

Project nurtures local teacher/student writers

by Shane Arman - Friday, November 28, 2008

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/1509/project-nurtures-local-teacher-student-writers/>

The Fox Valley Writing Project (FVWP) will begin a new chapter Jan. 1, 2009, when Patricia Scanlan takes over as director of the project that helps teachers and students improve their writing.

FVWP is an affiliate of the National Writing Project (NWP) and connects area teachers with Oshkosh's College of Education and Human Services to share teaching strategies through workshops and engage young writers in camps.

Scanlan, an associate reading education professor, said FVWP focuses on the growth of teachers, which, in turn, benefits their students.

"The writing project really is focused on developing teachers as reflective practitioners, to help teachers focus their work on inquiry and to improve themselves through professional development opportunities," Scanlan said.

One of the central developmental pieces of the program is the annual Summer Institute held from mid-June to mid-July at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. The three-week institute is a professional and personal growth opportunity for teachers interested in using writing to promote learning.

"Participants have a chance to think more about their teaching and to think about other people's teaching and how that might improve their own practice," Scanlan said.

About 20 people are selected for the institute from a pool of applicants who must provide a letter of support from an administrator and partake in an interview. Tuition, books and supplies are provided for all participants upon acceptance, thanks to 22-consecutive annual grants from the NWP, including a \$43,000 grant in 2008.

The 2009 FVWP Summer Institute will be held June 15 to July 10. Applications and supporting materials should be turned in by Feb. 16, 2009. For more information, visit <http://fvwp.uwosh.edu/institute/index.htm>.

Those who participate in the Summer Institute can help coordinate the Young Writers Camp, which is offered to students entering grades six through 10 who have a specific interest in writing.

"Our students at the Young Writers Camp often come to us because they have been involved in other writers camps in the past or by recommendation by teachers," Scanlan said.

The two-week camp, held four days per week in August, allows students to practice their writing while interacting with other writing students. The schedule includes writing skills development, writing and revising time and opportunities for sharing and conferencing, according to the FVWP Web site.

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Works from the camp are published in an anthology, which is sent to all participants, who also have the option of joining the Young Writers' Blog.

For more information about the Young Writers' Camps, visit <http://fvwp.uwosh.edu/youngwriter/index.htm>.