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## About the Arkansas Leadership Academy

The Arkansas Leadership Academy is a nationally recognized statewide partnership of 15 universities; 9 professional associations; 15 educational cooperatives; the Arkansas Departments of Education, Higher Education, and Career Education; the Arkansas Educational Television Network; Tyson Foods, Inc.; Wal\*Mart Stores, Inc.; 2 superintendent representatives; the Office of the Governor; and the State Board of Education, a total of 49 Partners.

The Academy, through the use of research and best practices, designs creative and innovative approaches to establish learning communities in public schools by developing human resources and modeling and advocating collaboration, support, shared decision making, team learning, risk taking, and problem solving. Partners commit to changing their organizations to support system improvement.

### Academy Beliefs:

- People support what they help to create.
- Diversity is embraced and valued.
- To change others, change yourself.
- The greatest leaders are known by the number of leaders they create.

Connecting People, Ideas, Perspectives, and Experiences.



A collaborative partnership  
housed at the  
University of Arkansas.



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# Academy Action



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## Upcoming Institutes

- Master Principal Institute**
- P1S2A—Nov. 9-11, 2010
- P1S2B—Nov. 29-Dec.1, 2010
- P3S2—Dec. 7-9, 2010
- P2S2—Jan. 25-27, 2011

- Assistant Principal Institute**
- Session 1—Nov. 17-19, 2010

- Superintendent Institute**
- Session 2—Dec. 2-3, 2010

- Teacher Leader Institute**
- Forum 20, Session 2—  
Nov. 14-16, 2010
- Forum 19, Session 3—  
Jan. 9-11, 2011
- Forum 20, Session 3—  
Feb. 27-Mar. 1, 2011

- Team Leadership Institute**
- Year 2, Session 1—  
Nov. 3-4, 2010
- Year 1, Session 1—  
Jan. 18-21, 2010

- Effective Meetings Training**
- TBD

Learn more about application  
deadlines and upcoming  
Academy Institutes at  
[www.arkansasleadershipacademy.org](http://www.arkansasleadershipacademy.org)

## Participants Sharpen Their Skills at Facilitator Training

In September, 29 principals, teachers, instructional facilitators, and Partner representatives took part in the Arkansas Leadership Academy's two-day Facilitator Training at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain. The Academy's Institute Facilitator Amanda Linn facilitated the training which is designed to sharpen constructivist facilitation skills and plan effective meetings.

Throughout the course of the training, participants modeled the new tools and skills they were learning. For example, to begin, the meeting was opened with the Academy tool "The Big 8":

- 1) Welcome ("Why Did We Call This Meeting?")
- 2) Introduction ("Who Are All These People?")
- 3) Logistics ("How Do I Get My Physical Needs Met?")
- 4) Get Acquainted ("How Do I Fit Into this Community?")
- 5) Intended Results ("Where Are We Headed?")
- 6) Review Agenda ("How Are We Going to Get There?")
- 7) Norms ("How Are We Going to Behave?")
- 8) Agreement ("Can We Live It?")

Participants discussed the role of a facilitator as the designer, engineer, and driver of learning and worked together to identify the necessary characteristics of a "good meeting." Groups jigsawed articles such as the "Seven Deadly Sins of Facilitation" (NSDC) and presented their sins' means of redemption. Participants also spent time discussing the workings of the grown-up brain and theories on how adults learn best. A number of books (see

page 2), articles, and electronic resources were introduced in addition to a cadre of Arkansas Leadership Academy tools to facilitate student and adult learning. The training concluded with a look at agenda design, the 7 Norms of Collaboration, and the art of questioning. Participants reflected on the work of the two days and discussed next steps for taking their learning back to their schools and organizations.

This year's Facilitator Training is the second training of its kind, which the Academy first piloted last November. The response to the Academy's Facilitator Training has been good, evaluations have shown it to be successful, and several requests for a second phase of Facilitator Training have been made. One participant remarked, "Very good, practical strategies presented in an authentic way. We were able to experience what we were hearing. I was reminded of many things I had let fall by the wayside. I think my facilitation will have new life." Another participant wrote, "I enjoyed this so much and learned so many new tools. A follow-up session would be so beneficial to me. It would be nice to come back together and talk about what worked for us."

Facilitator Training was first developed in response to numerous requests as well as the need to develop facilitators at all levels of the education system. Facilitator Training is set to build on the groundwork of the Academy's Effective Meetings Training held in the spring.

## From the Academy Team

In the Academy's Teacher Leadership Institute, we believe that teacher leaders should be continuous learners. As a way to model this, we have introduced the creation of Personal Learning Networks (PLNs) into the Teacher Leadership Institute experience. Author and Educator David Warlick describes Personal Learning Networks as "the people and information sources that help you accomplish your goals, either on the job or in your personal pursuits...new techniques for organizing digital networked information have enabled us to fashion new kinds of networks that extend far beyond our immediate location and face-to-face connections, and to grow our networks based not on explicit decisions, but through the ideas of other nodes (people and resources), whose ideas intersect with ours."

Our Teacher Leadership Institute PLNs are in their early stages; however, exciting things are already happening. Not only are teachers building their own PLNs, they have formed groups based on shared interests to research and "test drive" online tools and resources related to teaching and learning for students and adults. The results of their efforts will be shared with the other TLI participants via the institute blog and in upcoming institute sessions. Ken Kay, director of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, describes being literate in today's society as being able to find, validate, synthesize, leverage, communicate, collaborate, and problem-solve with information. We are excited about Personal Learning Networks as a way for teachers to practice these skills. As teachers expand their networks, we expect they will model the same behavior for their students and colleagues.

Amanda Linn, Institute Facilitator



In September, 19 graduates of the Master Principal Program met together on Petit Jean Mountain for the second annual MPI Learning Reunion. These graduates have completed all three phases of the Master Principal Program and expressed an interest to continue their professional learning and collegial networking on a regular basis.

Master Principal Leader Diana Peer explains: "Graduates from the Master Principal Program develop strong professional relationships with other

principals around the state during the course of their three years in the institutes. Principals frequently tell us that one of the things they count on is to continue to learn from one another for the rest of their careers. To facilitate that continuous and collaborative learning, we invite graduates to these annual Learning Reunions." Some of the principal feedback this year follows:

"I have learned new ideas and strategies that I will share with my staff. I have also made new contacts and connections."

## MPI Grads Gather for Learning Reunion

- "The opportunity to connect, re-connect, and network was invaluable."
- "I learned so much from others."
- "This process is like a dose of B12 for me. The vitality it generates is so very valuable to my job as an educational leader."
- "What a group of leaders for our Arkansas children!"
- "This experience recharged my ALA battery."

This year, participants focused on how, as an instructional leader, they have consciously built capacity of adults in ways that resulted in increased student or adult learning, the effectiveness of their "system change" leadership over the past year, the core tools and content (knowledge and skills) for their work in each of the five performance strands, and specific areas of growth.



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## Teacher Institute Grads Named Milken Educators

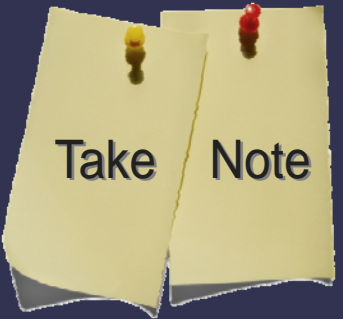


Tracy Valentine, Reading & English/Language Teacher at Bragg Elementary School in West Memphis, is a graduate of Forum 18 of the Teacher Leadership Institute: Read what she had to say about being honored as a 2010 Milken Educator: "Being named a Milken Educator only validates what teachers do to help lay the foundation for a better tomorrow. I know there are numerous educators in the state of Arkansas who also deserve this honor, and I only wish that I could share the title with them. I know that everyone desires to feel successful, and I try to provide that for others. The thing I remember most from the Teacher Institute is that you must be able to communicate to your colleagues, students, parents, and your community about the importance of education and improving teacher effectiveness through rigorous professional development and learning communities."

Tamika Jordan, Curriculum Technology Specialist at Avondale Elementary in West Memphis, is a current participant in Forum 20 of the Teacher Leadership Institute. Here's what she had to say about being named a 2010 Milken Educator last month: "It is an honor to be recognized for the effort that I put forth everyday. I strive to make teaching and learning in my classroom engaging, exciting, and fun. I am excited that others take notice of what educators bring to the world. My extreme passion for teaching children and encouraging everyone to be their best contributes heavily to my success.

From the Academy's Teacher Institute, I have learned that reflection is a powerful tool if applied. I love to learn and improve. I have found that taking the time to reflect gives me an opportunity to find ways to make whatever I am doing better."

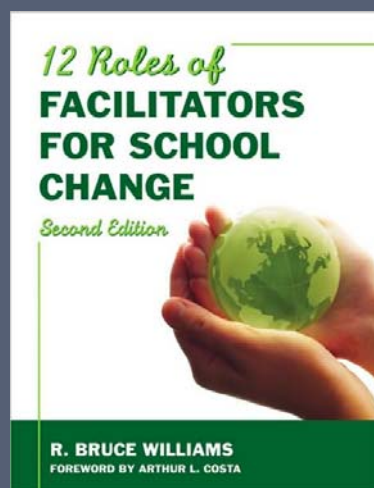
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\* In September, the Academy met with a team of national consultants in Little Rock to discuss the future direction of technology integration in the Academy's work. The Academy's new Assistant Principal Institute, which is being piloted this month, will feature a large technological component to accommodate more participants statewide.

\* Congratulations to Master Principal Kay York of Margaret Daniel Primary School in Ashdown and new Academy Capacity Building Leader Joe Fisher who were named the 2010 National Distinguished Elementary and Middle-level Principals for Arkansas by the National Association of Elementary School Principals. They were honored at a banquet in Washington D.C. in October.

## Read This: 12 Roles of Facilitators for School Change



One of the resources that participants received at this year's Facilitator Training was R. Bruce Williams's *Twelve Roles of Facilitators for School Change* (Corwin Press, 2008). In this updated edition, Williams, noted for his expert group facilitation and his skills in planning and team-building methodologies, shows education leaders how they can become powerful agents of school reform. Advocating a transformational vision of leadership and learning, he outlines 12 essential roles on the leadership team and provides practical tools for individuals in each role to use in facilitating the change process. Who plays the roles of the facilitators for change? Williams explains

that many people both inside and outside the school can play these roles if they are prepared and trained with the necessary skills to facilitate the change process. To begin, Williams notes four main functions of effective facilitators required for school change:

- Leading the collaboration and change process;
- Providing skills training;
- Acting as a resource consultant; and
- Motivating and energizing the group.

Next, he points out the three necessary elements of the change process, based on research:

- Focusing long-range goals and short-range tasks on

student learning and achievement;

- Promoting shared decision-making among the members of all concerned constituencies; and
- Keeping communication and interaction centered on visible achievements.

Each chapter of the book focuses on one of Williams's proposed 12 fundamental roles for school-change facilitators by combining the three elements with the four functions (e.g., The Architect Sees the Big Picture, The Quarterback Leads the Team, the Producer Organizes the Project). Each chapter provides its own perspective and practical tools and can be read on its own as needed.

