

25th Annual Conference offers interactive sessions, sharing, and window on change

by Mike Cook, AESA president-elect

Everyone knows the AESA Annual Conference is a great place to build relationships with colleagues, and we have planned some interactive and fun opportunities for the 25th Annual conference, December 1-4, at Savannah, Georgia. The conference theme is “Meeting Challenges ... Celebrating Success.”

The interactive portion of the conference will be a first ever Friday afternoon “Digital Jam” hosted by ESAs. In a wide-open area there will be digital centers where attendees can experience various technologies in a no risk, fun environment. The centers will include a Nintendo Wii; sing along karaoke; Second Life avatars; social media using a variety of technologies including iPad, Droid and iPhone; and “Digital Dumpster Diving.” The dumpster diving will highlight free Web 2.0 applications and tools that have classroom and administrative applications. All this, and popcorn and pop, will make it a Friday afternoon unlike any other in AESA conference history.

This year, in addition to building those relationships, the “big takeaway” will be opportunities to learn about the direction of Federal programs, reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and in keeping with the

conference theme, meeting those challenges and discussing what those upcoming actions mean for educational service agencies.

This year’s conference provides over 70 ESA-to-ESA breakout sessions organized around four strands. These agency-led presentations are great opportunities to “celebrate success” as part of the conference theme. The four strands are:

- ESA board members setting direction through policy, leadership, and innovation.
- ESAs assisting schools in meeting the four U.S. Department of Education principles:
 - * Achieving equity in teacher distribution/certification,
 - * Improving the collection and use of data,
 - * Improving the quality of standards and assessment,
 - * Improving struggling schools.
- Technology leading us into the future through student, financial, online learning, data warehousing, student learning systems, personal learning networks, and global networking.
- Innovative ESA programs that meet challenges and demonstrate success.

Continued on Page 2.

Annual Conference registration increases November 1

Registration for the 25th Annual AESA Annual Conference December 1-4 will increase by \$100 per person on November 1. The conference theme is “Meeting Challenges ... Celebrating Success.” Registration may be done online from the AESA website at www.aesa.us.

The current rate for an AESA employee or board member is \$725 online with a credit card, or \$780 by check, purchase order, mail, or fax. The rates go to \$825 and \$880 respectively on November 1. Unlike other national conferences, AESA registration fees also include two breakfasts, two lunches, and a brunch for your convenience.

Hotel registrations at the Westin located adjacent to the convention center, Marriott on the historic riverfront, or the Hyatt on River Front Plaza are tied into AESA’s online registration process. When you complete the conference registration online, you will be directed to a special online hotel reservation page to complete that process.

AESA members may also register online for the November 30—December 1 preconference event hosted by the National Association of Media and Technology Centers (NAMTC).

AESA News is published by the Association of Educational Service Agencies, 801 N. Quincy Street, Suite 750, Arlington, VA 22203-1730; phone: (703) 875-0739; FAX: (703) 807-1849; (info@aesa.us). Editor: Dick Moody

Executive Council

President: Dee Alarcon

President-Elect: Mike Cook

Past President: Joseph Crozier

Central Region

Cliff Carmody

Minnesota (507) 537-2250

Joseph Crozier

Iowa (319) 753-6561

Bruce Dennison

Illinois (309) 936-7890

Mick Loughran

Nebraska (402) 463-5611

Eastern Region

Dan Hare

Ohio (513) 887-3710

James Langlois

New York (914) 248-2300

Marjorie Wallace

Pennsylvania (814) 734-5610

Southern Region

John Bass

Texas (806) 677-5010

Dee Cockrille

West Virginia (304) 529-6205

Lindy Franks

Arkansas (870) 777-3076

Western Region

R. Stephen Aguirre

New Mexico (505) 445-7090

Dee Alarcon

California (707) 399-4401

Mike Cook

Kansas (620) 663-9566

Staff

Brian Talbott, Executive Director
(703) 875-0739

Peter Young, Financial Officer
(203) 481-4063

Dick Moody, Associate Executive Director,
(360) 866-6331

25th Annual Conference (continued from Page 1)

President Bill Clinton is an invited speaker. He is credited with formation of the Arkansas Educational Service Agencies. His office has indicated it is currently confirming schedules for December. This year's conference also has two dynamic keynote speakers, Ian Jukes and Fred Bramante. Jukes is director of the InfoSavvy Group. Bramante, nationally recognized as a leader in education redesign, is the longest standing member of the New Hampshire State Board of Education.

Named one of the top educational speakers in the country, Jukes' rambunctious, irreverent and highly charged presentations emphasize many of the practical issues related to restructuring to meet the needs of students. Jukes works with school districts, businesses and organizations all over the world to help reshape their futures. He is also publisher and coeditor of the *Committed Sardine Blog* read in more than 60 countries.

Bramante has led a full-scale effort

to redesign public education in New Hampshire, particularly at the high school level. His work has earned him rave reviews across the country. A former candidate for governor, past chairman of the state board of education and former middle school science teacher, Bramante also founded a part-time business in 1972 that is now one of the largest music retailers in the country.

The conference also provides sessions with AESA's business sponsors. In addition to underwriting costs to make the conference as cost effective as possible for ESAs. These workshops are focused on not only the programs to improve student learning or back office services, but that also provide royalty sharing opportunities if an ESA wants to participate at that level.

You may register for the 25th Annual AESA Annual Conference online at www.aesa.us/AnnConf2010.htm. See the sidebar article on conference registration for details.

Kusler receives Federal Advocacy Service

Mary Kusler accepted the Federal Advocacy Service Award at the 2010 Educators' Call to Action Conference. The award was presented on behalf of the AESA council, "In recognition of distinguished federal advocacy support of regional educational service agencies." Kusler in June became manager of governmental relations for the National Education Association after nine-and-a-half years with the American Association of School Administrators. As assistant director of governmental relations for AASA she was a national advocate for educational service agencies and rural schools. Presenting the award were AESA Governmental Relations Chair Cliff Carmody,



Cliff Carmody, Brian Talbott, Mary Kusler, and Dee Alarcon

Executive Director of SW/WC Central Service Cooperative of Minnesota, AESA Executive Director Brian Talbott, and AESA President Dee Alarcon, Superintendent of Solano County Office of Education, California.

AESA Executives in Residence

The 2010/11 cohort for the AESA Executives in Residence program has been selected. The Executives in Residence program is a year-long program of professional development for ESA leaders.

The participants are:

- Sharon Henson, Associate Executive Director, Region 12 Education Service Center, Texas;
- Anna McClane, Managing Director, Region 4 Education Service Center, Texas;
- Stephen Nielsen, Assistant Superintendent, Finance, Puget Sound Educational Service District, Washington;
- Antonio Pagan, Chief Technology Officer, Hampshire Educational Collaborative, Massachusetts; and,
- Lori Williams, Deputy Director of School and Agency Operations, Educational Service District 112, Washington.

The 2009/10 cohort is in the process of completing their activities. Those participants are:

- Bob Baker, Managing Director, Support Services Region 4 Education Service Center, Texas;
- Lisa Fry, Programs/Services Administrator Grant Wood Area Education Service Center, Iowa;
- Jerry Maze, Associate Executive Director Region 12 Education Service Center, Texas; and,
- Janet Sloand, Director, Montgomery County Intermediate Unit, Pennsylvania.

New council members elected



Jack McAlpin



Rich McBride



Joan Wade

AESA will welcome three new council members in 2011. Elected to the council were Jack McAlpin, Southern Regional Educational Service Agency, Mississippi, representing the Southern Region; Rich McBride, North Central Educational Service District, Washington, representing the Western Region; and Joan Wade, Cooperative Educational Services Agency 6, Wisconsin, representing the Central Region. The Eastern Region had a bye this election.

Nominations for the council positions were announced in June, and were due in September. McAlpin, McBride, and Wade were the only nominees from their regions. AESA bylaws under Article III, Executive Council, Section F, state, "If a candidate for a region runs unopposed the council may be majority vote cast a unanimous ballot for the candidate on behalf of the membership."

The council is the governing body of the association. It meets four times

annually in the spring, summer at the CEO Summer Conference, fall at the Educators' Call to Action Conference, and winter at the AESA Annual Conference. The council has 13 members, three elected from each region, who serve staggered four-year terms, and the past president who serves an additional year. In order to maintain the 12 elected members, each region elects council members three out of four years, with each region having a bye every four years. This year the Eastern Region had a bye and did not nominate a council member.

The newly elected council members will begin their term at the spring 2011 meeting. Ending their terms on the council in spring 2011 are: Dee Alarcon, California, Western Region, who next year will continue as past president; Dee Cockrille, West Virginia, Southern Region; and, Mick Loughran, Nebraska, Central Region.

Dale McCall honored with Colorado award

The Colorado Association of Superintendents/Senior Administrators (CASSA) honored Dale McCall, Executive Director of the Colorado BOCES Association with the 2010 Colbert Cushing Award.

The CASSA Colbert Cushing Award honors individuals who have made an outstanding professional contribution and/or service to the Colorado Association of School Executives (CASE) and to the Colorado Association of Superintendents/Senior Administrators, to a school district, or to education on a national level.

McCall is the former superintendent of Centennial BOCES and member of the AESA Council. As executive director of Colorado BOCES, he remains active in AESA as the Colorado state leader and Colorado representative on the AESA Governmental Relations Committee.



Dale McCall

Baldwin steps down, Cook becomes president-elect, Langlois named to council

James Baldwin, Superintendent of Questar III BOCES, has resigned to become chief of staff of the New York State Education Department, effective October 14. Baldwin's confirmation by the New York Education Board of Regents was announced September 14.



James Baldwin

Baldwin, a member of the AESA council, was also president-elect of AESA and would become president at the council's spring 2011 meeting. Baldwin announced his resignation from the council at its September 20 meeting held in conjunction with the Educators' Call to

Action Conference.

Baldwin's resignation required a special election for president-elect. The AESA council conducted the election under procedures set forth in the AESA vacancy in the AESA bylaws. Mike Cook, Executive Director of Educational Services and Staff Development Association of Central Kansas (ESSDACK), was elected by a unanimous vote. Cook is an AESA council member representing the Western Region.

The council filled the vacancy created by Baldwin's resignation with the appointment of James Langlois, Superintendent of Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES of Yorktown Heights, New York.



Mike Cook



James Langlois

US Academic Decathlon seeks to expand its ESA roots

The Great Depression is the topic of the 2010 - 2011 US Academic Decathlon competition, a 10-event academic program, with the national championship scheduled April 27-30, 2011 at Charlotte, North Carolina. Last year's national championship at Omaha hosted more than 300 students from 36 states. Over 2,000 schools participate in the US Academic Decathlon nationwide.

AESA is a partner with the US Academic Decathlon, which began as a program of ESA member Orange County Office of Education, California, in 1968 under the direction of Dr. Robert Peterson, former Orange County Superintendent of Schools. The competition went statewide in California in 1979, and has been a national event since 1982.

The US Academic Decathlon is seeking to expand its reach to middle and high schools with programs anchored in national curricular standards. Educational service agencies interested in becoming involved in the US Academic Decathlon may

contact USAD Director of Operations Mylene Chaffe at mylene@usad.org or AESA Associate Executive Director Dick Moody at dmoody@aesa.us. US Academic Decathlon staff are available to assist ESAs in setting up programs to serve their local school districts.

The USAD program is also seeking volunteers as speech and interview judges and proctors for the national competition. Persons interested in being a judge or proctor may contact Mylene Chafe.

In addition to the national championship event at Charlotte, the US Academic Decathlon hosts virtual competitions, and last year started a US Academic Pentathlon for middle schools.

The ten-event academic program strives to foster a greater respect for knowledge, to promote wholesome inter-school academic competition, and to further develop student communication skills. A new theme of study is established every year with topics that are relevant and challenging. Gold, silver, and bronze medals

are awarded for individual events and total scores. Overall individual winners are recognized as well as champion teams. This very broad base of awards allows for major recognition of academic accomplishment. The USAD curriculum also addresses a number of National Content and Curriculum Standards, see: <http://usad.org/Curriculum/Standards.asp>.

A unique aspect of Academic Decathlon is that it is designed to include students from all academic abilities from grades 9—12. Each nine-member team consists of three "A" (Honor), three "B" (Scholastic) and three "C or below" (Varsity) students. Each student competes in ten events: Economics, Essay, Art, Interview, Language and Literature, Math, Music, Science, Social Science and Speech. This year's "Super Quiz" category for The Great Depression will focus on geology and include a case study on the Dust Bowl. For more information, go to the US Academic Decathlon website at: www.usad.org.

Department of Education has plans for ESAs

“Conveners, connectors, communicators” are three roles U.S. Department of Education Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education Dr. Thelma Melendez sees for educational service agencies.



Thelma Melendez

Melendez, keynote speaker for AESA's Educators' Call to Action Conference in September, told attendees from 20 states about her experience with ESAs as a local district superintendent working with her county office of education in California.

During her presentation, Melendez reviewed the Department of Education's "Blueprint for Reform" and the role she sees for educational service agencies.

She stated, "ESAs are well positioned to help build capacity around

the four reform areas which this administration emphasized from the start as fundamental to our education agenda." Those four reform areas are focused on teachers and leaders, college-ready standards for all students, turning around low-performing schools, and developing effective statewide longitudinal data systems.

Melendez said, "ESAs are vital partners for rural and small districts, as well. We know the types of services you traditionally have offered in rural communities tend to include instructional services, infrastructure support, staff development and curriculum support, and general office and management support.

"You help them meet the diverse needs of their students, faculty, and administrators. And I know many of you are taking on a greater role in rural areas, in response to consolidation and shrinking local revenues.

"In rural communities, and across the country, ESAs are also using tech-

nology to overcome the challenges of distance that many small, rural schools and districts face by providing online instruction for students and leveraging the latest innovations to save teachers time and districts money with professional development."

At the AESA Foundation's Summer CEO Conference the attendees from 26 states U.S. Department of Education Deputy Assistant Secretary for Rural Outreach John White detailed the blueprint, along with plans for rural schools.

White stated the blueprint has "cross-cutting" priorities of, "flexibility, growing success, evaluation and building the knowledge base" and "priorities relevant across all areas." He said among those priorities is supporting rural and other high-need areas. "In order to ensure that rural and other high need districts are not disadvantaged, priority must be given to programs that serve those populations."

Partners and Sponsors provide Annual Conference support and expertise

Business Partners and Sponsors have an integral role in the 25th Annual AESA Conference at Savannah. The financial support helps AESA keep costs for participants low. These companies also bring expertise to the conference that may assist agencies in planning or operating programs.

AESA's Business Partners are accepted after participating in a due diligence process conducted by Patton Boggs law firm of Washington DC. Among the topics covered in the due diligence process are management, finances, and customer service. AESA's Business Partners are the Association of Educational Purchasing Agencies

(www.aepacoop.org), Direct Energy Business (<http://debusiness.directenergy.com>), Great American Financial Resources (www.gafri.com), Marsden Services (www.marsden.com), Nova Southeastern University (www.nova.edu), and Promethean (www.prometheanworld.com).

Each of the Business Partners will exhibit and conduct a sponsor session at the Annual Conference.

Additionally, Gold Sponsor Grace Global, Inc., (www.graceglobalinc.com) will again host the "Internet Café." Silver Sponsor JDL Horizons (<http://www.jdlhorizons.com>) will have a 900 square foot digital video

studio in the exhibit area. Bronze Sponsors Edison Learning (www.edisonlearning.com), myChinese360 (www.mychinese360.com), and US Academic Decathlon (www.usad.org) will have a presence at the conference. Also supporting the conference is Bronze Sponsor Walden University (www.waldenu.edu).

Links to all AESA Business Partners and Sponsors are located on the AESA home page at www.aesa.us, and also with AESA Business Members on the AESA website Business Partners and Members page at www.aesa.us/Market-Place/bus_members.html.