomed to the board, Lee Baker and Robin Rovick.



Bette Erickson



Leo Stern

A marketing executive and parent advocacy educator, Lee Baker helps parents gain skills and find resources to support their children with learning disabilities. She has actively served on IDA-UMB's Publicity & Communications Committee as well as provided her expertise as a conference presenter. She and her family live in St. Paul.

Robin Rovick is also an active IDA-UMB member, and serves the community as a reading therapist and Level IV O-G tutor. She utilizes the Orton-Gillingham approach to instruct her students and has found much success through multisensory instruction. She has also been a huge help as the volunteer that answers the IDA-UMB phone lines. Rovick and her family hale from Minneapolis.

Also in June, Kelly O'Rourke Johns moves into the role of 1st vice president of the board, while Jeanie Munsterman begins her term as 2nd vice president. Cindee McCarthy will continue to serve as president of the board for a second term.

WITH GRATITUDE

Though board changes and additions always bring renewed energy and fresh ideas, we're always sad to say farewell to directors who have fulfilled their terms. This year, the IDA-UMB board loses two people who have played significant roles in shaping the organization.

Bette Erickson attended her first national IDA conference 15 years ago, and apparently it left an impression! She has been an active IDA-UMB board member, serving two consecutive terms, and has served as 1st Vice President of IDA-UMB. In addition to Erickson's many accomplishments, she was instrumental in getting House File 2 passed through legislature. She is a founding member of Parent Advocates for Students with Dyslexia (PASD) and the mother of a successful college student with dyslexia. Her passion and commitment have been incredible gifts to our organization.



Leo Stern brought his own brand of considered advice to the IDA-UMB board as an individual with dyslexia and as an attorney. Stern served as a commercial litigator with the international law firm of Fredrikson & Byron for more than 35

years and continues in private practice as a mediator and arbitrator. He is treasurer of [The June Stern Family Foundation](#), a nonprofit dedicated to helping kindergarten through third grade children in the Twin Cities to advance their reading skills. Leo's knack for arbitration occasionally has come in handy during impassioned board meetings! His expertise and dedication helped us forge new bylaws and our current strategic plan.

Thank you, Bette and Leo, for your service!

Reading Center Publishes Classroom Infusion Training Outcomes

For four years, The Reading Center has been training classroom teachers in the Rochester Public Schools in a classroom application of the Orton-Gillingham approach for use with all students. Outcomes in the classrooms demonstrate the impact of that training.

In primary grade classrooms, teachers incorporated The Reading Center methods into their daily lessons. Most of the lowest quarter of readers moved out of the "at-risk" category by the next school year. The highest 25 percent of readers in the same classes continued to make substantial gains throughout the year. Teaching classroom teachers allows The Reading Center to reach the greatest number of children and make the biggest impact.

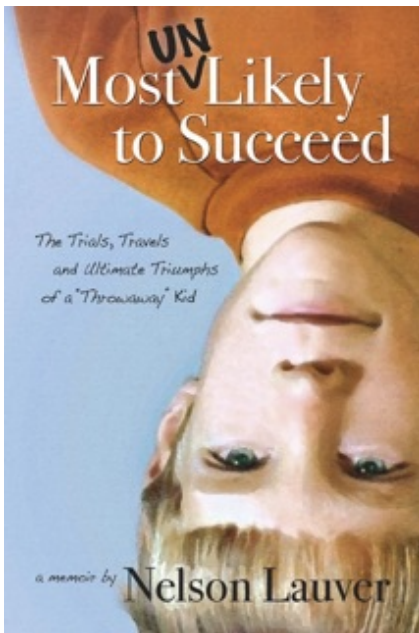
For more information on The Reading Center/Dyslexia Institute of Minnesota, [CLICK HERE](#).



GROVES' POST-SECONDARY TRANSITION PROGRAM

Program supports graduates transitioning from high school.

It's the time of year when high school seniors are asking, "What's next?" While many are set to attend the four-year college of their dreams, others are unsure if they are ready for post-secondary education. It's a stressful time of year for high



school seniors and their families, and even more so for those with learning disabilities or attention disorders (LD/ADHD).

This was certainly the case for Karen Leeming and her son Patrick, who was diagnosed with a learning disability while in elementary school. Leeming had always been a strong advocate for her son, and was well-versed in the world of special education and the accommodations that Patrick would need to be successful. When it came time for Patrick to move on after graduating from high school, Leeming was pessimistic. She researched transition programs available through public schools and also disability service programs at local colleges. Nothing quite fit Patrick. Then, Leeming found the Groves Post-Secondary (GPS) Program.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE . . .](#)

CONTROVERSIAL THERAPIES: BUYER BEWARE

by *Cindy Russell, Executive Director, [The Reading Center/Dyslexia Institute of Minnesota](#)*

The Winter 2011 issue of the journal *Perspectives on Language and Literacy* published by the International Dyslexia Association is dedicated to controversial therapies for dyslexia.

There are always people out to make a buck, and because parents of struggling students can be desperate to find help for their children, they may be willing to try anything that promises results. Some of the questionable treatments for dyslexia that we hear being offered in our region include: eye therapy, nutritional therapy, chiropractic treatments and cognitive training.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE . . .](#)

PRODUCT POINTER

Sesame Street Launches Subscription-Based iPad App for Kids' Books

By [Daniel Donahoo](#), *Wired.com*

The folks at that educational media stalwart, Sesame Street,

have moved to further strengthen their place on our mobile devices by launching an [iPad eBook reader](#). It is essentially a portal into their ebookstore, but I say "reader," rather than "store," because the model is subscription-based, not direct purchasing. To access the whole collection via your iPad will cost you \$3.99 per month, or \$39.99 annually. The app itself is free and it will be interesting to see how this pricing point goes for the Sesame Workshop. It seems quite reasonable to me.

The Sesame Street Workshop is really working the mobile app space, developing licensing deals with a number of developers including [IDEO Toy Lab](#) and [Callaway Digital Arts](#). It is a clever approach – and from what I have seen so far, they are maintaining the quality we expect from this highly-regarded children's brand.

That said, at the time I downloaded, there was not one free starter book to try out how well the user interface worked. This needs to be fixed. We deserve the chance to test out a product before we start signing up to subscriptions.

Most Unlikely to Succeed: A memoir by Nelson Lauver

(2011, Five City Media)

\$14.95 Paperback

review by Kelly O'Rourke Johns

What's most compelling about *Most Unlikely to Succeed* isn't the familiar plot thread of a kid with LD who's failed by the system and ultimately makes good. Much as Lauver's past is peppered with system failures (and incomprehensible, malicious abuses) and offers a moment of redemption worthy of a Disney movie, what makes the book worth reading has to do with perspective. In short, the book effectively and wrenchingly communicates the shame, heartache and angst of a child who struggles to learn.

Lauver, now a syndicated broadcaster and host of the radio show, "The American Storyteller," grew up in rural America in the 1970's. Though he loved and embraced school as a young child, by age 7 it became clear that he couldn't keep up with his classmates. Horrified that he'd be "found out" by his peers, Lauver adopted the persona of "bad boy" and began a school career rife with depression, fear and corporal and psychological punishment. Teachers publicly humiliated him and pegged him as lazy. He was beaten and locked away in a vault for days to "teach him a lesson." To avoid having to deal with him,

educators pushed him forward to the next grade level. He graduated high school having never passed a class.

Ultimately, his entrepreneurial spirit kept Lauver gainfully employed and eventually successful in his chosen field. But it was a formal diagnosis of dyslexia and learning to finally read and write at age 29 that gave him the courage to face his tormentors and help turn things around in the very school system that had so completely failed him.

Packed with rich characters and powerful images, Lauver's narrative strength is in the details – from the antiseptic scent of school hallways to the diesel of his dad's fuel truck. He may occasionally stray off course on superfluous pieces of his history (a limp description of his relationship with a literacy tutor felt more like a formal apology than a plot point); but, Lauver avoids self-indulgence by delivering an honest and emotionally raw accounting of a child whose spirit is slowly suffocated.

Most Unlikely to Succeed is a healthy reminder to us all – parents, educators and individuals with learning disabilities – that there's no such thing as a "throwaway kid."

For more information or to purchase the book, [CLICK HERE](#) or visit www.theamericanstoryteller.com.

CALENDAR

Anxiety and Elementary-age Children

April 26, 2011, 6:30 – 9 p.m.

PACER Free Workshop

Recognize anxiety in children and help them calm themselves.

[CLICK HERE for more information.](#)

All About Apps for Education

May 5, 2011, 10:30 a.m – 12:30 p.m.

SIMON TECHNOLOGY CENTER FREE WEBINAR

Find out about educational apps offered by the iPod and iPad.

[CLICK HERE for more information.](#)

Assistive Technology: Software to Enhance Learning and Comprehension

May 7, 2011

Groves Academy Workshop

Pre-registration required, cost is \$35 per participant.

[CLICK HERE for more information.](#)

**Registration Begins May 11 for
Sixth Annual Mann Foundation Symposium**

Minnesota teachers, parents and administrators are invited to attend this year's Sixth Annual National Ted and Dr. Roberta Mann Foundation Symposium about Children's Mental Health and Learning Disabilities on Aug. 9 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Speakers at the symposium, co-sponsored by PACER Center and the American Dairy Queen Corporation, will address a variety of topics on children's mental health and learning disabilities. Cost is \$15. Registration opens May 11 and fills quickly. For more information, call (952) 838-9000.

For more upcoming events, [CLICK HERE](#).

BREAKING NEWS

IDA-UMB's Bette Erickson

Heads to Washington

Board Member Serves as Parent Leader for the National Center for Learning Disabilities

The National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) spent March 28 -- March 30, 2011 in Washington, DC with their Parent Leaders Team --a group of 13 parents whom NCLD has trained and empowered to serve as advocates for NCLD and the LD cause. As a member of the team, Bette Erickson, vice president of IDA-UMB, enjoyed a whirlwind trip of training and legislature meetings. The parent advocates:

Learned about critical issues facing students, families and teachers affected by LD;

Embraced NCLD's policy agenda for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act;

Experienced media training "boot camp" with consultants led by the former Reagan speechwriter and CEO of Policy Impact;

And, marched onto Capitol Hill on March 30 with NCLD's executive director, James Wendorf, and the Public Policy team to educate Senate and House members and their staffs about our LD issues.

In one day, NCLD made 19 Senate visits, 13 House visits and provided detailed leave-behind packets and developed follow-up plans for every legislator they met. The Parent Leaders Team visit was made possible by NCLD leadership and financial resources from The Oak Foundation and NCLD.

Dyslexic Governor Brings Dyslexia to Limelight

By Stephanie Reitz, Associated Press

Doctors called him spastic. Teachers said he was mentally retarded. Some of his nastier classmates called him dummy.

Today, Dannel P. Malloy is called something else: governor of Connecticut.

[**CLICK HERE TO READ MORE . . .**](#)

An Inspiration

A California man didn't learn to read until he was 35. His young son figured out his secret and prompted him to get help through his public library. Watch this powerful and inspirational story of a long-un-remediated learning disability and John Zickefoose's incredible resilience.

[**CLICK HERE TO SEE CNN VIDEO . . .**](#)

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