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**To:** <CHARACTER\_EDUCATION\_NETWORK@EMAIL.RUTGERS.EDU>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 28, 2008 1:13 PM  
**Subject:** CHARACTER\_EDUCATION\_NETWORK Online -2007 Vol. #10

## CHARACTER\_EDUCATION\_NETWORK Online Mail List Vol. #10 (February 2008)

Welcome to the **CHARACTER\_EDUCATION\_NETWORK** online mail list. Your name has been added to this list as a result of your completing the New Jersey Department of Education Character Education Network Online Listserv Form or because you have indicated an interest in receiving updates on character education efforts in New Jersey.

The purpose of **The Network** is to encourage the adoption of character education programs and strategies by providing a forum for sharing information, research and promising practices. Through the Center for Social and Character Development at Rutgers University (CSCD@RU), **The Network** will offer educators access to national and state character education experts and programs through conferences, workshops, and e-mails.

**The Network** will be bringing you **news** from the national, state and local levels; **best practices**, including updates from our New Jersey Local Education Area (LEA) Partner demonstration sites; announcements of **events, conferences, workshops**; and **professional development opportunities** throughout the state and at the national level; grant and **funding opportunities**; **program and assessment resources** and links to other character education **websites**.

A link to the Center for Social and Character Development website ([www.rucharacter.org](http://www.rucharacter.org)) will lead you to current **articles** and **research** from the field as well as materials and large documents which you can download for use in your classroom.

The Center for Social and Character Development at Rutgers University operates in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Education under a contract with Rutgers, The State University, Center for Applied Psychology. This project is funded under Title V, Part D, Subpart 3, Sec. 5431 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the New Jersey Department of Education. No official endorsement by the New Jersey Department of Education of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise mentioned herein is intended or should be inferred.

### In this issue:

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- **Research in Character Education Supports Data-driven Educators**

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FROM THE CSCD DIRECTOR

As we were preparing to send out this issue of **The Network**, we received the good news from the Character Education Partnership that three New Jersey schools and one school district are among the 25 national Finalists in the National Schools of Character awards program (see Character Education News for more on the state level school of character program). Our hearty congratulations go to Brigantine Elementary School, Lore Elementary School, Rosa International Middle School and the Hamilton Township School District for being selected as national Finalists. Each school will receive a site visit from CEP and we wish them well in this final stage of the process to determine the ten National Schools/Districts of Character.

I want to draw your attention to a recent article in the New York Times Sunday Magazine of January 13, 2008 by Harvard psychologist Steven Pinker entitled “The Moral Sense.” Pinker reviews the evidence from the social and biological sciences that morality is indeed a distinctive part of our evolutionary history as human beings. This heritage shows up in five universal themes:

1. We know it is bad to harm others and good to help them;
2. We have a sense of fairness and reciprocity;
3. We value loyalty to a group, sharing and conformance to its norms;
4. We believe it is right to defer to legitimate authorities and respect people with status;
5. We value purity and sanctity and loath defilement.

There are accompanying moral emotions, including sympathy, anger, guilt, and gratitude that guide us in our reactions to these themes in the face of human behavior.

While this is generally good news for social and character educators, the evidence from science and history tells us that in action the moral sense is complex, and simply asserting a moral theme or virtue as the basis for our decisions is not sufficient ground to stand on. Both Hitler and Gandhi believed their actions were moral and true to their principles.

We are guided in our interpretation of human events and specific circumstances by our cultural context and often by our tendency to rationalize moral principles in pursuit of our self-interest. Whether the issue is addressing teen pregnancy through abstinence only curricula, the torturing of enemy combatants, or limiting student freedom in order to prevent violence in our schools, we face moral dilemmas continually in our curricular choices, our pedagogy, our conduct policies, and how we organize to educate.

Our students and parents and, indeed the whole community, are watching as we struggle as educators in systems that often work against our goal to develop young people of character, and in a society that teaches us all to align our moralizations with our preferable lifestyle choices instead of altruistic behaviors. How can we persist in the face of this complexity and what sometimes seem to be insurmountable odds?

The research on mirror neurons suggests that we also have an inborn capacity for empathy, for developing the interchangeability of perspectives exemplified by the various cultural formulations of the Golden Rule. And this may point us in a direction that supports our efforts to create caring school cultures – the optimistic proposal that our moral sense can help us in defining a path for administrators and teachers to travel on that generalizes our sense of positive development to the circle of humanity we call school. To quote Steven Pinker, “Moral goodness is what gives each of us the sense that we are worthy human beings.” It is what we seek in our friends and colleagues, and what we at the Center for Social and Character Development see in the members of this network when we see you at work.

Philip M. Brown, Ph.D.

Director

(The link to the New York Times article is: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9804EFDBIF3CF930A25752C0A96E9C8B63&scp=2&sq=the+moral+instinct&st=nyt>.)

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## CHARACTER EDUCATION NEWS

- ***New Jersey Leads the Nation in SSOC Applications***

New Jersey's record-breaking participation in the State Schools of Character award program recently made news on the homepage of Character Education Partnership's (CEP) website. This year, New Jersey leads the nation with 25 applications submitted to the Center for Social and Character Development at Rutgers University (CSCD @ RU). This is nearly twice as many applications as any other state, and a 47% increase in applicants over the last years NJSOC program.

The following schools/districts participated in this year's 2008 New Jersey Schools of Character Awards Program:

Avenel Street School, Avenel  
 Bartle Elementary School, Highland Park  
 Brigantine Elementary School, Brigantine  
 Colonia High School, Colonia  
 Franklin Avenue Middle School, Franklin Lakes  
 Hamilton Township School District, Hamilton  
 Ho-Ho-Kus Public School, Ho-Ho-Kus  
 Holly Glen Elementary School, Williamstown  
 Horace Mann Elementary School, Cherry Hill  
 John Y. Dater School, Ramsey  
 Lake Riviera Middle School, Brick  
 Lawrence Intermediate School, Lawrenceville  
 Lawrenceville Elementary School, Lawrenceville  
 Liberty Corner School, Liberty Corner  
 Livingston Park, North Brunswick  
 Lore Elementary School, Ewing  
 Pennsauken Campus of Camden County Technical Schools, Pennsauken  
 Robert R. Lazar Middle School, Montville  
 Rosa International Middle School, Cherry Hill  
 Sayreville Middle School, Parlin  
 St. Philip's Academy, Newark  
 TEAM Academy Charter School, Newark  
 Upper Freehold Regional School District, Allentown  
 Woodcrest Elementary School, Cherry Hill  
 Veterans Memorial Elementary School, Brick

This year's NJSOC winners will be announced and all participating schools will be recognized at the 2008 NJ Schools of Character Award Ceremony in June 2008.

- ***New Statewide Professional Association Taking Shape***

As many Network readers know, an ad hoc group of educators has been meeting since last May to form a new statewide organization devoted to supporting our work. Provisionally entitled

the “Alliance for Social-Emotional and Character Development,” the organizing group as expanded to more than 40 professionals. CSCD@RU has provided technical assistance in bringing the interested parties to the table to work on forming the organization, with help from the NJ Department of Education, Office of Educational Support Services. The Educational Information Resource Center (EIRC) in Sewell, NJ has agreed to serve as the administrative umbrella for the Alliance, which will be an independent organization welcoming educators, parents and other community members to support social-emotional and character education work in New Jersey schools and communities.

The two statewide conferences described below under Professional Development will be the official launching activities of the new Alliance, and we will be featuring additional specific information about these events when the conference announcement is finalized within the coming weeks.

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Save the Date! - 2008 Regional Conferences Scheduled for May 2008**  
*Leading for the Future: Best Practices in Character Education – The inaugural events of the new Alliance for Social-Emotional and Character Development – the new statewide association.*

Sponsored by Radix Elementary School, 2007 National School of Character with support from the Center for Social and Character Development at Rutgers University, and the Educational Information and Resource Center

### Southern Regional Conference

DATE: May 16, 2008

LOCATION: Educational Information and Resource Center (EIRC), Sewell, NJ

### Northern/Central Regional Conference

DATE: May 27, 2008

LOCATION: Rutgers University, Busch Student Center, Piscataway, NJ

More details, including conference registration information will follow shortly in a Character Education Network Alert.

- *Improving Outcomes for Youth*  
*County Forums: Better Use of Data*  
*The Rutgers Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Project*

8:30am to 3:00pm

LAST SESSION: March 4, 2008 - Bergen & Passaic Counties

Marriott at Glenpointe, 100 Frank W Burr Boulevard

Teaneck, NJ

The Rutgers SDFSC Project is offering county forums designed to help professionals provide enhanced services for youth through the Better Use of Data. The overall theme of these forums is to highlight the link between the effective use of data and fostering high quality programs. Participants attending these forums will receive tips on how to effectively use data, have access to additional data sources, and make connections to others who are using data.

Other Scheduled SDFSC Workshops include:

Evaluating the Comprehensive Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug (ATOD) Abuse Program for Results

April 11, 2008 South Region  
 April 16, 2008 North Region  
 April 18, 2008 Central Region

**Planning and Implementing a Comprehensive Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug (ATOD) Abuse Prevention Program**

May 21, 2008 South Region  
 May 28, 2008 North Region  
 May 30, 2008 Central Region

**Effective Collaborations with Parents and Community Members and Organizations**  
 April 4, 2008 South Region

**Reviewing Your District's Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy**  
 Dates TBD in conjunction with County Offices

For more details, visit the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Project website at: <http://sdfsc.rutgers.edu/>, or contact the SDFSC Project at: telephone: 732.445.6173. or [sfdsc@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:sfdsc@rci.rutgers.edu).

- *Responsive Classroom One-Day Workshop*  
*Friday, March 14th, 2008*  
*Sheraton Crossroads*  
*1 International Blvd, Rt 17 North*  
*Mahwah, NJ 07495*

INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW

Through discussion and lively interaction, workshop participants can learn how the Responsive Classroom approach boosts children's social and academic skills while reducing behavior problems. Workshop participants will:

- Participate in Morning Meeting
- Explore foundational ideas
- See practices in action
- Investigate the Responsive Classroom approach to discipline
- Gather practical tips to try in your classroom right away

For more information, visit the Responsive Classroom website at:

<http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/prodevelop/onedaydates.html>

- *The Center for the 4th & 5th Rs' (Respect & Responsibility)*  
*14<sup>th</sup> Summer Institute in Character Education: "Smart & Good Schools: Helping Your Students Do Their Best Work and Do the Right Thing"*  
*June 30 - July 2, 2008*

The Summer Institute schedule includes:

Monday: Smart and Good High Schools or Character Matters  
 Tuesday: Smart & Good High Schools or Developing Character for Classroom Success  
 Wednesday: Lessons From the Classroom: 20 Things Good Teachers Do

The registration deadline is June 16, 2008. New Location for the Summer Institute is: Sperry Center at the State University of New York College at Cortland. For more details, visit: [www.cortland.edu/character/institutes.asp](http://www.cortland.edu/character/institutes.asp), or contact the Center for more information: E-mail: [character@cortland.edu](mailto:character@cortland.edu) or Ph. (607) 753-2455.

- The Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Center for Community of Caring is proud to announce these upcoming events:  
*24th Annual Community of Caring K-12 National Character Education Conference:  
 "Fueled By Character"*  
*July 28-30, 2008*  
*Salt Lake City, Utah*  
 and  
*Annual Youth Leadership Summit*  
*June 10-12, 2008*  
*Salt Lake City, Utah*  
 For additional information, please feel free to contact Ariana Prazen, Program Manager at the Center for Community of Caring at (801) 587-3432, or visit the website at:  
[www.communityofcaring.org](http://www.communityofcaring.org) .

## NATIONAL CHARACTER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

- *Share Your Promising Practices*  
*Character Education Partnership - Promising Practices Award Program*  
*Deadline: March 15, 2008*  
 As part of the National Schools of Character® awards program, the Character Education Partnership (CEP) gives **Promising Practices** awards to schools and districts in the United States and elsewhere for implementing *unique* and *specific* strategies in character education. CEP showcases the selected practices in its annual National Schools of Character (NSOC) publication and on the CEP website and honors the schools and districts at the annual CEP National Forum on Character Education. Award recipients receive a certificate in recognition of their work and a copy of the NSOC publication.  
  
 If your school or district has developed and successfully implemented a *unique* practice, we encourage you to apply for a Promising Practices award. [Click here](#) for guidelines and more information.
- *American Stars of Teaching Award*  
*Nominations Sought for Federal Teacher Award*  
 Nominations are now being accepted for the American Stars of Teaching award. Now in its fifth year, the award, which is designed to honor America's teachers, is sponsored by the United States Department of Education.

American Stars of Teaching recognizes one classroom teacher in each state and the District of Columbia who are representative of the teachers across the country to employ innovative and effective instructional approaches to improve the academic outcomes of students in their classrooms. Winners will be announced this fall 2008.

The nomination deadline is March 31, 2008. For more information about the program, visit the following website: <http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html>. Nomination forms are available from the following link: <http://www.t2tweb.us/AmStar/About.asp>

## CHARACTER IN ACTION

- *"What Makes A Family Strong..."*  
*2009 Calendar Art Contest*

Sponsored by the Department of Children and Families' New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect and the New Jersey PTA.

DEADLINE: All entries must be submitted by April 8, 2008

Students are invited to use their creative talents to illustrate this year's theme: "What Makes a Family Strong. . ." Children are encouraged to illustrate this theme with anything they think is important for a safe, happy, and secure childhood. Drawings can depict physical, social and emotional needs, such as a safe neighborhood, a good school and a loving family. Thousands of copies of this colorful calendar are distributed throughout New Jersey to help promote positive parenting and raise awareness of the problem of child abuse and neglect.

By entering this contest, students have an opportunity to have their artwork displayed in the 2009 calendar. The Grand Prize winners will win a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond. In addition to being featured in the calendar, winning entries will be displayed throughout the state during 2009.

For more information, please contact Glenna Gundell at 732-463-1431.

- *2008 Constitutional Academy*  
*A Five-day Residential Program for High School Students*  
*July 13-19 / July 20-26*  
*Washington, D.C.*

The Constitutional Academy, sponsored by The Bill of Rights Institute, offers high school students the challenge of college-level instruction before leaving high school. Students attending the 2008 Constitutional Academy will discuss contemporary issues with peers, work with historical documents at the National Archives, visit sites of historical and constitutional significance local to Washington, D.C., build new friendships with other like-minded high school students, and receive three college credits.

Thirty outstanding high school juniors and seniors will be selected for each program week in this college-level, residential program. At least ten full scholarships and many partial scholarships are available for qualified students. For more information, visit The Bill of Rights Institute's website at: [www.BillofRightsInstitute.org/Academy](http://www.BillofRightsInstitute.org/Academy).

## GRANTS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- *HEADS UP Sprint Ahead for Education*  
*Character Education Grant Program*

Deadline: April 15, 2008

The Sprint Ahead for Education grant program will accept applications for Character Education programs that promote youth leadership, youth volunteerism, school pride and a positive school culture. The purpose of these grants is to fund the purchase of resource materials, supplies, equipment and software that facilitates and encourages character education among K-12 students.

District level grants are available for programs ranging from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

School level grants are available for programs ranging from \$500-\$5,000.

Eligibility: Open to all U.S. public schools (K-12) and U.S. public school districts.

Applications will be accepted electronically only from March 3 to midnight, April 15, 2008. For more information, visit the Sprint website at:

<http://www.sprint.com/citizenship/education/sprintahead/> or contact [education@sprint.com](mailto:education@sprint.com) with your questions.

- *Jordan Fundamentals Grant Programs*

- Inspiration Grants

- Deadline: March 30, 2008

- Maximum Award: \$10,000

- Innovation Grants

- Deadline: March 30, 2008

- Maximum Award: \$10,000 +

- Program Objectives & Content

- Applicants must develop and implement an educational approach that supports improved student **academic achievement** and/or **social / emotional / behavioral interventions** through student engagement, student teacher relationships, and/or building the capacity of teachers. Applicants are encouraged to involve students in the development of this plan or unit. Student involvement in the proposal design is encouraged.

- Innovation Grants

- A minimum of 200 small grants, averaging \$2500, awarded to individual teachers, to support the development of more effective approaches or more effective implementation of traditional strategies to engage students and foster improved outcomes.

- Each year, a significant number of projects will be funded as "Innovation Grants" with individual teacher approaches that attempt to engage students in school using either experimental or traditional strategies effectively.

- Inspiration Grants

- Medium-sized grants, averaging \$10,000, may be awarded to teams of teachers to support scaling-up the implementation of approaches, originally developed with Innovation Grants.

- Requests larger than \$10,000 for Innovation Grants will be considered if the proposal scope is appropriately in alignment with the requested amount.

- Eligibility:

- Applicants must be public school teachers or paraprofessionals working with students in grades 1 through 12. Jordan Fundamentals will consider grants in all 50 States and the District of Columbia

For more information, visit the website at:

<http://www.nike.com/jumpman23/features/fundamentals/guidelines.html>.

- *Teaching Tolerance Grant Program*

- Application Deadline: Rolling

- Award: \$500-\$2,500

- Teaching Tolerance is offering grants to prekindergarten-12<sup>th</sup> grade classroom teachers who are planning to implement programs/projects that will improve intergroup relations, reduce prejudice amongst students, and/or encourage professional development in these areas. For more information please visit: <http://www.tolerance.org/teach/grants/guide.jsp>.

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## WEBSITE NEWS, RESOURCES AND RESEARCH

- *The Journal of Research in Character Education* (JRCE)

- Keeping up with the latest research in Character Education gets easier when you subscribe to the JRCE, the Character Education Partnership's research journal. The Journal includes a wide range of material centered on research in character education, including: peer-reviewed journal articles, case studies, book reviews, and VOICES (a practitioner's column). [Click here](#) to read this sample case study: *CROSSROADS, Where Community Meets Character in the Pursuit of Academic*

*Excellence*, JoAnne Ferrara, Manhattanville College and Eileen Santiago, Thomas A. Edison School.

For more information on the Journal of Research in Character Education, or to subscribe, please visit: <http://www.character.org/site/c.ipIJKTOEJsG/b.3751649/>.

- ***Major New Study by UVa Researchers***

- ***\$2.9 million U.S. Department of Education grant***

Dr. Sara Rimm-Kauffman and colleagues just began a three-year study of the Responsive Classroom approach with a special emphasis on math teaching and learning. To read more about it, visit Responsive Classroom at:

<http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/research.html>.

- ***Short Scenes from Popular Movies***

- **Film Clips for Character Education**

Film Clips Spirit of America, a nonprofit foundation, provides *Short Scenes from Popular Movies* with standards-based study guides for use by educators as discussion starters and teaching resources focusing on K-12 Character Education with cross-curriculum applications in Social Studies, Language Arts, History and Civics.

8 DVD episodes feature themes such as Honesty, Cooperation, Respect, Perseverance, Sportsmanship, Bullying Prevention, Citizenship, etc. from movies such as *Shrek*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Spiderman*, *Batman*, *Bridge to Terabithia*, *Akeelah and the Bee*, *Drumline*, *Remember the Titans*, *Star Trek*, *Coach Carter*, *Dead Poets Society*, *Forrest Gump*, etc.

For more information, contact:

Film Clips

4903 Island View St.

Channel Islands Harbor, CA 93035

Phone: (805) 984-5907

Fax: (805) 984-2397

Email: [info@filmclipsonline.com](mailto:info@filmclipsonline.com)

URL: <http://www.filmclipsonline.com/>

- ***The Greening Book: Being a Friend to Planet Earth***

- ***Watering Can Press***

Watering Can Press has recently released another character building book, entitled The Greening Book: Being a Friend to Planet Earth. The book helps students understand the importance of proper care for the planet, and learn respect for the resources it provides. The book provides interactive opportunities for students, encouraging them to journal and “write their own story”. For information on ordering this book e-mail [info@wateringcanpress.com](mailto:info@wateringcanpress.com) or call 212-243-3727. Or for more information on this book please visit:

<http://www.wateringcanpress.com/html/greeningbook.html>.