

NLLN Continuing Education Scholarship Reports for 2007/2008

Gina Skansberg MEMO Midwinter Conference January 27-28, 2008

I have just attended my first MEMO conference! The Midwinter gathering in Alexandria was an outstanding jamboree of presenters and attendees. Seriously, how many conferences have you been to where *every* session you went to was a bull's-eye? That was the case for me at this conference.

Mike Lynch gave a delightful keynote presentation on constellations and how we "regular folks" can recognize them when we meet them. The atmosphere was as if we were all in someone's living room; the welcome and comfort level was high.

Many hardy and layered souls met back later in the evening with Mike and went outside to experience what we had just talked about. Through amazing telescopes of astronomical proportions, we *saw* what was otherwise unseen; both Sagan's numerical description and Saturn's rings are true! This astronomical meet and greet was a stellar conference event.

23 Things on a Stick is a fantastic opportunity for us! Now, I knew from the postcards and emails that it would be cool, and that I should participate, but by coming to the session it was even better. There I got to experience it with a giant safety net under me! Being led through the process was apparently the kick in the keyboard that I needed; I am jump-started and eager to continue. Because of the session, I know that I need no more encouragement and that any needed guidance will be inherently available in the program.

23 Things is an invaluable tool for us educators as we share information with others. It is going to help us keep school libraries vibrant and necessary, even in the eyes of nonbelievers. 23 Things is a concise bridge that helps narrow the gap between the generations of digital immigrants and our digitally native students.

School 2.0 was led by a highly dynamic and knowledgeable speaker, Wendy Wolfe. This session addressed the need for schools to remain/become relevant to students through technology (for that is truly this generation's existence), and specific ways to accomplish that as educators.

Through multiple examples of student-created work through the use of technology, the audience saw how available these tools are to all of us. Free. We walked out of there energized rather than overwhelmed, with names and numbers of website contacts.

The final session of the conference that I attended was Collection Development and the Web. As a newbie to the profession, I was highly interested in how this component fits with ordering materials for the school library. I appreciated the professional "backup" in helping keep our school's media center relevant, vibrant, and necessary.

The MEMO Midwinter Conference was a very valuable use of my time and energy, and I am grateful to have been there. We all talk about "keeping up" with our students technologically; this conference helps us walk the talk. Our school libraries are improved because we translate these sessions into action.

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3/20/2008