

NADE 2004

The NADE 2004 Conference in St.Louis, March 11-13, with the theme, Developmental Education: Gateway to Success, offered a wonderful opportunity for professional growth for developmental educators, flavored with colorful lessons in history and culture.

Opening Thursday's events was the presentation of keynote speaker, Dr. Richard Light of Harvard, who spoke on assessment based on results from years of conducting interviews with students about their experiences on the campus. Following Dr. Light's presentation, I attended sessions on the use of journals in developmental writing courses and the use of Classroom Assessment Techniques for program review. Thursday evening's Cultural Heritage event at the Missouri History Museum included a multi-cultural dinner with ethnic food from several different countries and time to explore the museum's Lewis and Clark Exhibition.

Friday began with a rousing presentation by Crystal Kuykendall, followed by concurrent sessions on fun ways to teach grammar, using portfolios as exit criteria for developmental writing, and curriculum revision for disabled students. Lunch provided a time for the state

developmental education organization to meet. Later the Writing SPIN also gathered, deciding to form an electronic newsletter and listserv as a way for members to share ideas. Lewis and Clark was once more the focus of the evening as we traveled to the Science Museum for an IMAX film about the expedition.

The most exciting presentation on Saturday was about a transition project designed to help adults move from an adult basic education program into developmental coursework at a community college, something we have been striving to accomplish in Kentucky. Saturday afternoon we attended a Post Conference workshop on program assessment led by Daniel Apple of Pacific Crest, a private consulting firm.

Now as I look back on the conference, I realize that several sessions I attended involved assessment in one form or another, and it's assessment—and Lewis and Clark—about which I gained the most information. As we forge ahead toward student learning outcomes and curriculum assessment on that basis, this is an area where we as a college, faculty and administration need professional development. This, of course, relates directly to the KCTCS Learning College Initiative. If becoming a learning college (focusing on student learning)

is truly our goal, then we need to undergo as fundamental a change as we have undergone with consolidation. Could that be why we've avoided the issue all year? But I digress.

Submitted by: Lynn Crabtree, Chair of Humanities and Fine Arts
Division