



SALSA NEWS

Supporting the Advancement of Learning Stories in America

Joins Us for the 2nd Annual National Learning Stories Conference!

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SALSA is proud to announce its 2nd National Learning Stories Conference, a virtual event featuring expert speakers and a keynote address by Wendy Lee, co-author of *Learning Stories in Practice* and Director of the Educational Leadership Project in New Zealand. (pictured below).

The conference theme, **Reclaiming Voices of Equity and Diversity in Early Care and Education**, is supported by a number of breakout sessions on recognizing culture and sharing perspectives.

Join us in discovering how learning stories, an authentic assessment tool, will change how you view your work and the children you work with. This is an opportunity to learn from experts about value of storytelling and how to document learning in a way that connects to families.

This virtual conference will be held on Saturday October 3 from 8 am to 4 pm PDT.

For a complete schedule and to register go to:

www.accelevents.com/e/salsa2020

Your registration fee includes a one-year SALSA membership. SALSA would like to thank our major sponsor Educa for their support.



Saturday Seminars: Stories of Children's Learning

As you may know, Hilltop Children's Center in Seattle, WA (Duwamish Territory) will host the 3rd Annual National Learning Stories Conference on June 24-26, 2021! But did you know they're also hosting an online series that features the voices, stories, and lived experiences from educators around North America?

"Saturday Seminars" are monthly 75 to 90 minute online workshops set to inspire, motivate, and highlight just how much we can learn if we pay attention to and reflect on the voices of children.

Designed as a lead-up to the [Learning Stories Conference](#) and led by storytellers from different communities around the continent, this is part of Hilltop Children's Center's ongoing intention to create a conference that's more than just a 3-day gathering but instead is an opportunity to build community and capacity with using Learning Stories, storytelling, and other forms of narrative documentation as part of our ongoing work as educators.

Saturday Seminars run from September 2020 to June 2021 and are a pay-what-you-can model, ranging from \$5 to \$15 USD. As a thank you for registering early for the 2020 virtual conference (must register for the conference before September 9, 2020 in order to qualify) they are waiving the registration fee for the first Saturday Seminar workshop of the series, "Engaging Families in Reflective Practice: Learning Stories in the Flow of the Year." If you're able to, they encourage you to pay the registration fee as proceeds from the series go to developing a scholarship fund for the 2021 conference.

To obtain your free registration code, please email workshop organizer, Mike Browne (he/him) at institute@hilltopcc.org with your full name. Sponsorship and Partnership opportunities are available for the conference and this series. For more info, email Mike.

Mission

SALSA, Supporting the Advancement of Learning Stories in America, advocates for the Learning Stories approach that enhances intentional teaching, reflective practices, and advances equity and diversity by acknowledging early childhood educators, families, and children as both learners and teachers.

Vision

SALSA represents children's learning with integrity and respect, recognizing their individual value and competencies. We advance Learning Stories in the United States as an authentic narrative approach to bring joy into teachers' work of documentation, observation, and assessment.

Board of Directors

Regan Bynder, Chris Carducci, Isauro M. Escamilla, Jeannette Mulhern, Lorena Ramos, Lindsey Shafer, Joyce Stone, and Annie White.

Profile of a SALSA Board Member: Dr. Annie White, President



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

I first learned about Learning Stories in 2011, when I attended an Inspire Study Tour in New Zealand led by Margie Carter. During the NZ study tour we visited centers and looked at their Learning Stories documentation/portfolios, listened to center teachers share about their experience writing Learning Stories, and encountered an inspirational lecture by Wendy Lee, which had a deep, life-changing impact on me.

- **What makes Learning Stories such a compelling choice for assessing children's learning?**

Learning Stories provide opportunities to capture, explain, plan, and stretch children's learning and growth. Using stories or "narratives" is a powerful communication tool, as it crosses all cultures and is easily transferable and relatable to families. Using stories to convey teacher observations, to elevate teachers' role as researchers and knowledgeable co-learners with children and families, is a transformative process.

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

Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Studies, School of Education, at California State University Channel Islands. I teach undergraduate Early Childhood Studies students.

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

Learning Stories are incorporated in curriculum and assessment courses and embedded in all of the classes I teach. Learning Stories is such a powerful assessment approach and can be used with adult learners too. For example, Learning Stories are written as part of practicum/student teaching, university student self-written Learning Stories referred to as "My Stories."

- **What can early learning educators do to help promote Learning Stories?**

Start with self. If you haven't already begun, start writing Learning Stories! A great way to first write a Learning Story is to use a baby photo of yourself and then write a narrative story about yourself to someone significant in your life. Share it with the person and ask them to write a response.

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

You are not alone! We are in this together. New Zealand educators are cheering us on! Be the ripple in the pond and start locally and work towards globally. Support the work of SALSA, help us advance Learning Stories in the USA and beyond.

Note: Space considerations prohibited publishing the full profile of Dr. Annie White; to access it please go to <https://salsa-global.org/meet-the-board/>

SALSA News Briefs

Free Webinars with Wendy Lee

Educa, the New Zealand-based company that has developed a Learning Stories app and is also a sponsor for our upcoming conference, is hosting a series of ten free webinars with Wendy Lee. Each in the series highlights part of the latest book by Wendy Lee and Margaret Carr, *Learning Stories in Practice*. To sign up for a future webinar or access a recorded one, go to: <https://www.geteduca.com/webinars/wendy-lee-webinars/>

The Power of Learning Stories: Student Reflection & Encounter with COVID-19

As part of a California State University Channel Islands undergraduate research course with Dr. Annie White, university students wrote Learning Stories to document the impact COVID-19 has had on their lives. The students used Learning Stories as a tool for self-reflection and to make visible the impact of COVID-19 from an adult learner perspective.

Also at the link below you will find Learning Stories from two SALSA Board members:

<https://salsa-global.org/learning-stories/covid-19-learning-stories/>

Want to be more involved with SALSA?

The SALSA Board of Directors is accepting applications to serve either on the Board or on the Advisory Committee. If you are interested, and feel you have a contribution to make to support our Mission and Vision, you may email us at SALSA.USA10@gmail.com or download an application at <https://salsa-global.org/connect/get-involved/>

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