

# Connections



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## ***Addressing the Mathematics Teacher Shortage: WHAT ROLE SHOULD AMTE PLAY?***

**Barbara J. Reys, University of Missouri  
AMTE President**

For the better part of my career in teacher education, there has been considerable “talk” about the current and growing shortage of mathematics teachers. AMTE members are well aware of the crisis – we’ve seen our pre-service programs shrink as talented mathematics students choose more lucrative careers that align with their expertise. We’ve watched young teachers struggle (and sometimes give up) as they encounter classrooms that challenge their abilities and their vision of what it means to be a mathematics teacher. We are urged by our university administrators to develop more accessible and streamlined certification programs (e.g., online delivery of courses, reduce education requirements, eliminate supervision of field experiences). We watch our state legislators adopt new methods for certifying teachers in shortage areas that often bypass our classrooms. At the same time, we are criticized by diverse constituent groups for teacher education programs that are, on the one hand, less than rigorous, and on the other hand, out of touch with the demands of teaching.

There is little doubt that the shortage of interested and qualified individuals seeking to teach mathematics is real. While the current economic recession may cause more people to pursue a job in the “recession-resistant” world of education, it is not likely to solve the long-term problem of attracting and preparing a sufficient supply of highly qualified mathematics teachers.

The question is, what should be done about

it? More importantly, what should AMTE do about the shortage of teachers of mathematics?

In the after-glow of the recent presidential election, many smart and well-intentioned people are offering commentary on the issue. For example, Thomas Friedman, whose wife is a teacher, recently stated:

“One of the smartest stimulus moves we could make would be to eliminate federal income taxes on all public schoolteachers so more talented people would choose these careers. I’d also double the salaries of all highly qualified math and science teachers, staple green cards to the diplomas of foreign students who graduate from any U.S. university in math or science — instead of subsidizing their educations and then sending them home. (“Tax Cuts for Teachers” *New York Times*, Jan. 11, 2009)

Similarly, another prominent writer and thinker, Malcom Gladwell, recently wrote about the difficulty of identifying “good” teachers. He offered the following suggestion:

“Teaching should be open to anyone with a pulse and a college degree—and teachers should be judged after they have started their jobs, not before. That means that

*(Continued on page 4)*

## AMTE'S 2010 Annual Conference News

### The Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators <http://www.amte.net>

#### President

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Make plans now to attend the 2010 AMTE Annual Conference in Irvine, CA on January 28-30, 2010.

The 2010 conference includes the following:

- The preconference sessions will be held on Thursday morning.
- A full slate of conference sessions begins at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday.
- The Thursday general session will begin about 5:00 p.m. followed by dinner on your own.
- The business meeting will occur in conjunction with Saturday's lunch.
- The conference will end by mid-afternoon on Saturday.

As usual, all meals on Friday and through lunch on Saturday are included in your registration fee.

The conference site is the Hyatt Regency Irvine Hotel. The hotel room rate is \$159 for a single or double room. **The deadline for room reservations is December 4, 2009** or when the room block is full. Filling the rooms in our block at the conference hotel helps by reducing some of the conference expenses paid by AMTE, so help support AMTE by staying at the conference hotel. Hotel reservations can be made using the link on the AMTE website or by calling Hyatt reservations at 800-233-1234.

Conference registration is available online at the AMTE website. **The registration deadline is December 4, 2009.** Early registration at reduced rates is available through October 1, which is also the registration deadline for speakers. We hope to see you in Irvine in January!

### 2010 AMTE Annual Conference Dates to Remember:

**Early Registration Deadline: October 1, 2009**

**Registration Deadline for Speakers: October 1, 2009**

**Regular Registration Deadline: December 4, 2009**

**Deadline for Hotel Reservations: December 4, 2009**

**Conference Dates: January 28-30, 2010**

Comments, questions, and submissions for AMTE *Connections* should be directed to: Libby Knott, AMTE *Connections* Editor, Department of Mathematics, Washington State University, P.O. Box 3113, Pullman, WA 99164-3113 [lknott@wsu.edu](mailto:lknott@wsu.edu)

## Affiliate News and Announcements

### Appalachian Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (AAMTE)

#### Annual Conference

#### Equity in Appalachia: No Region Left Behind

Fri., October 16 – Sat., October 17, 2009

Huntington, WV

The AAMTE Annual Conference brings national and regional speakers together with mathematics teacher educators across the Appalachian region (Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia) to explore current topics and trends in mathematics education.

**Conference Strands** include: Emerging Leaders/Mentoring; Technology; State Trends/Initiatives; and Research in Mathematics Education.

For conference details, visit: <http://aamte.clubexpress.com/>

Conference Program will be posted by **June 30, 2009**

Conference Registration will open **July 1, 2009**

AAMTE facilitates collaboration and communication among mathematics teacher educators at state, district, community college, college and university levels. To become a member, visit: <http://aamte.clubexpress.com/>

Members receive three newsletters each year (highlighting national/regional news) and access to a network of mathematics teacher educators in Appalachia. Annual Membership is \$20.

*Appalachian  
Association of  
Mathematics  
Teacher Educa-  
tors (AAMTE)  
Annual  
Conference on  
Equity in  
Appalachia:  
No Region Left  
Behind  
October 16—  
17, 2009*

### FAMTE NEWS

The Florida AMTE affiliate group met this year at the national AMTE conference in Florida where we decided to implement a series of Mathematics Teacher Educator Awards that are similar to those offered by AMTE for FAMTE members. We have established a graduate student award and a faculty award. Winners will receive a letter of recognition and a plaque. Awards will take place at the annual FAMTE meeting that is held in conjunction with the Florida NCTM affiliate (FCTM) meeting. The first awards will be given in October 2009 and annually thereafter.

<http://www.famte.org/>

Paige Allison,  
FAMTE President

***What is AMTE's position on the teacher shortage? Do we have a position? Should we have a position? Should AMTE offer solutions?***

### **President's Column**

*(Continued from page 1)*

the profession needs ... an apprenticeship system that allows candidates to be rigorously evaluated." (MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED: How do we hire when we can't tell who's right for the job? *New Yorker*, Dec. 15, 2008)

While I have great respect for the intelligence and boldness of Gladwell and Friedman, I'm not convinced that their strategies will either solve the current mathematics teacher shortage or result in mathematics classrooms that better serve students. However, I am glad they recognize the gravity of the shortage and I do appreciate their effort to put new ideas on the table for reflection and discussion.

The ideas expressed by Gladwell and Friedman raised another important question in my mind – That is, what is AMTE's position on the teacher shortage? Do we have a position? Should we have a position? Should AMTE offer solutions? If so, what strategies should we advocate for addressing the problem?

With the start of a new administration in Washington, you can be sure that Education Secretary Arne Duncan will be pressed to address the issue. In his congressional testimony (Jan. 13, 2009), Mr. Duncan shared plans for teacher support:

"We know that teacher quality must be addressed on many levels: recruitment, preparation, retention, and compensation .... President-elect Obama and I will also work with you and with school leaders across America to ensure that our teachers are treated and valued as professionals. We must promote career advancement programs so that successful teachers can be instructional leaders for their colleagues. We must enable teachers to

collaborate and learn from each other as members of strong professional communities. We must expand teacher compensation based on performance." (*U.S. Congressional Testimony*, Jan. 13, 2009)

Funds for competitive grants to address teacher shortages are also included in the economic stimulus package initiated by President Obama. In fact, the package proposes to commit \$300 million to enhancing teacher quality. The plan proposes to double Teacher Incentive Funds (TIF) for teachers and principals who raise student achievement and close the achievement gaps in high-need schools. It also provides \$100 million for competitive grants to states to address teacher shortages and modernize the teaching workforce.

I'm sure many AMTE members have comments as well as concerns about some of these proposals. I'm also convinced that AMTE members have the expertise and knowledge to make serious, experience- and research-based recommendations to address the problem. In fact, AMTE members are working every day on strategies to ensure that every student has access to a well-prepared and supported teacher of mathematics.

As the largest national professional organization of mathematics teacher educators in the world, what should AMTE do to inform the search for solutions, identify the best bets and implement needed reforms? What are our bold (and not-so-bold) recommendations for federal, state or local policy makers and educational administrators to consider?

While I don't have a specific solution or proposal to offer, I am convinced that the best ideas reside in the minds and collective experiences of AMTE members. Therefore, I call upon you to respond – let me know what you think AMTE should do. Contact me at: [reysb@missouri.edu](mailto:reysb@missouri.edu).

The Board of Directors of AMTE has established two annual awards to recognize mathematics educators at the Annual Meeting of the AMTE. The **Excellence Award**, recognizes excellence in each area of mathematics teacher education (teaching, service, research), focusing on one area each year. In 2010 the Excellence Award will focus on Service. The **Early Career Award** recognizes a mathematics teacher educator who, early in his/her career, has made significant contributions and shows exceptional potential for leadership in mathematics teacher education. Recent and past recipients of AMTE awards are:

**Excellence in Teaching in Mathematics Teacher Education** (next award in 2012)

Margaret (Peg) Smith (2009)  
Randy Philipp (2006)

**Excellence in Service in Mathematics Teacher Education** (next award in 2010)

Bill Bush (2007)

**Excellence in Scholarship in Mathematics Teacher Education** (next award in 2011)

Frank Lester (2008)

**Early Career Award** (awarded annually)

John Lannin (2009)

Consider nominating a worthy candidate for the 2010 Awards. **Complete information on these awards is available below, and at [www.amte.net](http://www.amte.net).**

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## 2010 Award for Excellence in Service in Mathematics Teacher Education

This award is intended to recognize a colleague for a unique contribution in service. The award recipient will have made a significant and lasting contribution to mathematics teacher education, directly and indirectly. The nominee shall have demonstrated commitment to mathematics teacher education through one or more of the following areas:

1. Active participation in advancing the development and improvement of mathematics teacher education (e.g., membership and leadership roles in state, national, and international organizations).
2. Active promotion and participation in activities promoting quality mathematics teacher education (e.g., creator of programs, coordinator of programs, writing and participating in grants, conferences, symposia, academies, supervisor of a student affiliate organization)
3. Active participation in the governmental and political areas to promote and protect beneficial legislation, to promote better awareness, and/or to build better communication
4. Active promotion and participation in school-university-community-government partnerships that have advanced mathematics teacher education (local, state, national level)
5. An unusual commitment to the support of mathematics teachers in the field (such as distinctive mentoring experiences).

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## AMTE Awards

### Criteria for Excellence in Service Award

The nominee of the Excellence in Service Award should be an active member of the mathematics teacher education community and have at least five years of commitment to mathematics teacher education. He or she should have made unique contributions to the field of mathematics teacher education. Unique contributions should be considered in the broadest sense possible.

#### Documentation required for Excellence in Service Award:

1. A current vita of the nominee, focused on excellence in service to mathematics teacher education (5 page limit).
2. A letter of nomination documenting the nominee's eligibility for the award, related to the criteria listed above.
3. Additional letters of support (no more than four) for the nomination from individuals knowledgeable of the nominee's contributions relative to one or more of the criteria stated above.

### 2010 Early Career Award

The Early Career Award is intended to recognize a colleague's contributions in their program of teaching, service, and/or scholarship within the first decade after receiving a doctoral degree. We invite nominations that highlight an individual's innovative contributions in one or more areas of teaching, service, and/or scholarship.

#### Criteria for Early Career Award

The nominee for the Early Career Award should be a mathematics teacher educator practicing in the field no later than 10 years after receipt of a doctoral degree.

**Teaching:** Contributions in the area of teaching pre-service or in-service mathematics teachers may include one or more of the following areas:

1. Implementation of effective and innovative teaching practices.
2. Demonstration of innovative teaching methods (e.g. publications, materials, video).
3. Recipient of awards in teaching from department, college, university and/or national entities.

**Service:** Contributions in the area of service to mathematics teacher education may include one or more of the following areas:

1. Active participation in advancing the development and improvement of mathematics teacher education (e.g., membership and leadership roles in state, national, and international organizations).
2. Active promotion and participation in activities promoting quality mathematics teacher education (e.g., creator of programs, coordinator of programs, author of and participant in grants, conferences, symposia, academies).
3. Active participation in the governmental and political areas to promote and protect beneficial legislation, to promote better awareness, and/or to build better communication.
4. Active promotion and participation in school-university-community-government partnerships that have advanced mathematics teacher education at the local, state, and/or national level.
5. An unusual commitment to the support of mathematics teachers in the field (e.g., distinctive mentoring experiences).

*(Continued on page 7)*

**Scholarship:** Contributions in the area of scholarship to mathematics teacher education may include one or more of the following areas:

1. Dissemination of research findings offering unique perspectives on the preparation or professional development of mathematics teachers.
2. Publication of materials useful in the preparation or continuing professional development of mathematics teachers.
3. Design of innovative pre-service or in-service programs.
4. Contribution of theoretical perspectives that have pushed the field forward.

### **Documentation required for Early Career Award:**

1. Current vita of the nominee.
2. Letter of nomination documenting the nominee's eligibility for the award.
3. Three letters of support for the nomination from individuals knowledgeable of the nominee's contributions relative to one or more of the criteria stated above.
4. Evidence of at least three contributions of the nominee's teaching, service, and/or scholarship in mathematics education in one or more areas as outlined above.

### **Nomination Process for Excellence Award and Early Career Award**

AMTE members may nominate a mathematics teacher educator who meets the criteria of the award. Self-nominations will not be considered. Nomination materials should include those stated in each section above. The committee will review applications in an electronic format. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to submit all application materials electronically.

Electronic submissions should be sent to Nadine Bezuk at [nbezuk@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:nbezuk@mail.sdsu.edu)

If applicants wish to include large documents in hard-copy form, we will be able to scan documents of up to 50 pages in length. Applicants may submit DVDs, CDs, or videotapes, but each clip submitted should be no more than 20 minutes long. Hard copy submissions should be sent to:

Nadine Bezuk  
Attn: AMTE Award Nomination  
Center for Research in Mathematics and Science Education (CRMSE)  
6475 Alvarado Rd., Suite 206  
San Diego, CA 92120

**Please be sure that all items in the nomination materials are clearly labeled with the name of the nominee.**

### **Deadline for Nominations**

Nominations for the **Excellence in Service Award** must be received by **September 30, 2009**. For the **Early Career Award**, nominations must be received by **October 15, 2009**.

*How do you  
make a  
nomination  
for an  
AMTE  
award?*

## AMTE Awards

*(Continued on page 8)*

### ***Deadline for Nominations:***

***Excellence in Service Award:  
September 30,  
2009***

***Early Career Award:  
October 15,  
2009***

### **Procedure for Review of Materials**

The AMTE Awards Committee, a seven-member committee, will review the materials and select the award winner yearly. Nominations will be reviewed by the com

mittee, and the award recipient will be notified by late November, so that the person can have time to make arrangements to attend the AMTE conference.

The award recipients will receive a plaque and be recognized at the AMTE meeting in the year in which he or she receives the award. The winner of the Excellence Award will give a featured presentation at the AMTE Annual Conference in the year they receive the award. The winner of the Early Career Award will be recognized at the annual AMTE meeting and asked to contribute an article for the Summer *AMTE Connections* Newsletter and to lead a mentoring session for other early career mathematics education faculty at the annual AMTE meeting.

## Nominations Sought for AMTE Board

The AMTE Nominations and Elections Committee is seeking nominations for consideration as candidates for President-Elect, Treasurer and Board Member-at-Large.

To nominate a candidate, send the individual's name, professional affiliation and position, email address, and one to three sentences describing his/her qualifications for the position to the chair of the nominations committee, Francis (Skip) Fennell at [ffennell@mcddaniel.edu](mailto:ffennell@mcddaniel.edu) or via mail to Francis (Skip) Fennell, Academic Hall, McDaniel College, Westminster, MD 21157.

Make sure to indicate whether the nomination is for President-Elect, Treasurer or the Member-at-Large position. Nominations of colleagues and self-nominations are permitted. (Before selecting any potential candidate on the election slate, the Nominations and Elections Committee will verify his/her willingness to serve.) **The deadline for receiving nominations is July 31, 2009.**

***The deadline for nominations for President-Elect, Treasurer, and Board Member-at-Large is July 31, 2009***

***For information on membership and other AMTE activities***

## **NEW AMTE Publications Director and Journal Task Force Appointed**

The AMTE Board of Directors approved the appointment of Alfinio Flores, University of Delaware, as the first AMTE Publications Director. Dr. Flores will serve a 4-year appointment with responsibilities including providing oversight to all AMTE publications to ensure quality, avoid redundancies, and meet the needs of the membership. In addition, a major initial responsibility will be to work with a newly appointed AMTE Journal Task Force to initiate a mathematics teacher educator practitioner-oriented journal.

AMTE Journal Task Force Members:

Alfinio Flores, University of Delaware, DE; [alfinio@udel.edu](mailto:alfinio@udel.edu)

(AMTE Publications Director and Chair of Task Force)

Fran Arbaugh, Penn State University - [ArbaughE@missouri.edu](mailto:ArbaughE@missouri.edu)

(Board Representative)

John Lannin, University of Missouri - [LanninJ@missouri.edu](mailto:LanninJ@missouri.edu)

Rebecca McGraw, University of Arizona - [rmcgraw@math.arizona.edu](mailto:rmcgraw@math.arizona.edu)

Rheta Rubenstein, University of Michigan-Dearborn - [rubenst@umd.umich.edu](mailto:rubenst@umd.umich.edu)

Lynn Stallings, Kennesaw State University - [lstallin@kennesaw.edu](mailto:lstallin@kennesaw.edu)

Pat Wilson, University of Georgia - [pswilson@uga.edu](mailto:pswilson@uga.edu)

The Journal Task Force will: conceptualize the new journal (articulate purpose and audience; recommend frequency of publication, general format and special features; provide estimated costs to AMTE); provide recommendation regarding publication format (self-publish or collaborate with an established publishing company); and develop a call for the first Journal Editor. A report of the Task Force is expected in Fall 2009.

If you have ideas or suggestions to share with the AMTE Board or the AMTE Journal Task Force, please contact: Barbara Reys ([reysb@missouri.edu](mailto:reysb@missouri.edu)) and/or Alfinio Flores ([alfinio@udel.edu](mailto:alfinio@udel.edu)).

Photo below: AMTE President Barbara Reys and Affiliate Director Sandi Cooper accept NCTM Affiliate Leadership Plaque, April 2009



***AMTE's first Publications Director, Dr. Alfinio Flores, will serve a four-year term. He will work with AMTE's Journal Task Force to initiate a mathematics teacher educator practitioner-oriented journal.***

## Teaching Resources Task Force Report

*Here are the recommendations of the AMTE Teaching Resources Task Force regarding AMTE's infrastructure, resources, and priorities.*

The **AMTE Teaching Resources Task Force** was charged with investigating the issues, needs, and opportunities to support the AMTE membership in the utilization of teaching resources and making recommendations to the Board based on the desires of the membership with consideration for AMTE's infrastructure, resources, and priorities. The Task Force, chaired by Kathy Morris ([morrisk@sonoma.edu](mailto:morrisk@sonoma.edu)), included members Susan Hillman ([shillman@svsu.edu](mailto:shillman@svsu.edu)), Amy Roth McDuffie ([mcduffie@tricity.wsu.edu](mailto:mcduffie@tricity.wsu.edu)), Babette Moeller ([bmoeller@edc.org](mailto:bmoeller@edc.org)), Nicole Miller Rigelman ([rigelman@pdx.edu](mailto:rigelman@pdx.edu)), and Board Representative M. Lynn Breyfogle ([mbreyfog@bucknell.edu](mailto:mbreyfog@bucknell.edu)).

This Task Force created a survey that was taken by 201 AMTE members in December 2008. The Task Force analyzed the results and submitted a report to the Board for consideration at the April Board Meeting that included recommendations along with related suggestions and thoughts on which AMTE committees might be responsible for their consideration and possible implementation. The Task Force recommended that:

- **AMTE continue to actively support members in their use of teaching resources through collaboration opportunities and networking.** Specific suggestions included: maintaining a schedule at the annual conference that incorporates substantive opportunities for networking through long breaks and meals, and networking opportunities as a part of the newly designed AMTE website.
- **AMTE focus on specific resources that members identified as presenting more pressing needs (i.e., case-based and video materials, K-12 curriculum, web-based and technological materials, and textbooks).** Specific suggestions included: dedicating a certain number of AMTE conference sessions for these specific genres of mathematics teacher education (MTE) teaching resources, and future calls for articles regarding the use of varied teaching resources.
- **AMTE foster increased opportunities for face-to-face interactions on teaching resources.** Specific suggestions included: emphasizing the "scholarship of teaching" (Shulman) as a core component of our annual conference and proposing the establishment of an MTE strand at the NCTM conference that would consist solely of workshops for MTEs that parallel the sessions for preK-12 teachers at that conference.
- **AMTE create/enhance web-based opportunities for interaction on teaching resources to better meet the needs of those who cannot attend the annual meeting.** Specific suggestions included: regular email ticklers that would announce and remind members of resources available, and discussion groups or social networking tools.
- **Teaching resources become an on-going component in AMTE publications.** Specific suggestions included: incorporating regular features in a publication that would focus on the use of cases, K-12 curriculum, instructional technology, and other resources deemed important to the members and take advantage of the new on-line *Connections* format to include multimedia links.

The Report was well received by the Board and several of the recommendations are already being pursued. The Teaching Resources Task Force has completed *(Continued on page 11)*

*Continued from page 10*

their work with this report and has been dismissed, but would like to thank those who participated in the survey for generously giving of their time and opinions to help make AMTE a more vital organization. For the full report please contact Kathy Morris ([Kathy.morris@sonoma.edu](mailto:Kathy.morris@sonoma.edu)) or Lynn Breyfogle ([lynn.breyfogle@bucknell.edu](mailto:lynn.breyfogle@bucknell.edu)).



**Current and former AMTE Presidents:** Front row--Current President Barbara Reys, Susan Gay, Judith Jacobs, Nadine Bezuk. Back row--Sid Rachlin, Karen Karp, Skip Fennell, Jenny Bay-Williams, immediate past president, Hank Kepner. (Orlando, Florida, February 6, 2009)

## Dates to Remember

Online at  
<http://amte.net>

**Membership/  
Renewal Forms**

**Position Papers**

**Position Listings**

**Resources**

**Forum for  
Members**

**Other  
Opportunities**

### 2009

August 6-8	MAA MathFest, Portland, Oregon
September 30	Nominations for AMTE Excellence in Service Award
October 15	Nominations for AMTE Early Career Award
October 21-23	NCTM Regional, Boston, Massachusetts
October 22-24	SSMA Annual Conference, Reno, Nevada
November 4-6	NCTM Regional, Minneapolis, Minnesota
November 12-15	AMATYC Conference, Las Vegas, NV
November 18-20	NCTM Regional, Nashville, Tennessee

### 2010

January 13-16	AMS-MAA-SIAM Joint Math Meeting, San Francisco, CA
January 28-30	AMTE Annual Conference, Irvine, California
April 21-24	NCTM Annual Meeting and Exposition, San Diego, CA

Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators  
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