

AUGUST 2021



# SALSA NEWS

*Supporting the Advancement of Learning Stories in America*

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## Join Us for Coffee & Conversation

### **SALSA Members**

We are offering our first virtual "Coffee Chat" with a SALSA Board of Director, Lorena Ramos on Saturday, Sep 11, 2021, from 8:30-9:30 AM PST.

Bring your coffee or favorite drink and join in conversation about Learning Stories. Let's learn about the power of Learning Stories to improve connections with children and families. This is the perfect time to engage in questions and network with Learning Stories enthusiasts! This conversation will be in Spanish and all are welcomed. Looking forward to meeting you!

Acompáñenme con su café o bebida favorita para charlar sobre las Historias de Aprendizaje. Exploremos el poder de las Historias de Aprendizaje para mejorar las conexiones con niños y familias. Este es el momento ideal para hacer preguntas y compartir con aquellos que escriben Historias de Aprendizaje. Esta charla será en Español y todos son bienvenidos. ¡Los espero con mucho gusto!

*Note: all members should have received an email with a link for the meeting. If you have any questions please email: [SALSA.USA10@gmail.com](mailto:SALSA.USA10@gmail.com)*

## 4th National Learning Stories Conference

SALSA is proud to announce its 4th National Learning Stories conference, a virtual conference featuring many workshops to choose from and TWO Keynotes given by Wendy Lee and Brenda Soutar from New Zealand. The theme of the conference, Creating Belonging in a Diverse World, will be highlighted as speakers share the amazing work being done in the United States to expand the possibilities of alternative assessment. Attendees will leave inspired with a strong understanding of how they can implement and improve their work and inquiry of Learning

Stories. Join us in discovering how learning stories, an authentic assessment tool, will change how you view your work and the diverse individuals you work with. This is an opportunity to learn from experts about the value of storytelling and how to document learning in a way that connects families, caretakers and colleagues. Meet other attendees, network and connect by video chat, join discussion groups, and engage in dialogue with sponsors and exhibitors. There will be opportunity to watch missed sessions.



# Register for the conference now!

## Hilltop Learning Stories Conference 2021 Recap



SALSA would like to express their deep appreciation to the leadership team at Hilltop Children's Center in Seattle Washington and especially, to Mike Browne for the herculean effort and work put into organizing and hosting the recent Learning Stories conference! According to Mike, "Over the course of 3 months (April-June 2021), we reflected, dialogued, challenged each other, and grew in our knowledge of how we can be culturally responsive, developmentally responsive, and responsive to the needs of our children in a time of grave injustice. We saw 413 participants representing 4 different countries and 16 different states in the US participate. They ranged from educators to pre-service teachers, social workers, policy makers, authors, and more." A shout out to Mike, Hilltop, and the amazing presenters for all the work accomplished to support and advance Learning Stories in our communities.

## **SALSA Board Member Profile: Chris Carducci**

### **How and when did you first become involved with Learning Stories?**

I was first drawn to TeWhariki (NZ National Early Education Curriculum) in 2011 and was so very fortunate to travel with Inspire to New Zealand to see, first hand, all about it. I listened as teachers described their ‘new’ assessment strategy – Learning Stories. I fell in love with the children’s portfolios and reading Learning Stories where, for me, sociocultural theory came to life on every page.

### **What makes Learning Stories such a compelling choice for assessing children’s learning?**

The fact that Learning Stories are narratives – told from the heart of teachers (and parents) in relationship directly with each unique individual child. The way Learning Stories invite multiple perspectives on children’s learning and really make visible the process of how learning happens and how children grow into understanding their own unique identity.



### **What is your current professional position: your title and main responsibilities?**

I appreciate where I am currently in my profession in ECE because I get the best of both worlds. In addition to being an infant care teacher for an Early Education and Care Program, I also work with adult learners as an adjunct instructor for Child and Human Development. I love the opportunity study education philosophies and theory and then put these ideas into practice with the children.

### **How do you incorporate the use of Learning Stories in your daily work?**

I teach multiple methods of assessment in my college classes as well as using the Desired Results Developmental Profile (PRDP) for all the infants. I am most inspired by what Learning Stories offers us as an assessment tool, but also as ‘a way of being’ with children to really “see” them as unique and special individuals in ways the check-boxes and rating scales cannot. The combination of Learning Stories as “evidence” of the DRDP measures works well for our required California standardized assessment.

### **What can early learning educators do to help promote the spread of Learning Stories?**

Share your Learning Stories broadly and invite others to read and revel in children’s learning. When people who do not spend much time with little ones read our Learning Stories they are often amazed at all that is going on in the early childhood classrooms – the authentic and wholistic learning opportunities which are very intentionally planned by thoughtful early educators.

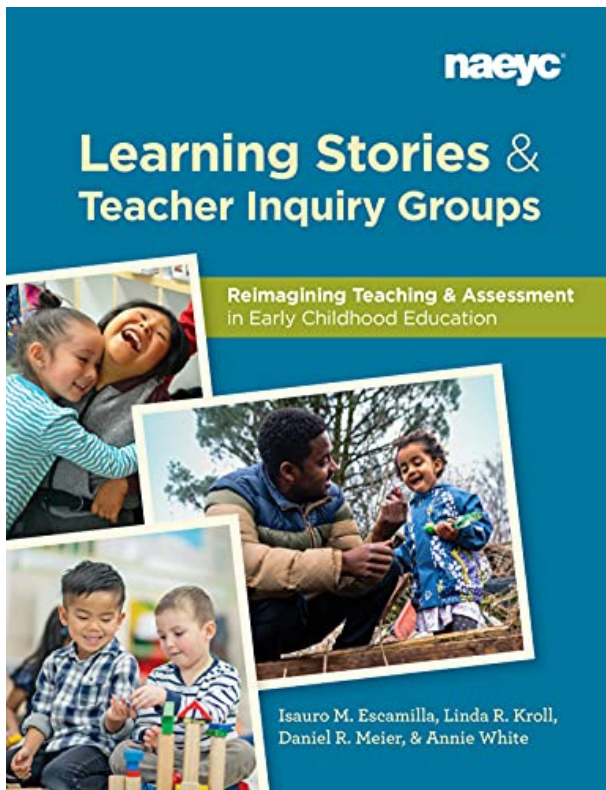
### **Is there anything else you would like our readers to know?**

Just to keep in mind that there are many opportunities to be inspired by the experiences of others, yet it is just as important, if not more, to build a strong sense of identity for your own program in your own context. Don’t seek to replicate – aim for being authentic and making rich experiences that reflect the uniqueness of your place, in this moment. Children’s memories of their childhood is in your hands.

## Learning Stories **Publication News**

### LEARNING STORIES & TEACHER INQUIRY GROUPS: RE-IMAGINING TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

BY ISAURO M. ESCAMILLA, LINDA R. KROLL, DANIEL R. MEIER, & ANNIE WHITE



Enhance your professional development and partner with children and families to improve learning experiences in a range of early childhood settings and programs.

Learn how to integrate the Learning Stories approach and teacher inquiry groups to promote authentic assessment to inform instruction, and foster collegial team building and collaboration. The writing of Learning Stories integrated within the professional development process of teacher inquiry, documentation, and reflection offers a new model of professional support and a method for reaching out to children and families.

The Learning Stories approach is used primarily with children from birth through age 8, and educators in classrooms and programs, administrators, professional development specialists, instructional coaches, and teacher educators can benefit from this approach.

For more information, or to purchase, [click here](https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/books/learning-stories).  
<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/books/learning-stories>



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**For More Information...**The Editor would like to thank all of the contributors to this newsletter. If you are interested in receiving more information about SALSA, upcoming events, or any of the items mentioned in this newsletter, please email us: [SALSA.USA10@gmail.com](mailto:SALSA.USA10@gmail.com) or visit our website: [www.salsa-global.org](http://www.salsa-global.org)