

Symposium Speakers by Topic

Learning Styles and Multiple Intelligences

Janet Willis, M.Ed.

Ms. Janet Willis is currently a doctoral candidate in Texas A&M University's (College Station) Curriculum & Instruction Education program graduating in December 2011. Her research interests include:

- Urban Education
- Special Education
- Multicultural Education

for training and mentoring teachers dealing with diversity in today's urban classrooms. She is currently working on her dissertation titled "Elementary Special Education Teachers Cultural Awareness & Beliefs Regarding African American Learners In One Urban School District." She has conducted many staff developments in Houston ISD and she has presented papers at various regional and national conferences. Ms. Willis works as a special education consultant.

Rashard Pennie, M.A.

Rashard Pennie has earned a BA in Political Science from Texas State University-San Marcos and an MA in History from Texas Southern University. She is a fitness professional whose writing has been published in the Houston Chronicle.

Teaching Special Needs Students in Higher Education

Mamta Verma, M.Ed.

Mamta Verma has a M. Ed in Educational Administration from Texas Southern University, Post Graduate Certificate in Transition Special Education from George Washington University, M.Ed. in Curriculum Development, and Post Graduate Diploma in Guidance and Counseling from Annamalai University, India. She is Texas certified in Administration, Special Education, English as a Second Language, English Language Arts and Reading, and Generalist.

Mamta Verma is an educator with 20 years of experience, working with students with general education and special needs in K-12 settings in India and USA. During her educational career, her main thrust has been on how to develop effective curriculum and classroom strategies, which enhance students' academic level and resulted in post-secondary success.

Mamta Verma is working as a Transition/ Vocational District Lead in North Forest ISD, Houston, TX. She has worked extensively with children of all ages in the special education settings, and her main emphasis remains on developing effective self-determination frameworks and strategies for educators and students. She has developed many transition programs in her school district which resulted in a huge success for improving post-secondary outcomes of students with special needs. She has presented at various conferences at regional and state level to increase awareness in improving post-secondary outcomes.

Symposium Speakers by Topic

Iva B. Ward, M.Ed.

Presently educating children in the North Forest Independent School District
Formerly educated children in the Houston Independent School District/ Community Education Partners
Received the Golden Apple Award
Was one of the Who's Who of America Education 4th Edition
Served on the City of Houston Health Department & Human Service Infant Mortality Task Force
Educated in the Houston Independent School District School System
Received Bachelor's of Elementary Education at Texas southern University
Master's of Education/Mid-Management at Prairie View University
Presently working on a Doctoral degree
Presenter, motivation speaker, and teacher trainer across the city and state
Participant of Harvard's Principal Center Summer Institute
Guest Lecture Texas Southern University
Bay Area Houston Alumnae /Chapter of Delta Sigma Sorority, Incorporated Community Service Award Honoree
Worker of the Year BM & E State Convention
NWOA 1st South Central Regional Director for Junior Achievers

Teaching Strategies

Diane Bailey, B.S.

Mrs. Dianne Bailey was born in Liberty, Texas and graduated from Hull-Daisetta High School. Upon completion of high school she attended Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas and Prairie View A&M University in Prairie View, Texas where she earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Home Economics with Certificates in Elementary General, Elementary Homemaking, Vocational Homemaking and Kindergarten. In addition, Mrs. Bailey also has a Dyslexia Certificate from Region 4.

Her teaching experience has been Elementary through High School for the last thirty two years. During those years she served in many capacities such as Skills Reading Specialist, Alternative Certification Program Teacher Supervisor, Team Leader, UIL Spelling and Dictionary Coach, Curriculum Writing, District Advisory, Campus Site Base, Minority Recruitment Committee, Student Teacher, Cheerleader and Drill Team Sponsor, Team Leader and Destination Imagination Coach. Mrs. Bailey is now retired, but continues to work in some form in the realm of Education.

Brenda Meloncon, Ph.D

Brenda Meloncon, Ph.D., SLP, is an educator with more than 30 years of experiences working with children and training adults to work with children who have special needs. Her commitment to the children she serves led her to pursue pedagogical methods and strategies necessary to develop emotional and cognitive skills for a strong literacy foundation.

Symposium Speakers by Topic

Dr. Meloncon has worked in Texas public school districts teaching and providing therapy to children, and organizing summer camps. She has served children with a wide range of delays and disorders in public schools and clinical settings. In addition to working with children, Dr. Meloncon has also taught adult education courses at Houston Community College. She also conducts in-services and other continuing education to faculty and support staff. She has presented on pedagogical strategies to educators around the United States at in-services, seminars, and state and national conventions. Dr. Meloncon published in the National Forum of Multicultural Issues Journal.

Dr. Meloncon is a licensed Speech Language Pathologist and has obtained special education and Administrator certifications from the Texas State Board of Education. She received her Ph. D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Texas A&M University in College Station, TX. She is also the CEO of Meloncon Consulting, LLC, a firm that provides consulting services and workshops for educators who work with underserved populations.

Classroom Management

Shantuan Coleman, Ph.D

Dr. Shantuan Coleman is currently a professor at Lone Star College, Houston Community College, Grand Canyon University and Argosy University. Previously she was the Director of MSI CyberInfrastructure Empowerment Coalition (MSI-CIEC) of the Center for Computational Sciences housed in the College of Sciences and Technology at the University of Houston Downtown (UHD). Prior to UHD she held dual responsibilities as Associate Director of Academic Development and Assistant Director of the Texas A&M University System Louis Stokes Alliance of Minority Participation in the Dwight Look College of Engineering at Texas A&M University (TAMU). Before TAMU, she was a Engineering Manager for the NASA where she assessed the International Space Station (ISS) Electrical Power systems risks in support of Human Exploration. She was responsible for independent engineering assessments and analyses of ISS Electrical Power System designs and development.

Coleman is also the Vice President and Creative Director for Coleman One Media Group. Coleman One Media Group is a company specializing in talent management, corporate & domestic event planning, media development of magazines, products and services. In addition, she is the owner of Coleman One Stilettos and More. Dr. Coleman also is a member and officer of several organizations which include Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. – Bay Area Houston Alumnae Chapter, Conference of Minority Public Administrators (COMPA) – Past National President, Board of Directors Jossey Hands Inc., Board of Directors Daniel Jarvis Home Health Agency, National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) – Lifetime Member, and Region 5 Advisory Board member. She is a member of Silverlake Church where she teaches Sunday school and Children’s Church for 9-12 year olds, and is also a member of the MSTP committee.

Symposium Speakers by Topic

Her philosophy is existentialism where she believes a personal interpretation of the world. Her strength is in her self-confidence and emotional maturity. In her leisure time she enjoys air hockey, event planning, horseback riding, creating youth programs, boxer training, watching basketball, decorating, reading books, working in the Youth Ministry and playing Wii. She is currently single living in Houston.

Her favorite quote: "Ordinary people can do extraordinary things!" Barack Obama

Patrick Gilbert, M.S.

Patrick has been an educator for the past five years. During that time he has worked as a substitute teacher in Navasota ISD, Pearland ISD and Waller ISD. In addition to substitute teaching, Patrick serves as a part-time instructor for Blinn College and also as an adjunct instructor for the Lone Star College System.

Mr. Gilbert holds an A.A. from Blinn College, a B.A. in Political Science from Prairie View A&M University and an M.S. in Education from Capella University. Furthermore, he has completed post-graduate study in Political Science at the University of Houston and is currently a doctoral student at William Howard Taft University.

Patrick is the owner of Gilbert Mediation Service which works to settle disputes outside of the court system.