



# LLD Alumni Newsletter for Linguistics & TESOL

<http://linguistics.sjsu.edu/bin/view/Public/AlumniNetwork>

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College of Humanities and The Arts

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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Ben Colborn ('06)*



As we noted in the previous edition of the LLDA A newsletter, this edition is the first one to be published exclusively electronically.

Doing so enables us to eliminate the not insignificant costs of printing and mailing.

Because we are moving in the direction of maintaining member contact electronically, it is important for interested alumni to join the LLDA A Yahoo! Groups list. You can request membership from the group home page at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lldaa/> or by sending an email to me at [bcolborn@gmail.com](mailto:bcolborn@gmail.com).

As you will read elsewhere in the newsletter, the Northern Region CATESOL conference that was held on-campus this year was a great success. The LLDA A awarded five stipends to cover the cost of attending the conference. Four of the stipends were awarded to LLD graduate students and one to a student from CSU Sacramento. We would like to be able to offer stipends in future years to enable graduate

students to attend the local conference.

Which brings me to the topic of fundraising. One of the key activities of the LLDA A is to award a scholarship at the end of every academic year, but it is much easier to give money away than it is to bring it in. While we discuss fundraising at every LLDA A board meeting, the options to raise money adequate for the needs of the scholarship are rather limited. At this time, then, I would like to encourage you to make a donation to the organization. Any amount is gratefully accepted. If you would like to make a donation, please use the information noted in the sidebar.

I wish a happy holiday season to all of you and a well-deserved break to all of the teachers.

To make a donation to the LLDA A, please send a check to the following address:

LLD Active Alumni  
1688 Montalto Dr.  
Mountain View, CA 94040

Please note "LLDA A Recognition Event—3417090003" in the memo.

## A Fabulous CATESOL Conference at SJSU

The Northern Regional CATESOL Conference, held 8 November 2008 at SJSU, was a great success thanks to the outstanding direction of conference chair Sharmin Khan. Sponsored primarily by the LLD Department, Khan, a lecturer in the department, began planning over a year ago, and committees were organized last spring.

This year's conference, with the theme of *Opening Doors: Empowering Students* attracted 667 attendees, along with 53 publishers. There were over 58 different workshops and demonstrations to choose from in the student union and Clark Hall. Publishers' book exhibits filled the second floor of the student union, and there was even a performance by a jazz trio from the music department.

For many, the day's highlight was keynote speaker Andrew Lam, National Public Radio's commentator for "All Things Considered". His lecture, ***When Friday speaks, you can expect a brighter Saturday***, captivated the audience who filled Barret Ballroom. Compliments have been flooding in for Khan, who generously thanked the committees for making this event a great success.

–Valerie Basescu Kiadeh ('07)



Friends of LLDA, with alumns Diane Andrews ('90) & Cheryl McKenzie ('78)

### Summer Social 2008

Harn Soper (above, 2<sup>nd</sup> from left) and **Karen O'Neill ('78)** opened their Palo Alto garden for a social on Summer Solstice. Alums and friends gathered for potluck food, conversation, and summer sunshine.



L to R: Yuki Mitobe ('04), Cassie Piotrowski ('91), Marianne Walker Wheeler ('99), Haewon (Sunny) Yu ('05) enjoying the summer evening.

### Post –Conference Social

**Jennifer Kockelman** organized an informal social at the Agenda Lounge on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street after the SJSU Northern CATESOL conference on November 8, 2008. Half a dozen alums and friends gathered to network and socialize.

### Alumni News

**Cassie Piotrowski ('91)** and **Anne Campsey ('96)** gave a presentation at the Northern CATESOL conference held at SJSU, entitled "Using Wiki Technology to Develop Academic Writing." They have also been invited to present at the Denver TESOL conference on "Engaging and Motivating Writers with Wiki ePortfolios." Both alums currently teach for Studies in American Language at SJSU.

**Virak Chan ('08)** writes: *After I graduated from the MA TESOL program at San Jose State University (SJSU) in late May, I paid a short visit to my brother working in Japan on my way home from the U.S. I got back to the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) and started working as a lecturer in the Bachelor of Education (BEd) and Bachelor of Art (BA) program in early June. Then in early July I got a new position coordinating the MA TESOL program here at RUPP. Until now, I have been involved in restructuring and advertising the program, overseeing intensive courses conducted by visiting lecturers and professors, and processing and reporting student admission and graduation. In addition to working as a coordinator of the MA program, I am also training English teachers for Cambodian High Schools and teaching academic writing to RUPP undergraduate students. My experience in the MA program at SJSU has largely contributed to the effectiveness of the work I am doing*

*now. So I would really like to thank all the SJSU faculty especially those at the LLD department and all my classmates and friends in the MA TESOL program for the unforgettable social and academic experience there.*

**Ben Colborn ('06)** works for Citrix Systems, Inc., developing technical training for the company's networking hardware and software products and improving authoring and review processes. He was recently promoted to the position of Senior Courseware Developer.

**Pat Nichols ('72)** will publish a book *Voices of Our Ancestors: Language Contact in Early South Carolina*. A product of three decades of research, the book will be published by the University of South Carolina Press in January 2009. Pat will give several book talks in South Carolina in February and March, including one for the annual South Carolina Book Festival. Further details can be found on her website: [www.patriciacauseynichols.com](http://www.patriciacauseynichols.com)

**Haewon (Sunny) Yu ('05)** is currently working as an instructor and a project assistant at SAL, teaching one core class and 2 elective courses and usually working with lower-level students. Her at SAL projects have included the Conversation Club, Language Exchange, and a volunteer class. In Summer 2008 she coordinated a teacher training program, Teaching English in English (TEE), for 30 English teachers from Korea.

**Carol Wilson ('83)** writes:

*I'm Carol Wilson, the current vice-president of LLDA. I finished my MA at SJS in 1983; I originally started working on a master's in English, but after taking classes from Dr. Lamendella and Dr. Ohala, classes I found far more interesting than my English classes, I switched to Linguistics. I took a master's in linguistic theory rather than TESL because I preferred that selection of classes. The choice worked out well for me. I was on the part-time circuit for a few years teaching both developmental English and ESL. Initially I thought I needed to focus on one discipline or the other, but it turned out to be a perfect background for a position at Mission College that was designated 50% English and 50% ESL. It was a tough job: trying to bridge two departments that didn't completely trust one another. Eventually, I moved into a full-time English position, but fully 60% of our English students use English as their second language, so my ESL background is really useful. I'll retire in 2 ½ years, but I'll always teach at least one class: I'm still loving it although a little less late-night paper-grading will be fine with me.*

**[job opportunity]** Mission is in a financial crisis, but we do have Basic Skills Initiative funding for ESL tutoring. Anyone who is interested in a tutoring position at Mission College should contact [myo\\_myint@wvm.edu](mailto:myo_myint@wvm.edu) or call him at (408)855-5316.

**Cheryl McKenzie ('78)**, who writes under the name of C. Lee McKenzie, will have a young adult novel published in March 2009. *Sliding on the Edge*, tackles the topics of “cutting” and suicide, phenomena that are on the rise in high schools and universities. “When I read news articles reporting frequent self-injury among teens and young adults, I had to write about it—probably to ease the feeling of helplessness.” Her website gives details about this book: [www.cleemckenziebooks.com](http://www.cleemckenziebooks.com)

**Andrea Withers ('03)** gives some insight into how “No Child Left Behind” affects her as a 4<sup>th</sup>-grade teacher at Fammatre Elementary in the Cambrian School District in SJ:

*I absolutely love the “No Child Left Behind Law.” Oh, yeah, it's just great. I don't even have to teach P.E. or music or art because the only two subjects on the fourth grade STAR (Standardized Testing and Reporting) at the end of the year are language arts and math. Isn't that fantastic? I can just give my kids worksheet after worksheet of state testing material for language and math and call that “teaching.” Why should I take my class on field trips or provide creative learning activities when, as a teacher, as a school, and as a district, we are graded on our kids' language and math scores? Nah. I'll just teach to that test all year. Who knows if my students actually understand the concept, but as long as they can fill in the right bubble, I'm content. And I'll focus only on the kids who are struggling because maybe I can get their*

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*scores up, which will make me look good and will make my principal happy. But I won't help the kids who already get it. Those advanced learners can just silent read or something because they will do fine on the test. So let's see, next week I'll give a pre-test, then I'll give some worksheets, and finally I'll stuff a post-test down their throats and then we'll just repeat all of that ad nauseum! Won't your child love not being left behind at school?*

*Of course, I don't actually feel that any of the above are best-practices for teaching, so I don't teach that way. Fortunately, the district where I teach is a high-scoring district and hasn't felt the need to cut out music, P.E., or art from our curriculum. In my classroom, science and social studies are still a part of our weekly curriculum. And we have fun in our creative learning environment. But even in such a great district, we are constantly focused on testing. With this law in place, how could we focus on anything else?*

**Amy Tan ('74)** wrote the libretto for an opera based on her 2001 novel *The Bonesetter's Daughter*. In September 2008 the opera had its premiere at the San Francisco Opera House. Tan was interviewed on the PBS Newshour on September 25.

B. Kumaravadivelu, professor of linguistics and language development, has received the 28th annual Kenneth W. Mildenerger Prize from the Modern Language Association of America for his book, *Cultural Globalization and Language Education*. The prize is awarded annually for an outstanding work in the fields of language, culture, literacy, or literature with strong application to the teaching of languages other than English.

**In Memorium**

Carol Justus, who coordinated the Linguistics Program at SJSU from 1989-1994, died on August 1, 2007. She later taught at the University of Texas-Austin for thirteen years.

**Executive Board  
LLD Active Alumni  
2008-2009**

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Jennifer Kockelman

**Susan Nolan Meek ('99)** donated this logo to LLDA. It appears on a number of items for sale online at <http://www.cafeshops.com/lldaa>. A percentage of the profits from the notecards, coffee mugs, sweatshirts, etc., go to LLDA.



### Upcoming local Conference and Institute

The Linguistics Society of America (LSA) will hold its annual meeting 8-11 January 2009 in San Francisco at the Hilton San Francisco. For details, see the LSA website, <http://www.lsadc.org>.

The 2009 Linguistics Institute will be held at UC-Berkeley with the theme "Linguistic Structures and Language Ecologies" from 6 July through 13 August. For details, see the Institute website, <http://lsa2009.berkeley.edu/>.