



A Publication of the Council for Learning Disabilities

April 2019

## President's Message



Dear CLD Members,

Spring is here! As always, I like to use the president's message to communicate with membership about important activities that are occurring in the organization.

Congratulations to the winners of this year's election! Joe Morgan at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas will be our new vice president and Beverly Weiser at Southern Methodist University will be our new treasurer. Read more about our newly elected officers later in this newsletter.

Thank you to Minnie Mize for her work co-chairing our Leadership Development Committee and supporting the work of our state chapters. Min recently sent out the call for nominations for this year's Floyd G. Hudson Award. Please consider nominating someone in the organization who has made outstanding service contributions to the field. Later this spring, Min will be reaching out to state chapters for nominations for this year's Teachers of the Year Award as well. These awards are presented at the annual conference each year.

I would also like to thank Meijia Liu for taking over our special Archivist Committee this year. Meijia has been working away at Pro-Ed in Austin, Texas, to archive the many important documents of the organization. Her committee also worked with Executive Director Linda Nease to put together the special poster highlighting 40 years of CLD conferences that was displayed at our 40th anniversary conference last year.

The submission deadline for CLD's 41st Annual International Conference has passed, and I am happy to announce that we had over 200 proposals submitted this year! Brittany Hott is the program chair for this year's conference and is hard at work finishing up the program as we speak. Confer-

ence planning is also under way in the capable hands of co-chairs Anne Brawand and Judy Voress, with the help of this year's local arrangements committee, co-chaired by Mariya Davis and Kristi Santi. It is looking like we have a terrific conference in the making for 2019 in San Antonio!

Have you checked out the CLD website lately? In the Research to Practice section, you will find guidance from our Research Committee posted on a variety of timely topics, including assistive technology, English language learners, vocabulary instruction, positive reinforcement, transition, and more! In the News and Legislation section, you will find updates from our Liaison Committee related to national advocacy efforts on behalf of students with learning disabilities as well as updates on CLD's work with the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD) and the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD). Check out these valuable resources at <https://council-for-learning-disabilities.org/>.

**Sheri Berkeley**  
CLD President

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**Editor's Note:** This column provides readers with immediate access to evidence-based strategies on current topics that can easily be transferred from the pages of LD Forum into effective teaching practice in CLD members' classrooms. Authors who would like to submit a column are encouraged to contact the editor in advance to discuss ideas. Author guidelines are available on CLD's website.

## 5 Ways To ...

### 5 Ways to Implement Assistive and Instructional Technology in Inclusive Classrooms

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Students with learning disabilities (LD) are increasingly being included in general education classrooms for their core content instruction (McLeskey, Landers, Williamson, & Hoppey, 2012). Access to inclusive classrooms involves providing students support from a special educator and general educator. However, even as students with disabilities have greater access to general education classrooms, a continued achievement gap persists between students with and without disabilities (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). A potential contributor to this gap is how general and special educators approach co-teaching. General educators have noted they lack knowledge for how to support students with disabilities, while special educators report a lack of preparedness to teach academic content (King-Sears, Brawand, Jenkins, & Preston-Smith, 2014). This often leads to classrooms where very little differentiation occurs, with general educators delivering a majority of Tier I instruction. One way for teachers to differentiate instruction is to consider assistive and instructional technology (AT/IT) tools. As students with LD receive a majority of their content instruction in general education environments, it is important that technology be there to support them in accessing content.

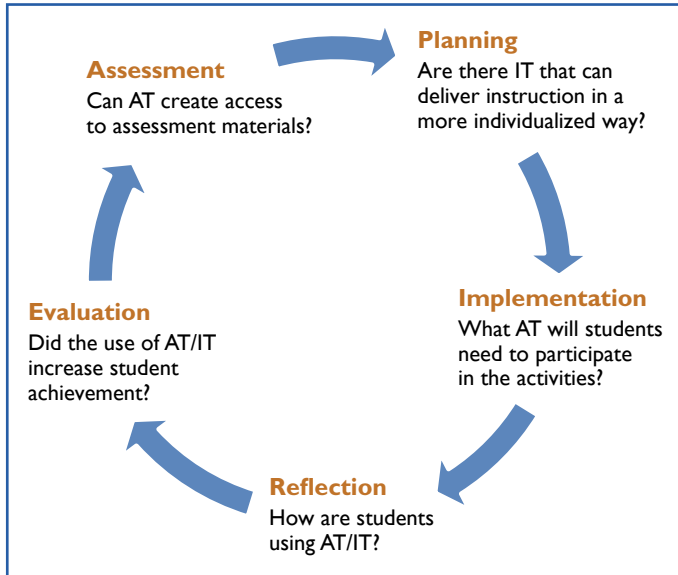
For students with LD, AT/IT can provide versatile means for access to high quality instruction (Edyburn, 2014). Effective use of technology can supply students with individualized interventions that can increase their mastery of grade-level curriculum (Basham, Hall, Carter, & Stahl, 2016). This manuscript will discuss strategies for aligning AT/IT to the specific needs of students with LD in general education classrooms. The strategies are intended for *inclusive classrooms*, where students with LD receive their instruction alongside students without disabilities, and for *co-taught classrooms*, which are inclusive classrooms where students receive their instruction from both general and special educators. Whether a classroom is inclusive or co-taught, both the general and special educators serving the students with LD should be involved in the process of considering and selecting AT/IT, as both the general educator's content knowledge

and the special educator's knowledge of individual students' needs should inform their decisions. These recommendations are therefore meant for both general and special educators in inclusive and co-taught classrooms to guide their planning and evaluation of technology use.

#### 1 Clarify the Role of Assistive and Instructional Technology in the Classroom

A critical aspect of implementing technology in the classroom is understanding when, how, and where to use technology-based tools (Anderson, Griffith, & Crawford, 2017). For both general and special education teachers, this includes understanding and defining the roles of AT and IT in classrooms to deliver both content and individualized support. While both AT and IT can exist together in a classroom, when and how teachers use them differ. *Assistive technology* (AT) can be seen as tools that provide a form of alternative access to activities, while *instructional technology* (IT) can be seen as tools used to deliver instruction through a technology-based medium (Edyburn, 2013). While technology cannot serve as the main instructional or intervention tool, it can provide alternative ways for teachers to meet the individual needs of students with LD (Smith & Okolo, 2010). This is especially important to consider as students with LD represent one of the most diverse student populations in terms of personal backgrounds and educational needs, which can include difficulties with reading, listening, speaking, mathematics, and writing (Gartland & Strosnider, 2018). Identifying ways that technology can provide alternative means for delivering instruction or creating access to instructional activities or assessments can support successful outcomes for students with LD. The following suggestions will provide guidance for how to establish expectations for AT/IT use in the classroom. To frame this discussion, Figure 1 is meant to outline how teachers can consider if AT or IT is appropriate for use in any phase of an explicit instructional cycle.

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**Figure 1.** Framing AT/IT in an Explicit Instructional Cycle.

## 2 Consider Technology when Planning Instruction

As part of implementing explicit instruction to support students with LD, teachers should begin by planning the essential components of the instruction they will deliver (Archer & Hughes, 2011) and how AT/IT can be used to enhance this process. Teachers should consider how they will (a) segment complex skills, (b) draw student attention to important features of the content, and (c) create purposeful practice opportunities (Hughes, Morris, Therrien, & Benson, 2017). With thoughtful planning for the use of technology in instruction, teachers can meet the needs of diverse student populations (Smith, Basham, Rice, & Carter, 2016). Considerations teachers can make during the instructional planning process for implementing technology are provided in Table 1.

## 3 Selecting New Technology to Use in the Classroom

As technology continues to become more available in classrooms, teachers will ultimately be tasked with selecting new technology to use. One popular avenue teachers pursue is applications (apps) that can be used on mobile phones or tablets. Apps that are systematically designed to meet learning goals can provide a fun and adaptable way for students to master content. When selecting either apps or technology to use, teachers should be cognizant of how they are using their resources and be careful to select tools that will have utility in their classrooms.

Technology can be expensive, and in resource-limited environments this can be a concern for teachers (Flanagan, Bouck, & Richardson, 2013). One solution is to utilize free versions of apps offered by developers to determine if they are worth purchasing. Although free apps sometimes come with advertisements or have limited capabilities, they offer a low-cost option for AT/IT. Additionally, many apps that students already use, like Google Docs and Microsoft Office, have embedded tools and free add-ins that can meet the needs of students with LD (Basham, Smith, & Satter, 2016). Examples include Google Docs’ Voice Typing and Microsoft Office’s Dictate, both of which offer speech-to-text services that remove the barrier of typing. More comprehensive lists of add-ins can be found at Google’s ([support.google.com](http://support.google.com)) and Microsoft’s ([appsourc.microsoft.com](http://appsourc.microsoft.com)) websites.

There are a wide variety of technology-based tools available to teachers, often making it difficult to determine which will contribute productively to instruction. With their Project Software Identification and Evaluation for Decision-Making (PSIED) model, Schmidt, Lin, Paek, MacSuga-Gage, and Gage (2017) suggest taking the following course of action when selecting AT/IT: (a) assess need, (b) review product, (c) implement, and (d) evaluate. This process aligns with direct and explicit teaching models where teachers first assess student needs in relation to content standards and

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**Table 1.** Considerations for Implementing AT/IT

Planning Question	Teacher Action	Example
1. Does the AT/IT support mastery of standards-based objectives?	Consider students’ needs and what areas they struggle with. Add AT/IT with intention and with students’ needs in mind.	Supplement text content with audio and visual content.
2. How does the AT/IT support the implementation of explicit instruction?	Use AT/IT to accompany and enhance content or deliver it in an accessible way.	Use e-readers or text-to-speech tools for students who struggle with comprehension or reading fluency.
3. Are the AT/IT tools appropriate?	Consider the appropriateness of AT/IT tools for tasks and students’ ages.	Select apps with content that is aligned to grade-level standards and common interests for students’ age groups.

**Table 2.** Guiding Questions for Considering and Choosing AT/IT for Students with Learning Disabilities in the General Education Classroom

Guiding Question	Considerations
1. What specific service(s) will the AT/IT provide the student?	Consider the areas affected by the student's LD and how this impacts the student's ability to access the curriculum. The AT/IT should provide a service that removes identifiable barriers to help the student meet his/her learning goals.
2. Will the AT/IT provide a benefit or a barrier?	Consider the design and accessibility of the chosen AT/IT tool and whether any elements of it will be distracting for the student. For example, an app that uses a significant amount of animations and graphics might not be effective for a student with a visual processing disorder.
3. How will the student use the AT/IT in the classroom?	Consider the types of technology available to the classroom or that the student already has. Additionally, consider the appropriateness of the student using the AT/IT in different scenarios (e.g., instruction, independent work, and group work).
4. Will the student be receptive to using the AT/IT tool?	Consider how the tool will be integrated into the student's classroom routines and the student's level of comfort with the tool.

create learning goals and objectives. From here, teachers should review products to determine if they address learning goals and whether or not they can be used to systematically address these goals (McLeskey et al., 2017). In addition to determining if the tools address the established goals, teachers should also determine if the tool supports the specific learning needs of students with LD. Table 2 provides guiding questions that teachers can consider when planning to use AT/IT for students with LD in Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and lesson development.

#### **4** Establish Classroom Expectations for AT/IT Use That Promote Equity

One concern surrounding AT/IT use in the classroom is the potential stigma faced by students with disabilities (Scherer, Sax, Vanbiervliet, Cushman, & Scherer, 2005). Teachers can promote equity in their classrooms by establishing a classroom environment that normalizes AT/IT use and grants students privacy in their use of tools that other students do not need or do not choose to use. Creating this environment begins with setting expectations for technology use that include AT/IT. For example, all students can receive instruction on how to access basic and free tools built into the Google and Microsoft Suites like spell check, dictation, and text-to-speech. Fostering technology use among all students can help to minimize stigma for students with LD who need regular access to AT/IT tools. Teachers should also give students options to use headphones and desktop privacy shields to give students more private access to AT/IT.

Another consideration when introducing technology into a classroom is establishing rules for use. Clear and consistent rules for using technology in the classroom guide students toward using their resources more effectively while

also protecting their privacy and safety online. As with any other classroom procedure, teachers should establish expectations for when and how technology should be used in the classroom and consider how these expectations coincide with school-wide technology policies. This can include signals for times to use or put away devices; lists of permitted websites, tools, or resources; policies for the use of personal electronic devices; and guidelines for how to interact with peers online. A final consideration for teachers is how these expectations are relayed to parents and families in the instance disciplinary measures for inappropriate technology use occur.

#### **5** Evaluate the Effectiveness of AT/IT

As with any tool implemented in the classroom, the use of technology as an assistive or instructional tool should be evaluated against the goals teachers have established for their lessons and overall student mastery of the content taught. In any explicit instructional cycle, teachers should have detailed plans for successive lessons with the methods and materials for each lesson clearly laid out (Hughes et al., 2017). This means teachers should know when technology is being used to address specific learning targets and goals, and have plans for assessing student knowledge and skills as a result of these lessons. Ultimately, teachers want to be able to show increased mastery of content from pre- to post-assessments as a result of having used AT/IT in specific lessons or with specific groups of students, including students with LD. This includes having a clear understanding of when lessons that address students' IEP goals are delivered and whether the specific tasks related to these goals are effectively supported by AT/IT. These evaluation methods support teacher decision making in determining

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whether a selected tool should be used moving forward or if changes in instructional methodology should be made.

## Conclusion

As the number of students with LD served in general education classrooms continues to increase, it is important for teachers to understand how technology can be used to support all students in their classrooms. Embedding technology in explicit instructional cycles is one way teachers can differentiate instruction for the diverse students present in their classrooms. This includes clarifying the role of AT/IT in the classroom; selecting technology to address specific teaching and learning tasks, and providing chosen technology to students in a way that is specific to their learning needs; and evaluating if the selected technology met the stated goals. To do this, teachers need to be mindful of how technology will fit into their instruction to supplement teacher-led activities while ensuring that the use of technology is regularly evaluated by determining if it supports student mastery of established standards and learning goals.

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## CLD Announces Election Results

Many thanks to all who voted in the election this spring for Vice-President and Treasurer. CLD was lucky to have Drs. Endia Lindo and Joseph Morgan run for the position of Vice President and Drs. Beverly Weiser and Tricia Strickland run

for the position of Treasurer. CLD is extremely happy to announce that our new Vice President is Joseph Morgan and the new Treasurer is Beverly Weiser. Congratulations to both Dr. Morgan and Dr. Weiser!

## CLD 2019 Award Nominations

### Floyd G. Hudson Service Award

The Floyd G. Hudson Service Award is presented by the Council for Learning Disabilities for outstanding performance and commitment by a professional who works in the field of learning disabilities in a role outside of the classroom. This CLD member, working in a leadership capacity, enhances the professional learning of others in the field and impacts the lives of persons with learning disabilities.

Eligibility for consideration of the Floyd G. Hudson Service Award includes educational professionals who:

- provide professional development, consulting services, or serve in a leadership role working with teachers, other professionals, parents, and students, and
- have provided exemplary services to the LD field for a minimum of five years.

This award is named in memory of Dr. Floyd G. Hudson, a professor at the University of Kansas, who was a leader in the early years of CLD. Dr. Hudson was instrumental in formulating early policy to drive federal and state initiatives in the area of learning disabilities. Don Deshler has said of Dr. Hudson, “As I visit many schools across Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska, I can really see Floyd’s lasting influence. He was a kind, generous, innovative, and collaborative professional. He worked closely with many school districts solving problems, preparing teachers, and implementing more effective programs. Even today, many people here in the Midwest and around the country tell me about their positive experiences working with Floyd, many of which took place more than 20 years ago.”

Local chapters and members of the Board of Trustees may nominate candidates, one of whom is selected and then recognized at the annual international conference. In states without active chapters, nominations can be made by CLD members. The award recipient also receives a complimentary registration and membership renewal. During the award program, the recipient is presented with a certificate of recognition and an honorarium. The recipient will also be profiled in *LD Forum* (the CLD online newsletter) and on the CLD website. It is expected that the award recipient will give a poster presentation on a topic of his or her choosing (e.g., effective teaching practices) during the CLD annual conference. Nomination forms are due **May 15, 2019**.

For additional information, please contact Min Mize, Leadership Development Committee co-chair, at [minkimedu@gmail.com](mailto:minkimedu@gmail.com).

### Outstanding Educator/Teacher of the Year Award

Each year, the Council for Learning Disabilities recognizes outstanding teachers who are CLD members and who consistently provide quality instruction to students with learning disabilities. These teachers, selected by local chapters, provide direct services to students. In states without active chapters, nominations can be made by CLD members. Outstanding teachers are dedicated to implementing evidence-based instructional practices and collaborating with classroom teachers and other service providers to greatly improve the quality of education for all struggling learners.

Candidates for nomination must:

- be active, dues-paying members of CLD, including state chapter membership if state chapter is active,
- provide direct services to students with learning disabilities,
- implement evidence-based instructional practices that result in significant gains in achievement for children, adolescents, or adults who struggle academically, and
- advocate for persons with learning disabilities.

Recipients are guests at the annual international conference. They receive a complimentary registration and a one-year membership renewal. During the conference award program, they receive a certificate of recognition and an honorarium. These members are also profiled in the *LD Forum* and on the national website. It is expected that the award recipient will give a poster presentation on a topic of his or her choosing (e.g., effective teaching practices) during the CLD annual conference.

Please see the Call for Nominations on the CLD website ([www.cldinternational.org](http://www.cldinternational.org)) for additional information. The submission deadline is **May 15, 2019**.

Information entered into the online nomination form should only be entered by active CLD chapter presidents or current CLD members in states without an active chapter.

For additional information, please contact Min Mize, Leadership Development Committee co-chair, at [minkimedu@gmail.com](mailto:minkimedu@gmail.com).

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### Outstanding Researcher Award

In an effort to promote and acknowledge research, the Council for Learning Disabilities recognizes an outstanding researcher who submits a manuscript-length paper about learning disabilities that is based on a doctoral dissertation completed within the last five years. The submission must not be under consideration for—or the recipient of—another award. The award recipient is a guest at the annual international conference where he/she will present his/her paper. This recipient receives a complimentary registration and CLD membership or renewal. The recipient is also presented

with a certificate of recognition and a \$500 honorarium to be presented at the 2019 International Conference on Learning Disabilities in San Antonio, Texas. The recipient will be profiled in *LD Forum* and on the national CLD website. Additionally, the recipient's paper will be submitted for possible publication in *Learning Disability Quarterly*. Because of this consideration, the submitted manuscript cannot be simultaneously submitted to or already published in another journal.

For complete information on submitting to CLD's Outstanding Researcher Award competition, please visit <https://council-for-learning-disabilities.org/council-learning-disabilities-outstanding-researcher-award>.

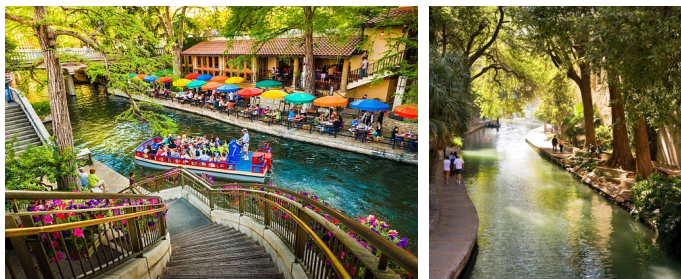
The current deadline for submissions for the Outstanding Researcher Award is **May 1, 2019**, at 5:00pm Eastern time.

## Conference Committee Announcements

### 41st Annual International Conference on Learning Disabilities

San Antonio, Texas  
October 3–4, 2019

Mark your calendar for an exceptional learning experience and networking opportunity! Join us at the lovely (and beautifully redesigned) Westin Riverwalk Hotel, which is located on the famous San Antonio Riverwalk near many historic sites. Hotel and conference registration information will be available soon at <https://council-for-learning-disabilities.org/2019-annual-conference>.



### 2019 J. Lee Wiederholt Distinguished Lecturer

We are pleased to announce that **Dr. Diane Bryant** of the University of Texas at Austin will serve as the 2019 J. Lee Wiederholt Distinguished Lecturer. Dr. Bryant will present the keynote address at the opening session.

### Program Chair

Dr. Brittany Hott, CLD vice-president, serves as the Program Chair for the 41st Annual Conference. Dr. Hott is planning an informative and varied program. Announcements regarding acceptance of presentation proposals is anticipated by mid-May.

### Local Arrangements Committee

Kristi Santi and Mariya Davis are leading the Local Arrangements Committee for the 2019 conference. They are working diligently on coordinating volunteers, compiling a list of activities in San Antonio of interest to attendees, and identifying local support—all to ensure attendees have a great experience at the 2019 conference. If you are interested in lending a helping hand, please contact **Kristi Santi** or **Mariya Davis**.

### Connect with CLD on Social Media

Follow us on **Facebook** and **Twitter** for updates about the conference and fantastic places to visit while in San Antonio.

### 2019 Sponsorships

Sponsorships are important to the success of the CLD conference. For information about sponsorship opportunities, please contact the Sponsorship Committee chairs at [CLD2019SanAntonio@gmail.com](mailto:CLD2019SanAntonio@gmail.com).

## Committee & Chapter News

### Colorado CLD Announcement

Colorado CLD once again co-sponsored the successful “Courage to Risk” conference, providing two professional development scholarships to educators to attend. In addition, we hosted a successful two-day sold-out Math on the “PLANES” conference with Steve Leinward as our presenter. Lastly, we are actively seeking out nominations statewide for Teacher of the Year, Para-educator of the Year, and Professional of the Year.

### Texas CLD Announcement

Greetings from Texas!

Many of our members attended a one-day conference in Houston featuring special education expert and WrightsLaw founder Pete Wright. Over 130 attendees had a wonderful opportunity to learn about special education law, assessment, SMART IEPs, and strategies for effective advocacy while also networking with other professionals who passionately serve students with special needs and their families. I would like to personally thank our past president, Kristi Santi, for



TX CLD Board: from left to right are Lesli Raymond [Treasurer], Mariya Davis [President], Pete Wright, Kristi Santi [Past President], and Maryam Nozari [Vice President].

her inspiration, leadership, and countless hours working on this project. I would also like to thank the Texas CLD executive board and many other individuals who contributed their time and energy.

We at Texas CLD are super excited that the 2019 annual CLD conference is coming to beautiful San Antonio! I am grateful for all members who have volunteered to help with local arrangements. Please contact me at [mdavis@tamusa.edu](mailto:mdavis@tamusa.edu) or Kristi Santi at [ksanti@central.uh.edu](mailto:ksanti@central.uh.edu) if you would like to get involved and lend a helping hand.

Also, nominations for Texas CLD board positions will be open soon. I hope you consider participating in our governance process.

Finally, please be sure to follow us on [our website](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

My best wishes!

**Mariya Davis,**  
President of Texas CLD

### Virginia CLD Announcements

The Virginia CLD annual symposium *Inclusive Practices for All* will be held at Old Dominion University on Saturday, April 27, 2019. The opening session will host a panel of experts from across the state speaking on their areas of expertise, including Dr. Leslie Daniel (autism spectrum disorder), Dr. Judith Fontana (specific learning disabilities), Dr. Robert Gable (emotional/behavioral disorders), Dr. Silvana Watson (attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder), Dr. Mira Williams (early childhood education), Dr. Margaret Weiss (co-teaching), and Dr. Craig Pinello (the state of special education). Over 50 presenters will participate in the 27 breakout sessions which will include topics such as technology, co-teaching and inclusion, vocabulary instruction, reading, early childhood education, and transition for students with disabilities. The symposium will conclude with a dessert bar! Register for the symposium at <https://vld2019.eventbrite.com>.

## Call for Manuscripts

Interested in writing for *LD Forum*? We are seeking submissions for our columns, including Research to Practice, 5 Ways To, Point/Counterpoint, and Current Issues in Review. For more information, see the author guidelines posted on the CLD website at <https://council-for-learning-disabilities.org/learning-disability-forum-council-learning-disabilities-newsletter>. *LD Forum* invites

articles from the full range of professionals who serve individuals with LD, including classroom teachers, graduate students, researchers, teacher preparation faculty, consultants, and others. For additional questions or to talk through potential topics, contact Dr. Apryl Poch, Editor, at [ldforumeditor@gmail.com](mailto:ldforumeditor@gmail.com).