

PUGET SOUND CENTER

for Teaching, Learning and Technology

The mission of the Puget Sound Center is to leverage **the power of technology, diversity and leadership** to transform teaching and learning.



Throughout 2004, the Puget Sound Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology continued its dynamic growth and responsiveness to partner needs. Staff of the Center have focused on clarifying our mission, identifying strategic objectives and developing collaborative partnerships. Along with our exciting partnership with Microsoft, two new work groups were created, three staff were added, and the Diversity in Technology Group was awarded its second National Science Foundation Grant.

The Center's founding Executive Director, Bill McMeekin, returned to his long time professional interest in community college administration. We miss him and wish him well!

There are many ways to learn more about the Center, from volunteering as a mentor in our TechREACH program for middle school girls, to exploring our innovative Peer Coaching resources, to participating in a collaborative project.

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Edmonds Community College Foundation, attorney with Beresford, Booth, Demaray & Tingstad, Inc. P.S.

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Karen Peterson

Executive Director for the Center and Ex-Officio Member of the Board

Strategic Objectives

▶ **Professional Development**

Optimize the performance of educators and other professionals by providing programs and courses on the effective use of technology, peer coaching, and leadership.

▶ **Equity**

Provide programs and support that address the achievement gap in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

▶ **Evaluation**

Assess needs, analyze program design, and provide program improvement recommendations.

▶ **Innovative Tools and Methods**

Create and use innovative methods and technology tools to support PSCTLT programs, educators and other professionals.

■ Microsoft Peer Coaching

Early in 2004 the Puget Sound Center's coaching program won unique recognition. Microsoft licensed the coaching program from PSCTLT and made it a key element in that organization's new "U.S. Partners in Learning" initiative. Microsoft's nationwide program will invest \$35 million over five years to supplement successful teaching models and curricula. The program will offer schools and administrators a spectrum of education resources that empower students and teachers to use technology to reach their full potential.

In addition to licensing the program, Microsoft has engaged the Center to implement the Microsoft Peer Coaching program across the United States and to help other countries adapt the program. The PSCTLT will provide the curriculum for the Microsoft program and will train Master Trainers in how to manage and implement the program.



Throughout 2004, PSCTLT staff worked with Microsoft to create the associated print and Web-based materials for Peer Coaching. In addition, a training program has been developed for local facilitators and master trainers.

More information on the Microsoft Peer Coaching program is found at <http://pc.innovativeteachers.com>.



■ Online Learning Initiatives

By collaborating with several Puget Sound Center programs and initiating its own activities, the Online Learning Program leverages the power of online learning and online tools to help transform teaching and learning, foster leadership, and facilitate collaboration among program partners.

Online learning has been a key curricular feature of the Center's Teaching + Technology Coaching Initiative (T2CI) program for several years. Coaches use online learning tools during training sessions to build community and collaborate on projects. Examples include discussion board introductions, online portfolio and Web lesson tools, and e-Zine creation. Between training sessions, coaches communicate at a distance with one another and facilitators through use of a moderated discussion board and an e-mail listserv. A recent T2CI online learning innovation is the Online Special Event, which brings a recognized expert (or team of experts) into an online discussion space for 7-10 days. Coaches, facilitators and the expert or team collaboratively build understanding of a topic or series of topics chosen to help coaches build skills. In 2004 T2CI hosted two successful Online Special Events and is planning to host more in 2005.

Another recent online learning innovation involves the use of an online course as the primary training repository for the second-year Peer Coaching program, known as Teaching + Technology Coaching Year 2 (T2C2). Coaches who finish T2CI and enroll in T2C2 meet three times over the course of a school year to build and refine their coaching plans, practice coaching skills and build coaching community. The online course in which they communicate between the three sessions also holds their in-progress coaching plans, plus all training documents and resources.

In addition to supporting existing Center programs and activities, the Online Learning Program actively seeks other partnerships, business, and grant opportunities to allow us to leverage our expertise in online learning design and facilitation. In all of these efforts, we seek to help partner organizations that share our mission of transforming teaching and learning.

Recent partnerships include:

- Consulting with international partners who are interested in localizing T2CI, including its use of online learning elements.
- Co-designing and co-facilitating the seven-week, all-online Ready to Facilitate course (partnership with Public Broadcasting System's TeacherLine division and Concord Consortium).
- Facilitating and mentoring facilitators for the six-week, all-online Online Facilitator Training course (partnership with TeacherLine).
- Designing, redesigning, and facilitating five-week courses: Introduction to Peer Coaching and Staff Development in an Integrated Curriculum (partnership with National School Board Association's Technology Leadership Network).

■ TechREACH

The mission of TechREACH is to increase middle school girls' interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) through hands-on high-quality curriculum, mentoring and real world projects. TechREACH served 136 middle school girls at 8 middle schools in the Puget Sound area in the 2003-04 school year and expanded to serve 170 girls in 12 schools in 2004-05.

Results of the Year 1 program evaluation by Evergreen Training and Evaluation showed that TechREACH increased girls' interest and confidence in STEM. 68% of girls stated that TechREACH helped their interest in math/science a little or a lot. 79% of girls responded that the club helped their interest in technology a little or a lot. Confidence levels showed similar impact, with 63% of girls reporting increased confidence in math/science and 73% reporting increased confidence in technology.

Students in TechREACH clubs learned various skills, from digital photography and environmental science to Web site programming. The 6th grade club at Voyager Middle School in Mukilteo became a resource for their school, creating a PowerPoint presentation shown to incoming 5th grade students telling them things they should know about the school. PSCTLT supports the TechREACH program through providing a stipend to teachers who lead TechREACH clubs, funds for club equipment and supplies, professional development for TechREACH club leaders, mentors for all TechREACH students, and student recruitment and retention support.

PSCTLT built partnerships with the Alliance of Technology and Women and Boeing Women in Leadership to meet the demand for TechREACH e-mentors. TechREACH mentors work at organizations such as Microsoft, the Department of Ecology, Boeing, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, and many other regional employers.

In 2004, TechREACH clubs were located in middle schools in the Seattle, Edmonds, Shoreline, Everett, Highline, Mukilteo, Renton, Whidbey Island, and Kent areas. Current middle schools participating include North, Voyager, Brier Terrace, Meany, Madrona, Seattle Girls School, Dimmitt, Sylvester, College Place, Kellogg, Langley, and Meridian. Additional sites will be added next year to meet our goal of serving more than 600 participants over the course of three years.

For more information about TechREACH, visit <http://pugetsoundcenter.org/techreach>.



■ Northwest Girls Collaborative Project (NWGCP)

This 18-month National Science Foundation grant, which culminated in February 2004, brought together over 100 organizations and programs in Washington and Oregon to collaborate, share resources, and promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) activities in an effort to strengthen the capacity, impact, and sustainability of girl-serving STEM programs. The NWGCP supported these organizations and activities via an NWGCP Web site including an online Program Directory listing all participating organizations, conferences and forums both in person and via video conference, e-newsletters, and developed a program self-assessment tool to assist organizational leaders in evaluating strengths and weaknesses of their programs.



In addition, 25 collaborative projects, each with two or more participating organizations, were awarded \$1,000 mini-grants to support activities that addressed gaps and overlaps in services for girl-serving STEM projects, including sharing best practices, developing assessment activities, and organizing events to encourage girls to pursue STEM careers. A Replication Guide was created to support other regions that may want to replicate all or part of the NWGCP model.

As a result of the success of the NWGCP, the National Science Foundation invited the PSCTLT to apply for another grant to replicate the NWGCP model of collaboration in three other regions in the United States. The PSCTLT applied for and received this grant and began work on the National Girls Collaborative Project in September 2004.

National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP)

The National Girls Collaborative Project brings together leaders and experts in girl-serving STEM organizations and assists them in sharing knowledge as well as exploring creative concepts across disciplines and between organizations. This is done via conferences and forums, electronic communications, and providing structured collaborative brainstorming and planning sessions. Mini-grants are awarded to well-designed, creative, and innovative collaborative projects which stimulate and encourage organizations to work together to improve existing successful STEM programs.

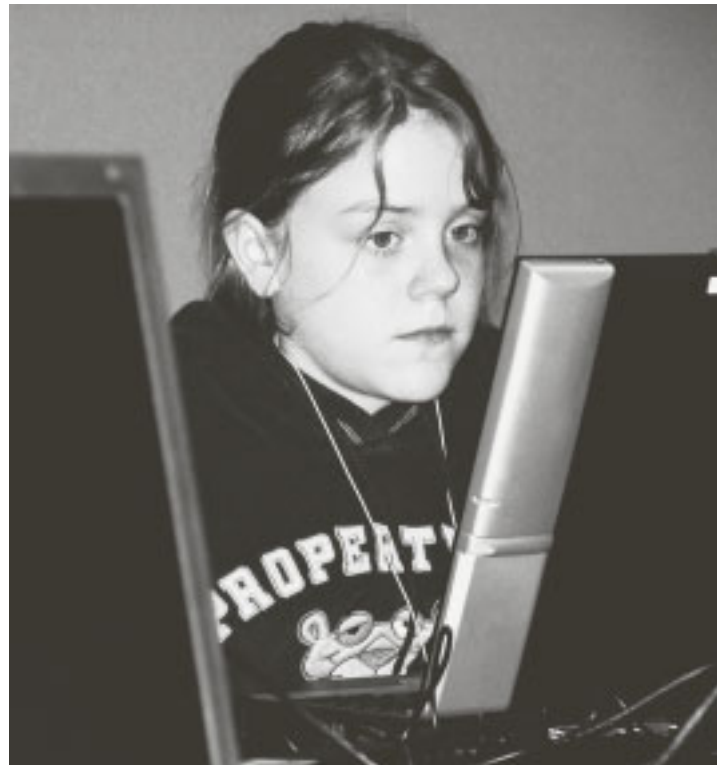


■ Evaluation

In 2004, the Center launched a new division called the Evaluation and Research Associates (ERA), offering program evaluation for projects in the social sciences specifically related to education and organizations interested in program improvement or those looking at program impact. Services include the administration of online surveys, qualitative and quantitative data analysis, research, and reporting of formative or summative evaluations and program evaluation. PSCTLT has a robust online survey system (Survey Solutions 6™) to use for external data gathering. ERA has worked with community-based organizations, school districts, educational service districts, and not-for-profit foundations.

Evaluation and Research Associates helps organizations or programs examine program processes and then provides information on "best practices" for ongoing improvement and operation. This includes planning the evaluation, determining methods to collect information, analyzing and interpreting the information gathered, and reporting evaluation results.

The division also provides outcome evaluation measures to demonstrate the impact of programs on various stakeholders. Outcome-based evaluation services might start with determining which methods work best to gather information to answer the research questions related to program theory from various stakeholders of the project. ERA will make recommendations and provide conclusions in reports designed for different audiences.





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