



# WorldGifted

Newsletter of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children  
[www.wcgtc.org](http://www.wcgtc.org)

## THE WORLD CONFERENCE RETURNS TO ITS ROOTS



*Kenilworth Castle*

Penny Mortimer  
2007 World Conference Project  
Manager

August is fast approaching and, with it, the 2007 World Conference. The combination of a varied and challenging academic program, together with an exciting social program focused around Shakespeare country in the heart of England, should result in an event that is not to be missed.

Whilst preparations are underway for this summer's event, it is interesting to reflect on the organization's history,

as the very first World Conference on Gifted Children was held in London, England in 1975. Our gathering this summer in England, then, will in some respects see the organization returning to its roots. We're delighted that so far more than 600 abstract submissions have been received from people in over 45 countries. This will be a truly global event.

The overarching theme for the conference is the way in which different cultures create different conceptions of giftedness and talent, which in turn feed into differing policies and practices. Please see the website <http://www.worldgifted2007.com> for a complete list of the main themes and lead speaker biographies.

### **Please note the following:**

- By **Monday, April 30**, all speakers must be registered to be included in the program.
- The social program is now posted on the conference website at [http://www.worldgifted2007.com/documents/social\\_programme.pdf](http://www.worldgifted2007.com/documents/social_programme.pdf).

**See also** page 3: Visit to Warwick



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

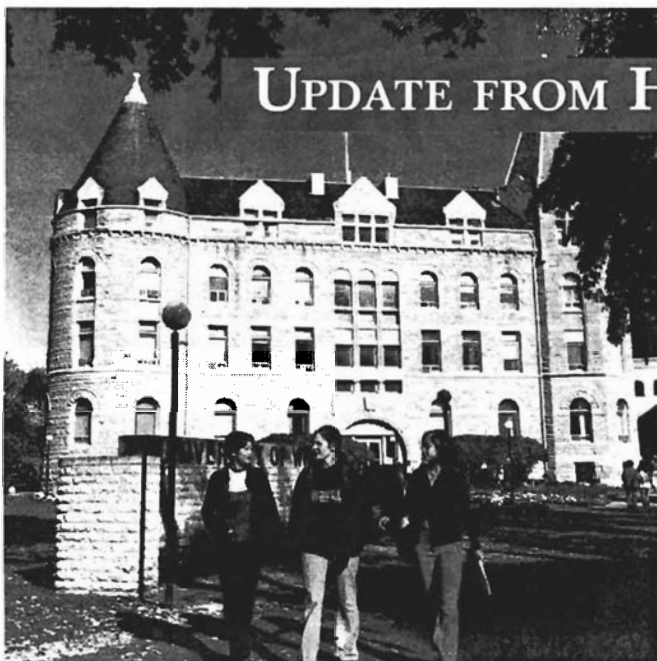
Den-Mo Tsai

The 17th Biennial World Conference will take place in Warwick, England from August 5-10, 2007. It is a wonderful opportunity for us to meet to exchange ideas, experience, and research. I urge you to attend this great conference that belongs to you all, and would very much like to encourage you to register by April 30, if you are a speaker, in order to be included in the conference program. I hope you are able to register soon for this important event.

I want to thank you for supporting our online newsletter. Most of you have agreed to receive our newsletter online. Our newsletter publishes the latest news and information about our organization, membership, and the international gifted education community. I encourage you to send a message to Headquarters for our newsletter, so that you can share what's happening in your country with others in the field.

I want again to apologize to you for the delay in the publication of our journal, *Gifted and Talented International*. Our editor, Dr. Maria McCann, has been ill and taken a temporary leave. We wish her the best. In the meantime, I want to express my appreciation to Dr. Taisir

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## UPDATE FROM HEADQUARTERS

### 2007 World Conference

The preparations are in "full swing" for this summer's Conference (August 5–10) in Warwick, England. Please see my write-up on page 3 (Visit to Warwick) for information on the conference site, accommodations, transportation, and planning.

### WC Business

We've heard back from the delegates of most countries in regard to the election of delegates for the 2007-2009 term. However, there are still some of you we haven't heard from yet!

We are pleased to announce that there are four candidates for the two positions available on the Executive Committee. These nominations have been forwarded to Dr. Taisir Subhi Yamin, Chair of the Elections Committee. Taisir has asked me to prepare a ballot to distribute to all members by mail.

### Initiatives

Since the Headquarters moved to the University of Winnipeg, we've had several parents approach us in regard to their gifted and talented children. We've begun arranging for mentors for some of these children. As well, I'm trying to arrange a "sharing circle" in the city for parents who would like to meet and share their ideas and experiences. We hope to be able to invite faculty members from the University to offer information sessions on topics of interest to the parents.

### Staff updates

Annette Greene's term ended in March. We are pleased to announce though that the term was approved by the University for an additional year. Annette started her new term with us on April 23, 2007 and we welcome her back.

Mike Bergsgaard, who many of you may have met at the 2005 Conference (in New Orleans), had been assisting with the World Council by serving as a liaison between the University's Faculty of Education and Headquarters. He's taken a position as acting Associate Dean for the Faculty of Education, and therefore is no longer working directly with us. We wish him well in his new role.

Louesa Polyzoi, a professor of education, is now working as the liaison person. Louesa is taking a particular interest in the WC membership. She and her research assistant, Dana Arpin, are collaborating with Annette and with me to strengthen the organization's membership worldwide. If you have any ideas in this regard, please contact us at Headquarters!

### Correction to last issue

Dr. Heidrun Stoeger will not be working as one of the co-editors of our journal as noted in Volume 25, Number 2, as she has accepted another project.

### In this issue

Here, we consider some of the social and emotional issues that affect gifted and talented children. Alan Wiebe takes a look at mentoring as a way of addressing the needs (including the social and emotional needs) of gifted and talented children. I offer a brief write-up of a lecture I was fortunate to attend last summer in which Dr. John Hoover spoke on the topic of bullying in relation to the gifted and talented. We feature our first book review by a WC member, Magda von Burg of Serbia. Magda offers an excellent review of *The Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Kids* by Tracy L. Cross. As well, we have an update in regard to preparations for the 2007 World Conference in Warwick, England, one of the themes of which will be the "social and emotional aspects of giftedness."

We were pleased as well to receive updates with news from members in several countries: Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Romania, and the United Arab Emirates, and from our WCGTC Seoul Office in Korea. As always, we welcome news – from delegates and members alike!

Finally, as we prepare the final draft of this issue of *World Gifted*, more details emerge about the massacre at Virginia Tech in the USA. We think of those who were so tragically killed, and of their friends and family. Sadly, the issues are complex and while there are no easy solutions, we are chillingly reminded how important it is to try to address them. We are all the more grateful, then, for those such as Tracey L. Cross, John Hoover, and others, who recognize these critical issues and work to implement programming to help address them.

Lisa McLean  
Executive Administrator  
WCGTC

## More From Headquarters

# VISIT TO WARWICK

**Lisa McLean**

I had the opportunity to visit the University of Warwick in March and meet with Deborah Eyre and the organizers of the upcoming conference. I wanted to briefly share some of my impressions of that visit with you.

### a. Conference Site

I was very impressed with the site of the conference, i.e., the University of Warwick campus. The conference venue will include the Warwick Arts Centre (pictured here) and the Rootes Social Building. There'll be plenty of comfortable spaces to meet with one another right on campus, and for those that are interested, the Arts Centre has a cinema and there is a sports facility with a pool.

### b. Accommodations

I stayed in Scarman House (one of the four-star equivalent accommodations) and found it very nice. I toured the other accommodations and found these very satisfactory as well. I am especially pleased that we're able to offer a range of accommodations. I think there should be something to suit everyone's needs and budget!

### c. Transportation

I flew into Heathrow and took public transportation to get to the University. While this wasn't too difficult (and I'd never been to London before), it did take some doing. Therefore, I would strongly recommend flying into

Birmingham if at all possible, as the University is only 30 minutes away from the Birmingham airport.

### d. Planning

The arrangements for August are very much on track. The organizers have outlined an excellent program, received many papers, and are making plans for all aspects of the conference – from registration to the opening and closing ceremonies. As well, they're planning an interesting social program that sees participants visiting various sites of interest in the area, including the Coventry Cathedral and the Royal Shakespeare Company's production of *Richard II* in Stratford-upon-Avon.

In short, I was glad to see that our conference is in very capable hands and am very much looking forward to our gathering in August! For more information, you can visit the conference website at [www.worldgifted2007.com](http://www.worldgifted2007.com) or you can contact me at [worldgifted@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:worldgifted@uwinnipeg.ca).

A special thank you to Deborah and the organizing team, especially:

Penny Mortimer, Project Manager  
Sandy Burdett, Conference Consultant  
Louise Duncan, Conference Assistant  
Ken Sloan, NAGTY Director Responsible

I appreciated your hospitality during my visit!



*Lady Godiva Statue in Coventry*



*Arts Centre at night*



## **The World Council for Gifted and Talented Children**

The World Council is a nonprofit international organization dedicated to the needs of gifted and talented children all over the world.

For more information, please contact us at World Council Headquarters:

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## **MEMBERSHIP OPTION: SPONSOR MEMBER**

Any member of the World Council may become a Sponsor Member by providing the membership fee for an individual who is financially unable to pay the fee, but who could benefit from a membership in the World Council. The benefiting member may be selected by the sponsor, or at the request of the sponsor, by the WC Membership Committee from applicants for Sponsorship.

# **WORLD COUNCIL PUBLICATIONS**

*World Gifted* is the newsletter of the World Council. Published three times a year, it contains the latest news and information concerning the organization, its membership, and the international gifted education community. Any article or portion thereof may be reprinted with credit given to the source.

We continue to invite all members to contribute! Please report on anything that you think would interest other members, such as events or initiatives in your area or country, news about regional organizations, profiles of individual members, or announcements of upcoming events.

Please forward your submissions to World Council Headquarters c/o the University of Winnipeg.

*Gifted and Talented International*, refereed by an editorial review board of leading international gifted educators, is the official journal of the World Council. The purpose of the journal is to share current theory, research, and practice in gifted education with its audience of international educators, scholars, researchers, and parents. It is published twice a year. Prospective authors are requested to submit manuscripts or queries to:

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# **CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS**

## **May 8-10, 2007**

Hawker Brownlow Education  
4th Annual Thinking & Learning Conference: "Teachers at Work"  
Melbourne, Australia  
[www.hbe.com.au/TAW.html](http://www.hbe.com.au/TAW.html)

## **July 3-23, 2007**

Challenge: TOMORROW Youth Program Program  
Shanghai, Beijing, and Zhengzhou (China)  
Global Interactions, Inc.  
[www.globalinteractions.org](http://www.globalinteractions.org)

## **August 5-10, 2007**

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children's 17th Biennial Conference  
Warwick, England, United Kingdom  
[www.worldgifted2007.com](http://www.worldgifted2007.com)

## **June 18-21, 2008**

Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) World Conference  
Moscow, Russia  
Call for Papers: [www.acei.org/MoscowCall.pdf](http://www.acei.org/MoscowCall.pdf)



# news

## FROM AROUND THE WORLD

### **Argentina: Addressing Issues in Education for the Gifted and Talented**

María P. Carracedo  
WCGTC Delegate, Argentina

As a delegate of the World Council, I am fighting with my colleagues to awaken, in the educational authorities, a sense of urgency in regard to issues in education for the gifted and talented. For this purpose, we have worked together with a deputy of the city of Buenos Aires and we have written a draft bill to be passed by the relevant authorities. In the near future, we will be doing the same thing, but this time, in the National Congress. Our intention is to try to incorporate, through the Ministry of Education, this subject into the new federal law addressing education.

In our institution, we give educational training courses, conduct research, and develop creativity workshops for talented and gifted teenagers. I am personally in charge of the coordination of the parents' workshop.

Little by little, word of this issue is spreading to the different regions of the country. Through newspaper articles, television programs, and talks given at schools, people are becoming aware of the need to adapt education to the needs of these teenagers and children.

On Friday, October 27, 2006, an event was held in the legislature in the city of Buenos Aires, where we, as teachers and parents, highlighted the problems that the absence of a law regulating education can create for these children.

Day by day, we continue our work to try to make the authorities aware of the issues.

### **The 2nd National Meeting of the Brazilian Council for Giftedness**



Denise Fleith  
WCGTC  
Delegate,  
Brazil

The 2nd  
National  
Meeting of  
the Brazilian  
Council for  
Giftedness  
was held

in Pirenópolis on November 6-9, 2006. The theme of the event was "Investment on Talents: Responsibility of All." The purposes of the meeting were: (a) to congregate persons and institutions, both domestic and foreign, interested in high abilities/giftedness in order to discuss the education of the gifted and talented in Brazil, (b) to provide scientific information regarding giftedness, (c) to present programs and services for the gifted, as well as results of research conducted in Brazil, (d) to provide information to public and private institutions in charge of designing and promoting public policies for gifted people, and (e) to cooperate for technical improvement of professionals who work in the field.

The meeting program included workshops, lectures, and round-table discussions on topics such as: the relationship between creativity and giftedness; the identification of talents and interests; challenging curricular options for the gifted; history, recent trends, and future perspectives on education for the gifted in Brazil; stimulating creative talent; gifted students with special educational needs; and public policies for the

gifted. Some of the keynote speakers invited were Dr. Robin Schader from the University of Connecticut; Dr. Catharina de Wet from the University of Alabama; Dr. Eunice Alencar from the Catholic University of Brasília; Dr. Maria Helena Novaes from the Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro; Dr. Maria Candida Moraes from the Catholic University of Sao Paulo; Dr. Solange Wechsler from the Catholic University of Campinas; Dr. Zenita Guenther from the Center for the Potential and Talent Development; and Claudia Dutra from the Ministry of Education. For information regarding the Brazilian Council for Giftedness visit the site [www.conbrasd.com.br](http://www.conbrasd.com.br) or send an e-mail [conbrasd@uol.com.br](mailto:conbrasd@uol.com.br).

### **Germany's States President Honours Student Academy**

Klaus K. Urban  
WCGTC Delegate, Germany  
Past President WCGTC

In August 2006, Germany's States-President, Dr. Horst Köhler, visited one of the year's summer academies ("Deutsche SchülerAkademie"), which are organized by the foundation "Bildung und Begabung" under the leadership of its Secretary General, Dr. Harald Wagner, one of our long-standing German Delegates, and the Academies' Director, Volker Brandt. Since its beginning in 1988, there have been 101 academy programs with nearly 9000 students (mainly grades 11 and 12) participating. During the summer holidays in the last few years, up to eight academies took place in different parts of the country, each academy offering six challenging courses (six days long) with 15 to 16 participants each.



The German President, who at the same time is the patron of the Deutsche SchülerAkademie like his predecessor Rau, was very much impressed by the work done, especially in one multi-national academy he visited in Metten, Bavaria. In the historic buildings of the wonderful monastery of Metten, about 65 students from five countries (Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Germany) lived and worked together for about two weeks. In my position as Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Deutsche SchülerAkademie, I had the privilege and honour of participating in this important event and was personally touched and amazed by the enthusiasm for learning, as well the cooperation and friendship among these promising young people. For more information see [www.bildung-und-begabung.de](http://www.bildung-und-begabung.de) or [www.deutsche-schuelerakademie.de](http://www.deutsche-schuelerakademie.de).

## Report Regarding the Law of Gifted Education in Romania

Florian Colceag  
President of IRSCA GIFTED EDUCATION  
President of EDU-GATE Consortium  
WCGTC Delegate, Romania

Presently, the law of gifted education in Romania is in the last phase before the final vote of the Romanian parliament. This is the third attempt over the years to create a legal framework regarding gifted education in Romania.

This time the proposed law had considerably more support, being strengthened by a variety of strategies and initiatives, including the following:

- an educational consortium formed by about 40 organizations, institutions, and companies
- strong support in the media
- strong international support from the major organizations in gifted education
- the support of a parliamentary

political party

- the creation of courses in the psychology and pedagogy of gifted education, creativity, and rapid learning techniques
- a pilot project in a private Jewish school, thus attracting the support of the Jewish community
- creation of an online course in gifted education for teachers and psychologists, and others interested in the area
- newly developed programs, such as the "creativity festival" held in mid-December
- conferences held for the public and media regarding gifted education
- the creation a powerful network of specialists in education who support gifted education
- the development of new programs for gifted adults and administration

All these initiatives created the backdrop against which the argument as to the direct connection between gifted education and development, efficient leadership, social stability, competence, and responsibility could be made.

This approach permitted the law to pass over the first negative vote of the government which considered the law to be discriminatory, then to conquer the neutral vote of the deputy chamber, and later the positive vote of the senate, resulting in a positive reevaluation from the government.

The political party who took on this mission was the Conservatory Party, especially Mr. Bogdan Pascu, Romanian Vice Prime Minister.

We had extraordinary support from individuals and organizations in the area of gifted education, and this international support was very important in changing the initial negative vote into a positive one. In this regard, I have to thank Dr. Klaus Urban, Dr. Sally Reiss, Dr. Franz Monks, Dr. Den-Mo Tsai, Dr. Tony Nolan, and other specialists in gifted education from all over the world.

We are sure that the gifted

community will support us after the vote as well in implementing a gifted education program in Romania. This program is part of a national salvation program after the integration into the European Union, and will make it possible to develop the human resources necessary to the development of the nation.

In the last five years, about five million people from Romania have emigrated due to economic problems and for political reasons. A great number of these emigrants were specialists in various domains. Therefore, a gifted education program is very important for replacing these people with a new generation of specialists.

Finally, the law will make it possible to create a specialized institute, a pilot centre, and to design and implement gifted programs in schools. Hopefully, too, it will have the effect of encouraging faster development of programs in gifted education all over Europe.

## A short commentary in response

Klaus K. Urban  
German Delegate  
Past President WCGTC

Mr. Colceag has asked me to give my opinion about the "Law on the education of gifted and talented children" (to which I would add: "and youth").

I think that the law is well balanced; it addresses all of the necessary issues, mentions a wide range of concrete measures, but at the same time is open enough "to be filled with life," and is not rigid. I appreciate that the definition includes not only children with manifested achievements but those children with potential, who might not have had the chance to develop their abilities. It is positive that identification is considered an integrated part of the educational process, which hopefully means that every teacher is looking for gifted and

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## **A Unique Strategy for Gifted Education in the UAE: Pursuing Excellence in Education**

Taisir Subhi Yamin  
Secretary of the EC, WCGTC

The Centre of Educational Sciences, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Ulm, is pleased to present a Master Plan for "Consultancy Services for the Development of Gifted Programs in the United Arab Emirates" to the Hamdan Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum Award for Distinguished Academic Performance (HBRAADAP), Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). This strategy was developed by a team of well-known scholars from the Centre. Three members were involved in the development process, these being Prof. Dr. Albert Zielger, Prof. Dr. Heidrun Stoeger, and Prof. Dr. Taisir Subhi-Yamin.

The Centre is one of the leading educational institutions in gifted education. It serves as a vehicle for providing the kinds of intellectual leadership necessary for the further stimulation, advancement, and improvement of theory, research, and practice in educational psychology in general and gifted education in particular.

The HBRAADAP has contracted our team to develop a Master Plan as the foundation for the development and establishment of a gifted program in the United Arab Emirates. Our team will make every attempt to create a unique program that will utilize the latest developments in gifted education and all other aspects of related knowledge. Over the five years of the plan, a large number of well-known and highly-respected scholars from around the world will be involved in the establishment of this unique project.

As a result of implementing this Plan, it is expected that the "UAE2006 Policy for the Education of the Gifted and Talented" will be developed. This policy will include, but not be limited to: policy rationale and aims, definitions of giftedness, principles and procedures for identification, guidelines for staff development programming, guidelines for provisions and programs, and guidelines for organizational issues (e.g., transition and transfer, resources, monitoring, and evaluation).

The general purpose of this Master Plan is to support and encourage the development of gifted students through an understanding of their abilities, interests, and needs by fostering appropriate educational opportunities for them at home, in school, and in the larger community.

Our project comes in harmony with the vision of the leadership in the United Arab Emirates. Based on the strategic vision of the country, we proposed and recommended the establishment of the National Centre for the Gifted and Talented (NC/GT) in the Hamdan Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum Award for Distinguished Academic Performance so that gifted education strategies can be provided for gifted children throughout the United Arab Emirates.

The NC/GT will be a leading institution of its kind, both nationally and internationally. Under the umbrella of the NC/GT, special schools for the gifted and talented will be established. In addition, a number of units and departments will be established.

### **Outcomes:**

This project will:

- (1) develop a National Policy for Gifted Education in the United Arab Emirates which will include the country's mission, vision, aims and objectives, philosophy, adopted

definition of the conception of giftedness and other related conceptions, guidelines for screening and identification, guidelines for curricula and instructional materials, guidelines for provision, facilities, and other resources that could be available for gifted and talented children in the United Arab Emirates;

- (2) develop special provisions that will be designed to meet the special needs of gifted and talented children in the United Arab Emirates;
- (3) create learning environments (including virtual learning environments) in which children can engage in problem solving and the use of productive thinking skills so that they are encouraged to explore, take risks, and apply their existing knowledge in new and creative ways;
- (4) provide teachers and school principals with strategies that will help them effectively use the available resources and instructional materials, with skills that will allow them to follow up planned lessons with individual and small group investigations, and with creative products to use with interested and motivated gifted and talented students;
- (5) develop a creative and critical resource access system through the use of the Internet and other media based vehicles; and
- (6) provide advanced level staff development for the teacher-training in the United Arab Emirates through cooperation with the University of Ulm and other universities and centres around the world that will be involved in implementing the action plans.

## President's Message

*continued from page 1*

Yamin and Dr. Albert Ziegler for helping with the journal as co-editors, and they have been working hard to help our journal continue on.

In the last issue of our newsletter, Professor Ching-chih Kuo, the President of the Asia-Pacific Federation of the WCGTC, reported on the success of the 9th Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness. Professor Ching-chih Kuo has since donated funds from the proceeds of that conference in the amount of \$5,000 USD to the WCGTC. I would also like to acknowledge the generous support of two individual donors Mr. Ming-Tze Chen and Mr. Ming-Tyan Jwo. On behalf of the WCGTC, I want to extend my most sincere thanks to each of you. Your support of the World Council is graciously valued.

Congratulations and thanks to Mike Bergsgaard! Mike had been assisting with the World Council by serving as a liaison between the University of Winnipeg's Faculty of Education and Headquarters. He's taken a position as acting Associate Dean for the Faculty of Education and is no longer assisting the World Council. We thank him for serving the World Council as he did. Louesa Polyzoi, a professor of education, is now working as the liaison person. We welcome Prof. Polyzoi and her assistant Dana Arpin as they collaborate with Lisa and Annette to strengthen our Headquarters services.

For the year 2007, I wish you all the best.

## A Short Response

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talented children. In this regard, I would recommend that there should be not only specially trained teachers, but that the topic of giftedness, and possible problems connected to the development of gifted children, should become an obligatory topic of regular teacher training and in-service training, so that it is certain that every teacher has at least some useful information about this group of children with special educational needs. I also appreciate that there is a special focus on children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Finally, I think it is important that besides a necessary central steering institution (the National Differentiated Training Centre), there is the possibility of establishing local institutions, too, which can work with the valuable input of various (re)sources.

From my experience, the law is comparable with international standards, and I congratulate Romania for this progressive educational investment.

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# BARBARA CLARK SCHOLARSHIP FUND APPLICATION

The Barbara Clark Scholarship Fund provides partial fiscal support to be used toward the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children World Conference or Youth Summit attendance. Expenses relating to registration fees, housing, and/or transportation may be covered by the fund. Completed applications must be received by **May 20, 2007**.

### Selection Criteria

A dedicated educator or gifted youth who is involved in gifted and talented education—a researcher, professor, classroom teacher, or other educational professional or student—who can demonstrate financial need such as citizenship in an emerging nation or a nation that prohibits use of funds outside of that country, or other financial hardship. The educator must show a long-term commitment to gifted and talented education. Two letters of reference are required.

### Scholarship Application Form

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zip or Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Attach two letters of reference with completed form and return to:

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children  
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Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9  
CANADA

Telephone: 204.789.1421 Fax: 204.783.1188

E-mail: [worldgt@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:worldgt@uwinnipeg.ca) Website: [www.wcgtc.org](http://www.wcgtc.org)



## YOUR WORLD COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

In an effort to familiarize you with the members of our Executive Committee, we are featuring the biographies of members of the EC in each issue. Here, we profile a member who continues to serve our organization in a number of important capacities. Dr. Taisir Subhi-Yamin is a long-standing member and a former delegate of the World Council, and is currently serving as the Secretary of the Executive Committee. In addition, he is one of the co-editors for the journal, *Gifted and Talented International*, and is particularly active in raising the profile of the organization and recruiting new members.

### Dr. Taisir Subhi-Yamin

Dr. Taisir Subhi-Yamin is a professor of gifted education and e-learning at the Arabian Gulf University in Bahrain. He has a B.Sc. in Physics, an M.A. in Special Education, and a Ph.D. in Gifted Education from Lancaster University in England. He is the recipient of academic prizes and fellowships from Jordan, England, and the U.S.A., including a Fulbright Award (1996). Currently, Dr. Yamin is working as a professor of gifted education at Ulm University in Germany.

As a university professor, Dr. Yamin is responsible for supervision of postgraduate students and teaching a number of courses including: Introduction to Giftedness and Creativity, Creative Thinking, Cognitive Psychology, Programs in Gifted Education, Counseling and Guidance for Gifted Children, Computer Assisted Learning, and Research Methods. He has developed a number of gifted programs in the Gulf and Middle Eastern region.

In addition, Dr. Yamin has other responsibilities, many associated with his position as the scientific editor for various newspapers, magazines, and journals. Dr. Yamin is active in the field of science popularization, has written ten books, and many articles and research papers. In addition, he has developed a number of training packages to develop thinking skills and creative problem solving.

He is an active member of an impressive list of academic institutions including: the British Educational Research Association (BERA), the European Council for High Ability (ECHA), Bahrain Association for the Gifted and Talented; President, Jordanian Association of Physicists, the National Committee for Gifted Education; Founder, the Qatari Centre for the Gifted and Talented. He is also the National Chancellor and regional representative of the International Association of Educators for World Peace.

Dr. Yamin's interests are identification, special provisions including virtual environments and computerized provisions, software development, and in-service training.

## WORLD COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Taisir Subhi Yamin (centre) with Dr. Thilo Fitner (left)  
and Dr. Kurt Heller (right)

## WCGTC Seoul Office Opening Ceremony and Symposium

Chris Yoon

Co-Director, WCGTC Seoul Office

At the opening ceremony of the WCGTC Seoul Office at Konkuk University on April 14th, 2006, Drs. Den-Mo Tsai and Barbara Clark gave congratulatory speeches and provided a history of the WCGTC to more than 300 teachers, parents, and scholars in the field of gifted education participating in the Seoul Office Opening Symposium.

Proposed by Dr. Chris Yoon and approved by the WCGTC Executive Committee Members at the New Orleans World Conference in 2005, the WCGTC Seoul Office aims to effectively support teachers and students in Asian countries so that they may experience cutting-edge training and curriculum. Co-directors Drs. Chris Yoon and Sagan Suk-Un Jin, along with the help of the Dean of Konkuk University, and financial sponsorship from CMS Education Korea, prepared the opening ceremony.

In his welcoming speech, Dr. Den-Mo Tsai said, "I hope that the WCGTC Seoul Office will support Korean educators of gifted education to learn and implement new trends and approaches in Korea. This will help gifted education in Korea as well as the WCGTC.

The Seoul Office will help connect students around the world and encourage both educators and parents to share their knowledge and expertise with each other."

At the symposium, Dr. Barbara Clark gave the first presentation entitled "Early Learning and Development of Gifted, Examples of Intellectual Processes, and Physical Function." "The History and Current Situation of Korean Gifted Education" by Dr. Suk-Hee Cho, President of the Asia-Pacific Federation at the time, was the second presentation. Dr. Den-Mo Tsai gave the third presentation

## THE WCGTC SEOUL OFFICE



entitled "Parenting Strategies to Help Children Become High Achievers," which was very helpful to participating parents. And the final presentation was on "Gifted Education at the Korea Science Academy" by Mr. Chun-Soo Jung, principal of the Korea Science Academy.

The WCGTC Seoul Office's primary responsibility will be designing professional development programs for Korean teachers and developing gifted programs for highly gifted and talented students in Korea. The office will also provide new information in the field of gifted education to local school districts, as well as recruit WCGTC members by creating a community of gifted education.

With support from WCGTC EC members, the Seoul Office will also be expanding its gifted programs internationally. Co-Director Dr. Chris Yoon said, "The Seoul office will be looking into any possibility of developing international programs, such as teacher training courses and summer or winter camps for gifted students throughout the world. Dr. Sagan Jin also hopes to have a close

collaboration with international organizations to develop programs in the field of gifted education."

The WCGTC Seoul Office is housed in the graduate school of education at Konkuk University. Its founding directors are Dr. Chris Yoon of Azusa Pacific University in California and Dr. Sagan Suk-Un Jin of Konkuk University.

### ISEE Winter Science Camp

The WCGTC Seoul Office and Taiwan National Science and Technology Museum collaborated to hold an international gifted science camp in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

The camp provided intensive science programs for students in grades five to eight from Korea, Taiwan, and the United States. A total of 51 gifted students were selected to participate in this special program from January 27-February 4, 2007.

The name of the camp was chosen as "iSEE", as small "i" stands for I (myself), inquiry, imagination,

*continued on p. 11*



*From left: Dr. Chris Yoon, Dr. Barbara Clark, Dr. Den-Mo Tsai and Dr. Sagan Suk-Un Jin*

and inspiring, while “SEE” stands for Science thru Exploring and Experiencing.

The goals of the program were the following:

- The iSEE international camp will be designed for highly motivated and able students to expand their knowledge and experience in science through cognitive inquiry and hands-on activities.
- This program will also provide students opportunities to learn about cultural diversity and to cultivate their global vision.

The topics were “Wind Power and Aviation” for grade five students, “Robotics” for grade six students, and “Material Science and Nanotechnology” for students in grades seven and eight. These topics were taught by carefully selected university professors and high school science teachers.

Students also took part in cultural experiences by visiting local museums and touring the city of Kaohsiung.

A number of professionals and specialists were involved in developing programs and designing curricula. A great deal of time and effort went into the planning of the program.

The program was directed by Dr. Chris Yoon and Dr. Sagan Suk-Un Jin. The Taiwan scholars coordinating the program were Drs. Jun-Fu Huang, Mei-Chen Chang, and Ms. Doris Wu. A formal program evaluation was conducted by Dr. Jim Green and Dr. Chris Yoon.

The overall program was supervised by Drs. Barbara Clark and Den-Mo Tsai.

For more information on the camp, you can go <http://www3.nstm.gov.tw/isee/index.html>.



# WC BOOK REVIEWS

## **Review of *The Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Kids* by Tracy L. Cross**

Prufrock Press (December 2005)

Reviewed by Magda von Burg

WCGTC Member, Serbia

The reason I was asked to write a book review of *The Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Kids* by Tracy L. Cross, PhD<sup>1</sup> is that I am the mother<sup>2</sup> of an exceptionally gifted son who has been, for six years now, competing in mathematics with students two and three years his senior, and scoring the best results.<sup>3</sup>

Another important detail is that my son and I live in Serbia, a country which due to known (and unknown) reasons is economically at a level that cannot provide security even for working people, least of all in the categories like education, health, or social services. Hence, children like my son and parents like me are mainly left to 'struggle' on our own with prejudices and ignorance in proving and re-proving the talent until the high-school age, at which time the state provides some kind of special educational system for gifted children.

For that reason, I have read the book as a 'student' in order to recognize some new tools or findings that would help me in my daily 'job' as a mother, and this review will hence lack all nice terms, compliments, phrases, etc. that are characteristic of psychologists or professional book-reviewers, for which I would like to apologize to the author in advance.

This is by far one of the best books I have read in this field, although I humbly admit I have not read that many, and is definitely the one I would recommend, not only to the teachers and parents, but to the state officials who decide on the framework of work and life for these others. The author does not only remind us of the fact that gifted children, without proper guidance, may end up in the tragedies like the one at Columbine High School, but also:

- gives useful explanations on psychosocial topics (e.g., a very clear and concise interpretation of

the Erikson's Theory) in a language comprehensible to non-professionals;

- offers constructive analysis on 'needs' and 'myths' (the two biggest problems I have encountered as a mother);
- emphasizes the importance of recognition (identification) of gifted children (especially among the native, African, and Hispanic Americans in the USA, but also in other countries among 'their' minorities);
- clarifies the ways in which gifted children may differ, and be similar to, other children;
- gives practical advice for guiding the gifted by illustrating the factors that play key roles;
- explains the phenomenon of the rage of gifted students and, of course, examines the other side of the coin that parents of gifted children have to deal with too often – bullying of the gifted;
- provides useful addresses for parents and professionals in the USA;
- and (not finally, but I wish to avoid the trap of retelling the whole book), as a true professional, does not conclude that he has solved all the problems, but raises issues relevant to certain subjects that teachers and parents should think about.

To put it briefly, a copious number of relevant and important topics are explained, clarified, and interpreted; the book offers heaps of advice that can be practically applied. In a word, this is a book that deserves to be listed in the reference literature.

There is a paragraph in this book that somehow struck me the most. I returned a couple of times to it and thought of how cleverly the author had spotted the essence of many problems concerning the gifted. Since I am not a professional book-reviewer, I hope I will be forgiven if I cite that paragraph here, in case that is not a standard practice:

I was stunned to learn that such an educated person could hold such foolish misconceptions. Imagine what messages people who are not well-educated or academically oriented send to gifted students. Also imagine how gifted students

are actually treated if large numbers of adults, including well-educated adults, hold such wild misconceptions about them. (p. 118)

Indeed, instead of being afraid of people who do not know about the gifted, as a mother who has gone through unimaginable situations, I am much more afraid of the people who call themselves well-educated, or even worse, of the actual educators who haven't read Erikson's Theory and who have stopped learning and asking questions.

Most educators, when thinking of gifted children, try to find ways to deal with their talent, since gifted children are on one hand 'flexible clay' to shape, but on the other, difficult when trying to anticipate their reasoning.

This book deals with the 'toughest' problem – the one least dealt with when talking about gifted children – their emotional needs and problems, and their literal 'integration' into society, which still cannot grasp all the complexity of their personalities.

Bearing in mind that the existence of our civilization depends on great minds, we all have to strive to help these children not only develop their talents, but become healthy, mature, and satisfied adults who are aware of their special features, as well as their common ground with the majority of people for whose benefit they will bring our civilization to a higher level.

One of the steps to understanding gifted children is to read *The Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Kids* by Tracy L. Cross. When you finish reading it, don't put it on the bookshelf, but on the night table, since I am sure you will keep returning to it, as I am still doing.

<sup>1</sup> Cross is an educational psychologist and phenomenologist, who has served as the executive director for a state-funded residential school for academically gifted adolescents, and, most importantly, as far as I am concerned, is a father of four who have kept reminding him on a daily basis of the importance of the parental role.

<sup>2</sup> I am a linguist by education (graduated English language and literature) and I work as a freelance translator.

<sup>3</sup> This year he won a gold medal at the Junior Balkan Mathematical Olympiad scoring 39 of maximum 40 points, and was the best on the national team of which the other five students were all two years his senior, in age and school grade.

# MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR TWO GIFTED STUDENTS

Alan Wiebe

WCGTC Member, Canada

Sessional Instructor, Faculty  
of Education and Extended  
Learning

University of Winnipeg



The mentorship program operating within the Faculty of Education at the University of Winnipeg provides mentor support to a variety of student populations in Manitoba's public school system. The mentors who work with these students are 4th and 5th year education students. Many are about to embark on their teaching careers in our schools.

One of the populations that is served by the program is students that are deemed gifted, but who are encountering difficulties in school due to issues relating to their "giftedness." This is a story about how two elementary school male students received mentors from the University of Winnipeg and shared an enriching experience.

A colleague of mine who works as a psychologist with students in two of Manitoba's rural school divisions phoned us in the fall of 2005 to discuss the mentorship program. He was enquiring whether there was a possibility of one or two of his clients receiving the services of a mentor. If the possibility was there, could we have a meeting with the school personnel and parents to discuss this potential opportunity. It was apparent at the meeting that the young boys in question were having difficulty becoming meaningfully engaged in their own education. In the discussions that followed, it was noted that many of the patterns of behaviour in the two boys were similar to that of other gifted students who have been caught in this dilemma, that is, a lack of appropriate engagement. Some of the descriptions presented included: incomplete assignments, starting new activities without finishing previous ones, refusal to read, impulsiveness, and various inappropriate social and emotional behaviours. All participants at the meeting felt that if two appropriate mentors could be found, that we should introduce the mentors to the boys and their parents as soon as possible. A second meeting was set.

Two women in the final year of their education degrees expressed an interest in getting involved as mentors to elementary age gifted students. One of the women would register the experience for a university credit, while the

other did not need another credit and would volunteer her time.

The expectation of all mentors is that as they form relationships and engage in enriching activities with their mentees, devote approximately 50 hours over the duration of the program, and keep a journal documenting their experiences. In particular, the mentors are expected to be in a two-way unconditional relationship with goal setting and educational strategies as their focus. Documenting motivational strategies that help the student improve opportunities for success is the primary goal. Strategies that do not show success are also documented. These journals, when submitted to me, form part of the research component of the mentoring program. A matching of mentor interest with those of their mentee is done but, as in many other human endeavours, chance is also at work when considering success.

The two boys and their parents were to meet their prospective mentors during meetings at their respective schools. At that first meeting, the boys would have the opportunity to develop the plan of activities that would frame the relationship. Doing homework would not be on the priority list, but enriching activities and relationship building would be. The activities the mentor and mentee embarked upon were to be new to the experience of the boys.

Both boys got an early opportunity to visit and explore the University of Winnipeg. One of the boys began developing a PowerPoint presentation about living with and caring for horses. He was able to experience this with his mentor who was an accomplished equestrian and owned a number of horses. The other boy got the opportunity to explore new activities such as skiing, as his mentor was a fitness instructor.

In the two cases outlined here, the mentoring relationships were successful for both mentor and mentee, and will not necessarily end after the approximately 50 hours of contact time in the program.

The following is a journal entry of one of the mentors and illustrates the strength of the mentor/mentee relationship:

When I got to my mentees school today, he was having a hard morning. Both his mother and the principal were with him, but he wasn't cooperating. They left me alone to work with him. I told him that I had brought my laptop computer and that I wanted to download his project (horses) onto the laptop so that we could do more with the project. Once he saw the computer he was ready to go. He went to the computer lab and was able to find a place where we could connect the laptop to the internet. He put some new images into his

*continued on p. 14*



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project, did some more writing and editing. We were also able to use the digital camera to make a short video of him for his 'all about me' page. For a day where he didn't want to work, we actually got a lot accomplished. (personal communication, March, 2007)

Although some mentors will move away to find their first teaching jobs next year, these mentors plan to keep in touch with their young mentees. Although a marked turnaround by the students at school did not occur, all agreed that a meaningful unconditional relationships between the students and adult mentors had many positive consequences – including some that can't be measured.

From the perspective of one of the mentee's mothers (personal communication, June 2, 2006), the experience was of significant importance to the development of her son's relationship to learning. She believes her son's "self-worth was validated" and the time with his mentor was "thoroughly enjoyed." The mother is a firm believer in the value of the mentorship program and acknowledges that, not only did her son benefit from the experience, but so did his mentor, who she feels is a "wonderful young woman" and who became a "trusted friend" to her son in many ways.

Both mentors expressed to me that the experience was invaluable to their "enriched" understanding of being a teacher and to better appreciate the enormous diversity of students to be found in our schools.

This year, we have three mentors working one-on-one with children (grades one, two, and five), as well as a group of five mentors working with students involved in various enrichment activities in a middle school.

## NEW BROCHURE

We've produced a new brochure. You can expect to be seeing our new look soon!

My thanks to Warren Schuetz at the University of Winnipeg for the graphic design on the brochure (and in our newsletters).

# WORLD COUNCIL for GIFTED and TALENTED CHILDREN





# BULLYING, VICTIMIZATION AND GIFTEDNESS: PRO RARIS AVIBUS [IN DEFENSE OF GEEKS]

John Hoover is a Professor of Special Education at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota, USA. He has co-authored books on bullying and is well-known in Canada and the USA as a speaker on the issue. Earlier this summer, Dr. Hoover gave a lecture to Annabelle Mays's class at the University of Winnipeg – a graduate course in Education, 15.5001/3 Special Topics: Bullying Affected Children – based in part on two papers he had previously co-authored:

- Hoover, J., and Stenhjem, P. (2003). *Bullying and teasing of youth with disabilities*. Issue Brief: Examining Current Challenges in Second Education and Transition, Volume 2(3). Accessed on August 24, 2006 at <http://www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=1332>
- Hoover, J. H., Hoover, A. A., Simanton, E., & Dornheim, B. (2004). *Pro raris avisbus [In defense of Geeks]*. In K. W. McCluskey & A. M. Mays (Eds.), *Mentoring for talent development* (pp. 58-72). Sioux Falls, SD: Reclaiming Youth International.

The following is a report on Dr. Hoover's lecture done by Lisa McLean.

## Are students that are gifted and talented bullied because of their gifts and talents?

Many of us immediately think of the stereotypical "geek" in school and would answer instinctively "yes" to this question. Yet, while there has been more research in the past few years dealing with the issue of bullying in schools generally, the issue of giftedness and bullying hadn't specifically been addressed until Jean Peterson and Karen Ray's (2006) article *Bullying and the gifted: Victims, perpetrators, prevalence and effects*.

According to Hoover, Peterson and Ray's article provides an excellent overview of the literature and looks to answer this very question. He finds that they suggest four characteristics of the gifted that they think may possibly be related to bullying. His handout *Bullying, Victimization and Giftedness: Pro Raris Avibus [In defense of Geeks]* (July 5, 2006, p. 2) lists these as follows:

- Intelligence itself and the climate in the building
- Hypersensitivity and perfectionism
- Non-synchronous developmental transitions
- Silence about inner turmoil and unwillingness to seek help

Of these, Hoover suggests that it is the "climate" in the school, specifically the existence of an anti-intellectual climate, which will be found to be especially critical in

this regard. He hypothesizes that students pick-up on the existence of this climate in a school. Bullying, then, he claims, is the mechanism by which this "anti-intellectualism is transmitted to kids by other kids." The most socially successful students in this climate, he suggests, will be those who have strong social skills, but who are, at best, average academically. Furthermore, he makes two additional predictions:

- (i) Some students will hide their gifts and talents in order to "fit in" socially.
- (ii) Of students that are overtly gifted, those most at risk of being bullied will be those who have difficulty with social skills.

Hoover et al. (2003, p. 65) note the effect of school climate on the roles of students in the school by comparing a regular school, for example, with a "high powered academic school." In this type of school, it is the students that are strong both academically and socially that are likely to be the most popular socially.

Hoover notes that, in their study of bullying and giftedness, Peterson & Ray (2006) found that:

- The proportion of males to females that are bullied is roughly the same as it is in studies of bullying generally.
- All bullying behaviors, e.g., "name-calling", "teasing", etc., correlated with one another.
- Bullying behaviors re: giftedness (teasing re: intelligence and teasing re: good grades) correlated specifically with one another, i.e., students were bullied on the basis of giftedness.

While this study does, in part, bear out Hoover's predictions, it looks only at the intellectual ability of the student, and not at their level of social skills.

Hoover, however, identifies a special case in which students, by virtue of having a particular disorder, i.e., Asperger Syndrome or Nonverbal Learning Disability, do have limited social skills. Moreover, in some children with these disorders, there is a clear disconnect between their level of intelligence and their level of social skills, i.e., they can be very strong academically, but have very poor social skills.

Hoover points to Little's (2002) study of children with

<sup>1</sup> The term "geek" is used in Hoover et al. (2004, p. 60), and in Katz (2000), to refer to students who are "bright, technically able individuals, who perhaps manifest a degree of social ineptitude, or at least express less interest in the social whirl than do typical teens."

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Asperger Syndrome and Nonverbal Learning Disability which found that:

- 94% of mothers of these children reported victimization.
- 75% of these children were bullied.
- 73% of these children experience physical assaults.
- The incidence of bullying with these children was approximately twice that of the contrast sample.

What's to be done for these students, gifted and talented on the one hand, but who are struggling socially on the other?

To Hoover, mentoring may be at the heart of the answer to this question. For many of these students, having a mentoring relationship with an adult offers a way out in that (i) the support of a caring adult may offset some of the negative effects of being bullied, and (ii) the mentor may support the development of the student's gifts and talents.<sup>2</sup>

At present, many of the approaches for dealing with bullying are directed at changing the attitudes and behavior of students. Interestingly, if anti-intellectualism in schools is indeed a significant factor contributing to bullying, that could lead to a marked shift in approaches to addressing bullying, with these approaches being directed toward the attitudes and behavior of school staff and administration as well.

It has long been recognized that many schools emphasize athletic talents while undervaluing academic achievement and gifts and talents apart from athletics.<sup>3</sup> If, as it seems, it is the case that in doing so, these schools foster a climate in which gifted and talented students are victimized, this is yet another compelling reason to advocate for better support for the needs of the gifted and talented students in our schools.

### References

Katz, J. (2000). *Geeks: How two lost boys rode the Internet out of Idaho*. New York: Villard.

<sup>2</sup> See Hoover et al. (2004: p. 69-71) where they make ten recommendations for mentoring these students, and see also Alan Wiebe's article on page 13 of this newsletter where he describes how a well-established mentoring program in the University of Winnipeg's Faculty of Education was recently extended to include mentoring for two gifted and talented students.

<sup>3</sup> For example, Feldhusen (1998: p. 29), in a discussion of Talent Identification and Development in Education model, notes that he "omits psychomotor or athletic skills (except for dance) because that domain is often well-served in most schools."

### Moving?

If you're moving, please contact us with your new address!

You can call or e-mail Headquarters as follows:  
phone 204.789.1421  
worldgt@uwinnipeg.ca

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, Inc.

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- ☐ 1-year individual US\$50 ☐ 2-year individual US\$95  
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## DISCUSSION LINK

In the last issue, we introduced a new feature on our website: *Discussion Link*. We put questions to our readers, one to educators and one to parents. Unfortunately, we haven't had any responses to the question for educators, which was as follows:

*"I would like to obtain information that would explain the development of the gifted standards as well as information regarding gifted curriculum for science students in grade seven life science courses. Basically I need to know what the ideal curriculum for students identified as gifted would consist of for science."*

It's not too late to contact us if you have any information you provide in response to this question.

Parents

The Discussion Link question for parents was as follows:

*"I am searching for an age-appropriate reading list that will challenge my grade son who is in grade five, but who is reading at the 11th grade level."*

We've had replies from two parents as follows and here we list some of their suggestions. These readings are suitable for advanced 5<sup>th</sup> grade readers. (See the website for more suggestions.)

### Magda von Burg (Serbia)

Colfer, Eoin	Series: <i>Artemis Fowl</i> (5 in series: <i>Artemis Fowl</i> (2001), <i>The Artic Incident</i> (2002), <i>The Eternity Code</i> (2003), <i>The Opal Deception</i> (2005), <i>The Lost Colony</i> (2006))	Fantasy
Jordan, Robert	<i>The Wheel of Time Series</i> (12 in series) (1990-2005)	Fantasy
Pratchett, Terry	<i>The Tiffany Aching Adventures: A Hat Full of Sky</i> (2004), <i>The Wee Free Men</i> (2004), and <i>Wintersmith</i> (2005)	Fantasy
Pullman, Philip	<i>His Dark Materials Trilogy: The Golden Compass</i> (1996), <i>The Subtle Knife</i> (1997), and <i>The Amber Spyglass</i> (2000)	Fantasy

### Annette Greene (WC Headquarters)

Dowswell, Paul	<i>Powder Monkey: Adventure of a Young Sailor</i> (2005)	Historical
Konigsbury, E. L.	<i>The View From Saturday</i> (1996)	Fiction
Oppell, Kenneth	<i>Airborn</i> (2004), <i>Skybreaker</i> (2005)	Fantasy
Paulsen, Gary	<i>The Hatchet Series: Hatchet</i> (1987), <i>The River</i> (1991), <i>Brian's Winter</i> (1996)	Adventure, Fiction

## NOTICE:

### Journal Gifted and Talented International

The **submission guidelines** have been updated. Please see the website at <http://www.worldgifted.ca/international.html> for the details.

Thank you to Dr. Taisir Subhi Yamin for taking the time to keep these current.

## World Council Receives Donations

The World Council is pleased to acknowledge the following donors who have made generous contributions to the work of our organization in 2006:

Individual donors:

Mr. Ming-Tze Chen  
Mr. Ming-Tyan Jwo

Organizations:

Professor Ching-chih Kuo, Chairperson of the Organizing Committee 9th Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness, and President, Asia-Pacific Federation of the WCGTC

We thank each of you for your support of the World Council. Your gifts lay the foundation for the World Council's future programs, with the goal of improving the communication and collaboration between those interested in gifted children around the world. Together we work toward the ultimate goal of making positive contributions to the lives of gifted and talented children everywhere.