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President's Message



Dear colleagues,

I am excited to share a few updates. As we continue to receive positive feedback from our 2020 virtual conference, Brenda Barrio, CLD vice president and conference chair, is working in collaboration with the Conference Planning Committee (CPC) to prepare for our 2021 conference. As noted in the call for proposals, we plan to have an in-person conference in sunny Las Vegas, Nevada, on October 14th and 15th. The CPC is continuing to closely monitor travel guidelines and will keep members abreast of any conference updates.

The Liaison Committee is also working diligently to advocate on behalf of individuals with learning disabilities. Liaison Committee chairs Roberta Strosnider and Debi Gartland represent CLD at the meetings of National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD). Most recently they supported the development of NJCLD priorities for the 117th U.S. Congress. The priorities will guide advocacy work during 2021. Once approved, NJCLD priorities will be shared on our CLD website.

In addition to conference planning and advocacy work, the Board of Trustees (BOT) continues to focus on CLD finances. For example, the Technology Committee recently completed a review of available conferencing and webinar software, including features and associated costs. The Technology Committee's work will result in cost savings when negotiating 2021 contracts. The Finance Committee is working to complete an internal financial audit. Beverly Weiser, treasurer and Finance Committee chair, is leading these efforts and will share results during our spring BOT meeting and through *LD Forum*.

Finally, as we focus on member recruitment and retention, I encourage you to share our CLD journals and social media accounts with colleagues to illustrate some of our member benefits. If you have not already done so, please consider liking our [Facebook page](#) and following our [Twitter account](#) to stay abreast of CLD happenings. Now is a great time to share CLD benefits with graduate students and welcome them to CLD. Here's to a productive new year!

Warm regards,
Brittany L. Hott, PhD, BCBA-D
2020–2021 CLD President

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Research Committee Issues Call for Applications for Outstanding Researcher Award

In an effort to promote and acknowledge research, the Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD) 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 they will present their 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 2021 International Conference on Learn-

ing Disabilities in Las Vegas, Nevada. 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, 2021, at 5:00 pm Eastern time.

Diversity Committee Updates

We would like to thank all of the members who presented and participated in the CLD 2020 conference Diversity Spotlight presentations and the efforts the CLD Conference Committee put in to make these sessions happen virtually during the global pandemic. The discussions and conversations during the conference and the presentations were valuable and inspiring for new projects. The members of the Diversity Committee have continued to stay active and work on supporting students with learning disabilities from diverse backgrounds

through the dissemination of research and practices. Currently, we have more than 20 active members. Our goals for 2021 are to continue the work begun and form new research teams. If you and/or others you know would like to join our committee and get involved in one of our teams, please feel free to contact me at yhsiao@wsu.edu. Happy 2021!

Yun-Ju Hsiao
Diversity Committee Chair

LD Forum Issues Call for Manuscripts

LD Forum is looking for manuscript submissions! Now is a great time to invite your colleagues and students to write for *LD Forum*. As many continue with virtual instruction, consider if you have anything that might benefit teachers during the pandemic or their teaching around current topics

(including anything you may have learned throughout the last several months) to support students with learning disabilities. Please contact Dr. Apryl Poch, editor (ldforumeditor@gmail.com or PochA1@duq.edu), with any questions regarding topics.

Chapter News

Texas CLD Announcements

The Texas Council for Learning Disabilities (TCLD) is pleased to report that two competitive research grants were recently announced for current TCLD members. These grants are designed to support action research in the classroom for PreK–12 teachers and doctoral student research. The grants are in the amount of \$750 each, and part of the grant monies will be allocated for conference attendance and presentation of research by recipients at the annual CLD conference. This effort is financially supported by the TCLD chapter as well as the national CLD chapter. We are very excited to support our current TCLD members to not only engage in research activities but also attend and present at the annual CLD conference.

Best wishes,
Randa G. Keeley
TCLD President

Virginia CLD Announcements

Happy New Year from the Virginia Council for Learning Disabilities (VCLD)! As educators, we are all trying to meet the needs of students and teachers through digital technology. While the situation is challenging, we at VCLD also have found it to be energizing. In a span of just 5 short months, VCLD enlisted the help of professionals from diverse disciplines who share our mission to provide professional development to educators throughout the state in the interest of enhancing the education of students with learning disabilities and learning differences.

In lieu of our traditional Spring Symposium in 2020, we collaborated with the Virginia Council for Exceptional Children on a series of four webinars that included over 700 attendees. Presenters at our *First Friday webinars* consisted of administrators from the Virginia Department of Educa-

tion; faculty from George Mason University, Marymount University, Old Dominion University, Radford University, University of Virginia, and Virginia Commonwealth University; pre-service teachers from Virginia Wesleyan University; and general and special education teachers from 10 school systems across the state. Every presenter, panelist, and facilitator *volunteered* their incredibly valuable time because they believed in our mission. In a year when we are often struggling just to make it through the week, the generosity of these remarkable individuals is extraordinary.

In 2021, VCLD will continue to provide free professional development to educators. A *First Friday* webinar was held February 5, 2021. Additionally, VCLD, **Decoding Dyslexia**, and the **Virginia Branch of the International Dyslexia Association** have co-founded a new organization, the *Virginia Joint Coalition of Learning Disabilities and Literacy*. The mission of the coalition is to broaden the scope of educational information with a more inclusive lens. Our goal is to target the literacy needs in the field with virtual, free professional development through sessions provided by experts within the member organizations. **Accessible Instructional Materials-VA** (AIM-VA) and the **Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center** also will be participating in the development of the webinars.

It is because of the ingenuity, perseverance, and resiliency of today's educators that we at VCLD have renewed hope for the coming year. The VCLD Board looks forward to continuing our work in the interest of students with learning disabilities and learning differences. We invite you to be a participant in our exciting journey.

Kindest regards,
Mindy Gumpert
VCLD President

Diversity Statement

The Council for Learning Disabilities is committed to celebrating and enriching the field of special education through its diversity. As a group, we pursue the best practices, research, and policies that exemplify enhancing the lives of individuals with learning disabilities, including those from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As a diverse group of professionals in the field of special education, we believe that this work cannot be completed in a silo, but rather, it must be embedded within every part of what we do. As an organization, we are committed to welcoming, understanding, learning about, and honoring individual diversity.