

IEA and NEA Presidents in the Spotlight at Delegate Assembly IEA Nearly 400 Delegates Help IEA Celebrate 125th Anniversary

Idaho Education Association President Penni Cyr presided over her sixth and final IEA Delegate Assembly and National Education Association President Lily Eskelsen Garcia provided a stirring keynote address as the IEA observed its 125th anniversary April 21 and 22 in Boise. Cyr is retiring this summer and told delegates she plans to travel the country with her husband and dote on her first grandchild; born just a week before Delegate Assembly. Eskelsen Garcia was making her first official visit to Idaho as NEA President.

A native of Utah and the 1999 Utah Teacher of the Year, Eskelsen Garcia

reminded the audience about the importance of their work, both in and out of the classroom. "You have the power, so put it to work for kids and don't waste it," she urged. "We are the people who can put together the pieces of the puzzle for students."

Eskelsen Garcia also spoke out in favor of well-resourced public schools and against concepts like school vouchers and for-profit schools that utilize public funds. "There are a lot of great choices



IEA President Penni Cyr (middle row, far left) and NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia (center, in light blue) pose with a group of members at the IEA Delegate Assembly

within the public school system, and we need to strive to make every public school look like our best public schools."

For her part, Cyr reflected on her six-year tenure as IEA President following many years as an educator in Moscow. "The last six years have been the pinnacle of my professional life," she said. "I couldn't be prouder of my work with, and on behalf of, the incredible members of the Idaho Education Association." Cyr will officially step down from office August 1, 2017. An announcement of a newly elected president will come later this spring.

IEA member **Sonia Galaviz** of Boise also addressed the delegates, sharing her experiences as the NEA Foundation Excellence in Education Award winner and offering words of encouragement for her colleagues. "Nobody gives us anything in Idaho, and we have work to do, but we know how to do this," she said. *See page three for our Q & A with Galaviz on her NEA Foundation and Idaho legislative honors.*

Delegates Act on Several New Business Items, Resolutions

As the highest governing body of the Association, the delegates debated and discussed several issues regarding the policy and philosophy that the IEA will embrace going forward. New business items approved at Delegate Assembly include:

- A dues increase of \$4 per member, per year for two years to cover costs associated with convening the 2019 Delegate Assembly in Coeur d'Alene.
- Instructing the Board of Direcctors to explore other options, both in Boise and elsewhere in the state, as venues for future Delegate Assemblies.
- Establishing a marketing/public relations task force to report to the Board of Directors on ideas for helping to improve the image of the IEA.
 - Directing the Board of Directors to integrate working toward racial justice into the IEA's strategic action plan.

Among the resolution passed by the delegates was a philosophical statement urging local affiliates and governing bodies to support and promote diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity relating to education employment.

Great Support for IEA Children's Fund

The customary fund-raising efforts

to benefit the IEA Children's Fund were a big success. The silent auction raised \$9,777 and cash contributions totaled \$8,830, bringing the overall amount raised for this terrific charity to \$18,607.

The IEA Children's Fund recently relaunched with a new web page and even more opportunities for organizations and companies to donate. Visit **https://ieachildrensfund.org/** for more information.

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Onward and Upward

Penni Cyr Says Thank You and Farewell, Looks at the Future of the IEA After six always exhilarating, alternatingly rewarding and frustrating years as IEA President, Penni Cyr is retiring this summer. Before she heads off into the sunset (in an RV with her husband) and dotes on her first grandchild, she looks back at the accomplishments of the Association and forward to the challenges that lie ahead

Congratulations IEA! Despite obstacles and challenges, IEA members have been more focused than ever on our strategic priorities. Our new Mission and Vision have paved the way for our association to reach for the stars. You created a roadmap for the IEA to focus on a future that unites IEA members across Idaho to uphold a public education system that prepares every child to succeed.

These past six years have not been easy; nothing about these times is easy. I began my six-year term as IEA President during the most tumultuous time in IEA's 120 year history with the passage of the Luna Laws. It was harrowing, but through your dedication and hard work, we overcame the tyranny of the Luna Laws and celebrated a victory for public education...and made history by repealing Props 1, 2 and 3.

And recently, IEA members made their voices heard on the controversial tiered certification proposal where teachers could have lost their teaching license based on a single evaluation. Over a 1000 members attended hearings that winter – we packed the house! And after many iterations, the reworked bill addressed each of the concerns raised.

Maintain your vigilance in advocating for public education; the fights will continue. Your endurance and persistence will be tested in future years with voucher bills, certification questions, funding and more. Remember, all the wins, all the battles, all the organizing, help us build the capacity of the IEA which we will need to draw upon like a battery for a very long time.

Even with all the issues and assaults on public education, we've focused on what we had to do to make the IEA stronger. I urge you to continue to turn to each other, build closer relationships, remain loyal, and maintain confidence in those elected to lead. Because of you, we will endure through difficult times.

What great work we have done together over the past six years! Your IEA board and other leaders have demonstrated progress, persistence, and resilience in leading this organization. I commend the leadership of our board of directors who have dealt with extreme funding issues, but have continued through determination and grit to make sure our members receive the benefits, training, and support needed.

Even while the IEA's strategic program budget was cut drastically, the IEA board continued to find ways to bring professional development to members, to grow our membership by supporting Targeted Locals, to train and professionalize IEA Trainers who are now in high demand around the state to provide training on behavioral management, student learning objectives, Master Teacher Premium portfolios and more. IEA and IDLA are partnering to offer online professional development through the IEA's very own digital portal and our trainers are currently building these online classes. We revitalized SPARKS for new educators to support them in their early years of teaching. And, we are standing up for our students as we work toward racial justice and equity in education in Idaho. Celebrate this really difficult work.

And we are growing! Because you are engaged in deep listening and are responding to what our members and potential members want and need, we are growing. Keep it up! Hold those one on one conversations; engage members; talk with everyone and listen to what they need.

These and other examples provide just a snap shot of our amazing work over the past six years. Amazing grace under fire, real leadership under great adversity, and your undivided strength will continue to bring you success. The IEA is vigilant, united and prepared to stand against those who oppose public education and the success of our students. Thank you for the honor of serving as your president for the past six years. I could not imagine doing anything else. Carry on!



Sue Wigdorski Named IEA Executive Director

Veteran IEA staff member and professional educator Sue Wigdorski was named Executive Director of the Idaho Education Association on April 10, 2017. The announcement was made by IEA President Penni Cyr and came after a national search. Wigdorski succeeds Robin Nettinga, who retired in December.

"Sue has all of the qualities and experience that the IEA Board of Directors was looking for in the next IEA Executive Director," said Cyr. "She sees possibilities in everything, models positivity and enthusiasm and doesn't believe in failure because everything is a learning opportunity."

Wigdorski first joined the IEA staff in 1995 as the Director of School Innovation, and served as a Region Director in the Treasure Valley from 2000 until her promotion to Associate Executive Director in 2010. She taught English and worked with at-risk students at Nampa

High School from 1988-93. Wigdorski has her Bachelor's Degree from Whitworth College in Spokane and received her Master's Degree in Adult Organizational Learning and Leadership from the University of Idaho this spring.

"I am very grateful for this opportunity and I look forward to continuing my work with our amazing members and the terrific IEA staff," said Wigdorski. "Public education is very important to me, and I will always advocate for students, teachers and public schools. They are the foundation of everything that our society and our future generations can achieve."

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

Picture Perfect Coeur d'Alene's Bruce Twitchell

"When I was seven or eight years old I asked Santa for a camera, and under my Christmas tree that year was a bright yellow 110 camera, along with a note from Santa." So began a lifelong connection with photography for IEA member Bruce Twitchell, who is now in his 12th year of helping Coeur d'Alene High School students develop a similar appreciation for the craft.

Twitchell followed up Santa's gift by saving money from his landscaping job to buy his first 35mm camera. After graduating from Boise's Capital High School, he studied photography at the University of Idaho and then cut his teeth with photojournalist jobs in Texas and at the Idaho State Journal in Pocatello. Marriage, kids and a desire to share his love and knowledge of photography with others led him to earn a teaching degree from Lewis Clark State College in 2005. He landed a teaching job at Coeur d'Alene High

School the following year, and has been a fixture at the school ever since.

"I love the fact that there is not just one right answer in photographymaybe not even a best answer," he says. "I can't imagine grading a bunch of math worksheets

where the answer is the same over and over." In addition to teaching photography, Twitchell took over as the school's yearbook supervisor five years ago and has been producing stunning posters for sports teams and other school organizations. (inset photo)

"Yearbook takes a little different approach because the students have to learn the

full spectrum of reporting duties-going to events, interviewing, interacting with others, and working on layouts with InDesign," he notes. "The posters started when the booster club asked me to do something to commemorate the senior football players three years ago, and it has taken off from there."

Twitchell relishes the fact that his students can express their creativity and have a release from the grind of their other classes. "It is an opportunity for them to have fun in class, even while learning, and I try to make it

> a safe place where they have the ability to try different things."

The IEA and the Coeur d'Alene Education Association also play a major role in Twitchell's professional life. He became a member in his first year of

teaching, then became increasingly more active as a building representative. He has been serving as CEA Vice President, and recently became the President-elect of the local association.



"I'm a bit nervous, but looking forward to it," he says. "And I know there are a great many people who are more than willing to help."

His wife, Jenny, made sure that he took the union path. When Bruce received membership forms in his first year, he called Jenny to see how she felt about it. "Heck yes, you are going to join," was the response from his wife, whose father had been a longtime member of the American Association of University Professors. Bruce and Jenny have been married for 18 years, and have two daughters, Tabitha (15) and McCamy (12).

Twitchell identifies the primary goal for the CEA as making sure that the learning/ teaching environment is safe and healthy. At the state level, he stresses that the IEA must continue to advocate for education funding, and address the teacher retention problem that is especially prevalent in North Idaho. "I have seen way too many good teachers establish themselves in Idaho and then take jobs in Washington, where a 20-minute drive can mean an extra \$10,000 a year."

The journey that Bruce Twitchell started on as a youngster with a gift from Santa is continuing in Coeur d'Alene, and the students in the district, along with the IEA and CEA, are the beneficiaries. The picture that he has developed as a professional educator has come into focus quite nicely.



2107 IEA award winners (L-R) James Orr, Jolene Dockstader, Melyssa Ferro, Paula Lyon, Peggy Hoy (TFEA) and Mike Wilkinson (TFEA)

IEA Award Winners

One of the highlights of the IEA Delegate Assembly each year is recognizing some of our stellar members and others who have made a positive impact on the profession and the Association. The 2017 honorees are extremely deserving of the recognition they received at Delegate Assembly.

- Jolene Dockstader, Shane Anderson Outstanding Member Award
- Melyssa Ferro, Marsha Nakamura Award for Teaching Excellence
- Michelle Stoneman, Larry Caldwell Advocacy Award
- James Orr, Sue Hovey Mentoring Award
- Paula Lyon, IEA Friend of Education Award
- **Twin Falls Education Association,** Betty Roper Public Relations Award

fact that there is not just one right answer in photography,"

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The 2017 Idaho legislative

session was notable for what actions were taken, including full funding of the third year of the Career Ladder, but also for what didn't

happen and what might still occur. The legislature spent 80 days in a session that was marked by internal strife and contrasting opinions on several issues, but a strong consensus on making a financial investment in public education.

Foremost in that investment was the Career Ladder; the five-year salary allocation plan designed to increase appropriations for teacher compensation so that Idaho will be better positioned to recruit and retain highquality teachers. Year three of the plan (FY18) is the largest increase, but despite sporadic noise to the contrary, the legislature overwhelmingly approved an increase of \$61.9 million. That figure was bumped up by almost \$4 million from previous estimates

because of increased enrollment at public schools around the state. The legislature also approved \$6.9 million (3%) in raises for classified staff not on the Career Ladder.

Feedback on the Career Ladder remains positive overall, but concerns persist that the plan has not provided enough benefit for veteran teachers. When the legislature opted not to create a \$60,000 top tier of the Career Ladder (capping it at \$50,000 instead), a Master Teacher Premium program (changed to Master Educator Premium during this session) was instituted to reward Idaho's experienced teachers. With those premiums scheduled to begin in 2019-20, some legislators are expressing concern about the potential price tag. The IEA will continue to offer trainings on Master Educator Premiums and will continue our support for keeping the premiums in place for any teacher that qualifies.

More encouraging news for public schools came in the form of a \$15.9 million (4.1%) increase in discretionary funding for districts. A substantial portion of the increase is earmarked to help districts with rising health

2017 Legislative Recap

Career Ladder, Health Insurance, Master Teacher Premiums Highlight Session



The 2017 IEA legislative team (L-R) Paul Stark, Penni Cyr, Sue Wigdorski, and Matt Compton

insurance costs, as the legislature began taking a more proactive approach to dealing with that major issue. Including these monies in discretionary funding and allowing districts financial flexibility was the approach supported by the IEA. A plan drafted by Rep. Wendy Horman, R-Idaho Falls, was enacted for the coming year, rather than a line item tactic that was preferred by some elected officials.

Policy Issues to Keep an Eye On

There are two important groups meeting over the summer that bear watching. The Legislative School Funding Formula Committee is looking at ways to modify or overhaul the methods by which Idaho funds public schools. The insurance and Master Educator Premium issues will be among their considerations. An Educator Pipeline Workgroup has also been convened, with IEA staff and teacher-members among the participants. This cross-section of education stakeholders is exploring potential solutions for Idaho's teacher shortage.

The legislature approved a new slate of

science standards as a temporary rule, but voted to remove five passages relating to climate change. Local districts are still allowed to draft science curricula as they see fit, and the standards will be revisited by the legislature in 2018.

Several bills opposed by the IEA were held in committee, but may well be brought back again in ensuing legislative sessions. Among them were:

A voucher bill in the form of tuition tax credits. This dangerous approach to education is in favor with the new national administration, but would siphon money away from public schools for use by religious and private schools.

■ Legislation that would have further loosened hiring restrictions

for charter schools, allowing them to bypass most certification rules. Accountability and oversight issues continue to plague many charter schools.

- A bill that would have drastically altered the bargaining verification process for local associations.
- Several pieces of legislation related to elections, including one that would have placed significant restrictions on the information that districts could provide to patrons about levies and bonds.

For more on the 2017 legislative session, listen to our podcast as the IEA legislative team breaks down the important takeaways. http://idahoea.org/news/iea-podcastlegislature-2017/



Excellence in Education. You would be hard pressed to find a phrase that more accurately describes the professional acumen and dedication that Sonia Galaviz brings to the classroom—as well as to the Idaho Education Association and her local, the Boise Education Association.

After taking home the IEA's Marsha Nakamura Teaching Excellence Award in 2016, Galaviz was named one of five finalists for the NEA Foundation's 2017 Excellence in Education Award, and attended a gala in the nation's capitol on February 10 for the announcement of the top honor. To her surprise, Galaviz was named the important national winner and delivered an emotional speech to the assembled to recognize crowd. Back in Boise, Galaviz was the positive honored by the Idaho legislature for the NEA Foundation Award and **contributions** her overall impact on the profession of educators and her students. She addressed in Idaho^{II} both the House and Senate **Education Committees during** the session and also spoke at the IEA Delegate Assembly. The IEA REPORTER caught up with Galaviz to get her thoughts and emotions about the last few months.

Q: What was going through your mind leading up to the NEA Foundation award winner being announced?

A: For the most part, I was at ease the night of the event. It was really special to share the night with my kids, who are my two most favorite people on the planet. My daughter and I got our hair done and it was fun to get all dressed up. I was backstage when they began the video they made of my classroom. I hadn't seen it before that night, so that was really gratifying. The filmmakers

FPORTFR **Q & A**

Sonia Galaviz Captures Top NEA Foundation Honor Boise Teacher Also Honored by Idaho Legislature

did a wonderful job capturing the diversity of Garfield and my classroom. I found it interesting to see what snippets of video they picked after two full days of shooting. After the video, going on stage was a little unnerving. I don't wear heels normally, so I was mostly worried about tripping. Ha!

Q: What were your emotions when your name was called.

A: I literally did not even consider that my name would be called. The Gala was also a long dinner, so we had dessert in front of us by the very end of the night. Penni Cyr (IEA President) said to me, "You look awfully relaxed over there, Sonia!" My reply was, "Sure. I'm not going up there." One minute later, my name was called. I just felt stunned.

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My son is the one who jolted me into reality. He screamed, "Mom! That's you!" It felt like a blur after that. My kids' reaction is what got me emotional.

The walk up to the stage was a little crazy. I felt like a fish out of water, but I just went where they told me to go. I was rushed to the center of the stage for pictures. I was crying the whole time. Just shocked, really. Then the short walk

to the podium seemed like it was happening in slow motion. It occurred to me, "What am I going to say?!" Not a good feeling. I sort of stammered through the beginning and then just spoke about what came to mind. I felt like the award represented public educators everywhere and the value our association places on supporting AND empowering us to be leaders in our own profession, so I spoke to that.

Q: Now that you have had some time to digest the whole awards process, what does it mean to you?

A: It's an honor, truly. I know so many deserving educators right here in Idaho and I

feel like I was representing them. What's great about teaching 10-year-olds is that they don't care what award you get or how groovy you think you are. They want, and deserve, a great teacher. I'm happy to push myself in that regard, to continue to seek and design ways to close the opportunity gap for my students.

Q: How did you feel about the legislative honor?

A: It was such a surprise to hear that Rep. John McCrostie and Sen. Janie Ward-Engelking had put together a House Resolution about me. Again, it's humbling. I know it's important to recognize the positive contributions of educators in Idaho. Public schools are doing GREAT things and are often overlooked. If I can spark any conversation about the efforts of public school teachers, offer an invitation to our legislators to build relationships with our schools, or shed positive light on our association, I am happy to do it. I feel very lucky to receive recognition from the House and Senate and that my colleagues, both John and Janie, would take the time to honor me in such a way.

Q: What was the most important thing you wanted legislators to know about you and other teachers?

A: While public support and funding may be up in Idaho, that wasn't the case five years ago. I haven't forgotten the struggle pre/post Tom Luna. Schools need adequate funding, yes, but we need our legislators to get what we do, what the demographics look like, our daily challenges, and get to know personally the great work being done in schools all over the state. I don't think anyone can know those issues without building relationships with schools and getting up close and personal with educators.

To read the complete interview with Sonia Galaviz, go to http://idahoea.org/ reporter/sonia-galaviz-captures-top-neafoundation-honor/

ESP CORNER IEA Summer Institute & ESPs –

What's In It For Me?

(Or – Come On Baby, Light My Fire!) Education Support Professionals are an integral and vital part of our schools. The contributions they make to our students are immeasurable but oftentimes overlooked. Unfortunately, there is frequently an inequity in professional development opportunities offered by school districts to certificated personnel verses classified personnel. ESPs are all too often left to their own devices to find, pay for, and then participate in professional development trainings to better their skills in their chosen professions - all the while being evaluated on their job performance without any effort in assisting them to improve their skills.

That is where the Idaho Education Association steps in. Each year the IEA's ESP Committee has provided classes and professional development opportunities to ESP members across the state. This summer, ESP members are afforded an opportunity for professional development at the IEA's Summer Institute, scheduled for July 27th through 29th at Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa. As a bonus, this year's offering includes the first ever statewide SPARKS training specifically geared for ESP members. Passed as a new business item at the 2016 Delegate Assembly, funding was earmarked expressly for this training and the newly formed ESP Caucus has taken on the challenge! The ESP committie, chaired by Stacie Aspiazu, and the ESP Caucus are currently planning a meaningful and fun experience for all attendees as they gather input from regions and locals throughout the state. The ESP SPARKS is envisioned as "a time for ESPs to get premium professional development while networking with other ESPs from around the state." Unlike other professional development offerings, ESP members will find that this is an all-expense paid opportunity as the IEA will cover the costs of registration, carpool travel reimbursement, lodging, and meals.

The theme for Summer Institute 2017 is "Be a Super Hero in the Classroom." With the addition of ESP Sparks, we would like to add "Be a Super Hero in the Classroom, the Office, the Lunchroom, the Hallways, the Buses, and the Playground!" It will truly be an experience not to be missed! So mark your calendars and save the dates – July 27th through July 29th for the IEA Summer Institute and ESP SPARKS. Join us and let's reignite your spark and light your fire!

Have feedback on the IEA REPORTER or a story idea for a future issue?

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IEA **PEOPLE**



Tricia Waltner.

After spending the last several years working as an associate in the IEA membership office, Tricia is tackling a new role as the associate for the IEA's Western Regional Organizing Center (WeROC). This move takes her back to the future--she started her IEA career 23 years ago as a Region Associate. Tricia replaces Tisha Case, who is moving on to a new position with Micron Technology. "We wish Tisha the very best in her new job, and thank her for the hard work and dedication she brought to the IEA," says Executive Director Sue Wigdorski.



Cliff Davis.

A veteran teacher and IEA member in Eastern Idaho, Cliff was recognized as a finalist for the National Speech and Debate Educator of the year award by the National Speech and Debate Association. In addition, his accomplishment was brought forward during the recent legislative session. "It's difficult to put into words the depth of my emotion", Davis says of the finalist honor. "Year in and year out you work with your colleagues, so to be recognized by them is incredibly gratifying." Davis currently teaches and coaches at Hillcrest High School in the Bonneville School District, and has also worked in Teton and Shelley.



Sally Andrus Mitchell.

A 17 year IEA member, Sally has been named an NEH Summer Scholar by the National Endowment for the Humanities. She is one of 25 teachers from around the country to be selected for the program, which enables teachers to study with experts in humanities disciplines. She will attend a two-week institute on Shakespeare's plays at the Palonsky Shakespeare Center in Brookyln, NY. Sally teaches at Renaissance High School in the West Ada School District.

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2017 IEA Summer Institute Up, Up and Away!

The IEA's premiere professional development and networking event takes place July 28-29, with pre-sessions July 26-27, at Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa. The 2017 Summer Institute gives members a chance to improve their workplace skills, get valuable information on career advancement, and share ideas with colleagues from across the state. The theme this year is Superheroes, so channel your inner Superman, Wonder Woman, Batman, Thor, and Captain America and help us vanquish the villains and protect truth, justice and the American Way!

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- The IEA Summer Institute is FREE for members, and includes dorm rooms, breakfast, lunch, carpool travel reimbursement and parking.
- College credit is available through NNU for this event.
- Sessions are led by IEA members and staff.
- Choose from a wide variety of sessions and topics, including:
 - Partnering with parents



- Collaborative relationships
 with school districts
- Global citizenship
- Passion-based learning
- Digital resources
- Supporting early-career educators
- External relations for local associations

Space in the 2017 IEA Summer Institute is limited, so register today at **https://www.** eventbrite.com/e/2017-iea-summerprofessional-development-instituteregistration-32954405514

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