

ITN

THE INNOVATIVE TEACHING NEWSLETTER



*"If the only tool you have is a hammer.....
everything around you looks like a nail."*

Top 10 Online Educators 2004

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presented by
Walter McKenzie
The One and Only Surfaquarium
<http://surfaquarium.com>
walter@surfaquarium.com

This is the inaugural issue of Top 10 Online Educators which I would like to make an annual newsletter event. In creating this honor, I wanted to recognize those educators who are singled out by their peers as being an inspiration to educators both locally and across the online community. At the outset of the search for these individuals I asked for nominations of colleagues who are in the trenches doing the work of our profession. The thoughtful responses I have received have been a pleasure to consider, and in a very real sense everyone who is nominated is a standout in our profession in his and her own right.

In addition to this month's newsletter, all nominees are showcased on the Innovative Teaching web site for the coming year at <http://surfaquarium.com/TOP10/>. They have each also been notified and given a web award which they may showcase on their web sites as they continue to make a difference both online and in the classroom every day.

Thanks to everyone who participated! I now present to you the top online educators of 2004!



Gina Boltz
Director, Native Village
<http://www.nativevillage.org/>

Gina is a Primary Special Ed teacher with 23+ years classroom experience who is currently on retirement disability. As director of Native Village publications, she has shaped the vision of this online resource for youth, educators, families, and friends who wish to celebrate the rich, diverse cultures of The Americas' First Peoples.

Native Village celebrates Native American culture and houses resources and information to enrich all lives on Turtle Island. The publication is free to anyone with Internet access. Current events newsletters are published on a weekly basis and summarize current events in an easy-to-read format.

Native Village is currently being accessed by K-12 schools, universities, homes, and educational institutions throughout the world. It's been recognized by many professional organizations and won the 2002 Publication of the Year by the National Association of Multicultural Education.



Andy Carvin
Senior Associate, Communications Policy, Education
Development Center for Media & Community
<http://main.edc.org/>

Andy is an Internet pioneer who has used his [WWWEDU](#) newsletter to document online happenings in education

since 1995. He joined the Benton Foundation in 1999 and is one of the coordinators of the Digital Divide Network and the Digital Opportunity Channel. He is senior writer and moderator for the DIGITALDIVIDE listserv, and author of the award-winning EdWebProject.org, one of the first sites to advocate Web use in education.

As this award is given in February 2004, Andy is making the move from the Benton Foundation to join the Education Development Center in Newton, Massachusetts. He views this move as the continuation of his work on the digital divide. He will pay particular attention to the issue of ICT literacy amongst underserved youth populations in the US and abroad, researching real-world communities while fostering virtual communities of practice.

Mr. Carvin was recently named by District Administration magazine as one of America's top 25 Ed Tech advocates.



Brenda Dalheim
Research Fellow, University of Melbourne
<http://webraft.its.unimelb.edu.au/476696/pub/index.htm>

Brenda Dalheim is responsible for the University of Melbourne's support page to undergraduates. This page has fantastic links to [checklists for identifying reading difficulties](#), [strategies for addressing these](#), and [assessment tools](#). All free to teachers and very easy to use.

Sue Burvill-Shaw writes, "I have used it to assist students address their literacy needs in a Secondary setting, and know of many new teachers, both Secondary and Primary, who have found it an invaluable and practical guide to working one on one to address students' needs."

Ms. Dalheim has served as a project leader for the University's Exceptional Learning Project and has

served the Royal Children's Hospital Education Institute. She is also a member of the Australian Society for Educational Technology.



John Klock
Online Instructor, Virginia Intermont College
<http://webpages.charter.net/jklock/>

John Klock has been a friend and acquaintance of mine online over the past several years. His work to acclimate students with online learning has been a hallmark of his educational career. Most importantly, John's winsome, approachable personality makes him a great ambassador for distance learning.

Mark Jones writes, "My nomination would go fto Mr. John Klock. Since retiring with 32 yrs. in public education he is now teaching at two area colleges. He does an outstanding job not only in the classroom but also in motivating his students. He teaches Learning Strategies, Orientation to Teaching, Foundations in Education, and his specialty Multimedia in Education."

I concur with Mark's nomination. It is an honor to recognize this selfless educator for the work he has done to influence so many lives for the better.



Sharron McElmeel
Children's Literature Specialist, McBookWords
<http://www.mcelmeel.com/>

Sharron McElmeel has built a national reputation as a resource for those interested in children's and young adult literature. She is an often requested speaker at conferences and professional development workshops. Her McBookWords web site is loaded with resources on children's authors, books and developing a life-long love of reading.

Joan Vandervelde writes, "Sharron teaches a fantastic online class for classroom teachers and media specialists entitled Teaching Children's Literature in the Classroom - this class is a must! It allows you to explore the world of new fiction and information books, today's authors and illustrators and discuss different ways to integrate children's literature with curriculum activities."

Ms. McElmeel also hosts the Children's Literature Discussion Group for Scholastic. Her enthusiasm for books and learning has proliferated in many dimensions online!



Shawn McGuire
Social Studies Educator, Vicksburg Middle School
<http://www.shawnmcguire.org/>

Shawn McGuire is teaching his fifteenth year of middle school social studies in Vicksburg, Michigan. His genuine concern for learning supported by his use of technology has made a significant impact on the lives of his students.

Michelle Simino writes, "His website not only helps communicate with students and parents, he continually updates it and uses his website within his classroom for instruction, as well. It is a resource for students while they are working on a large presentation for class." His trivia challenge is a fun, interactive way to get students

thinking about the social studies at higher levels of application.

Mr. McGwire supports young educators by welcoming them into his classroom to hone their craft as preservice teachers. Indeed, his efforts reach out to the Vicksburg community in a number of ways. For all of these reasons, Shawn McGuire is recognized as an outstanding online educator.



Dennis O'Connor
Online Instructor, Illinois Math and Science Academy
<http://wizard.imsa.edu/>

Dennis is an online instructor and instructional designer who has contributed in a variety of venues online. He was first recognized in 1995 with a Milken National Educator Award. By 1999 he was working as a Project Writer for ISTE's National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) Writing Project, and in 2000 he joined the faculty of Connected University. He is currently an adjunct instructor in the University of Wisconsin-Stout Online Professional Development program where he teaches Teaching Writing with the Six-Traits.

Joan Vandervelde writes, "Dennis' enthusiasm for Web-based learning is contagious. Many administrators, K-12 teachers and curriculum coordinators are spreading news about his classes via word of mouth. Teachers from all over the United States, as well as 32 other countries around the world, have participated in his online classes."

You can read more about Mr. O'Connor, his interests and accomplishments, on his Wired Instructor homepage: <http://wiredinstructor.net/index.htm>.



Janet Peters
Computer Educator, Saint Francis of Assisi School
<http://www.sfaschool.org/>

Janet Peters leads technology education at Saint Francis of Assisi School in Astoria, New York. Her [Computer Education home page](#) offers parents a view of the varied technology-related activities of their children. Among her accomplishments, consider her [WebQuest](#) for fourth grade students on computer hardware, her Inspiration project entitled How Our Day Has Changed covering grades four through six scheduling, and About Our Day and creates a graphical outline of third graders' schedules using Kidspiration.

Mrs. Peters has given numerous workshops for teachers on using Microsoft Office, including creating documents, mailing labels, business cards, planning mail merges, and preparing web pages. Other workshops have included using Story Book Weaver and [How to Conduct a WebQuest](#).

Mrs. Peters has definitely many talents that help students and educators, and has furthered education through her work online and through various projects.



Tonya Skinner
Business Educator, Oran High School
<http://lessonplans.btskinner.com/>

Tonya Skinner is a high school business educator at Oran High School in Missouri who has utilized the World

Wide Web to share her expertise and enthusiasm for learning with students and teachers alike. In person, she teaches Technology, Accounting, Keyboarding, Computer Applications and Advanced Computer Applications to grades 7 through 12. Online she offers a wealth of resources specifically targeting business education.

Betty Jo English writes, "Tonya contributes to our business teacher listserv and maintains a wonderful site for Business Teachers to use for lots of classroom ideas." In 2001, Tonya was honored with both the NCBEA Emerging Professional Award and the Southeast Business Education Association Outstanding Business Educator Award; both well deserved for her efforts to promote an enthusiasm for learning in her field.

Mrs. Skinner's contributions as an online educator at the secondary level made her an outstanding choice for this recognition.



Clover Taylor
Library Media Specialist, Western Albemarle High School
<http://www.k12albemarle.org/westernalbemarle/library/>

Clover Taylor, Library Media Specialist at Western Albemarle High School in Crozet, Virginia, is responsible for the library's web page for this 1,080 student, comprehensive high school in Central Virginia. She keeps the page up to date and through it offers reference resources that help the students complete their class assignments as well as pursue their personal interests.

Students surveyed indicate it is a resource they use regularly, for they know they can depend on it for quality internet resources. Faculty members also use the library's web page to access instructional resources outside the building. Through Ms. Taylor's diligent efforts, the learning community of Western Albemarle

High School continues to grow as effective, efficient and ethical users of information.

Ms. Clover demonstrates the critical role library information specialists play in the digital age, where knowledge of how to access, interpret and utilize information is the key to success.

Find More Great Resources at <http://surfaquarium.com/it.htm>

Next Month's Topic: "Summer Olympics"

You can email URL's of high quality sites which may be of interest to our readers as well as new topic ideas and input and feedback to walter@surfaquarium.com

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