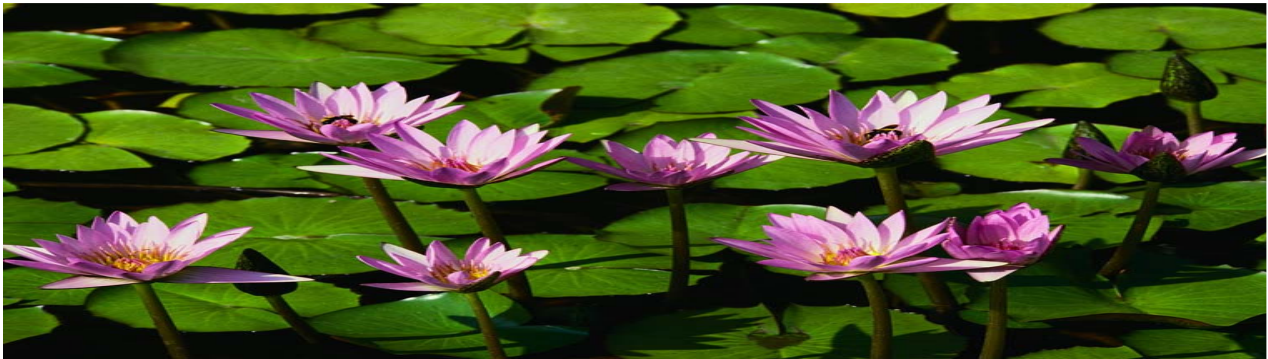




eMemo

March 2007



*Thank you to this month's **WFIS eMemo** sponsor,
The ARK Foundation of Tacoma, Washington*

March 15, 2007

WFIS Legislative Update:

“Strengthening education as the advocate and voice of private schools” has proven much more than a written message to our membership this year. With the November elections, our state elected an even greater Democratic majority in each house of the State Legislature. WFIS has spent much of the year since the 2006 Legislative session, working to partner with stakeholders around the state who have a similar philosophy regarding educational choice. We have also worked closely with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Private School Advisory Committee to OSPI, our constituency leadership groups, our WFIS board and a variety of lobbyists that could present our view and move forward our legislative agenda. (See <http://www.wfis.org/HTML/pubpol/sirs.html>.)

In 2005, Governor Gregoire appointed a commission to study Washington’s educational system from birth through college. This commission was called “Washington Learns”. Its initial focus was to evaluate funding for education at all levels and make recommendations on how educational dollars could be better spent. This group, divided into three committees, was to address Early Learning, K-12, and Higher Ed. The Governor also created a new department, co-equal with OSPI, called the Early Learning Department. As you may recall, the results of the sixteen-month study were presented in November, 2006, and have been the basis for almost all of the educationally related bills for this legislative session.

The initial Omnibus Bill to enact the Commission's findings has been divided into many smaller pieces. While, the vast majority of K-12 and Higher Ed bills have held little concern for our member schools, the Early Childhood legislation has been of great concern. This is because there is no cohesive statewide group to represent the private early childhood educational providers and these providers comprise the majority of programs in our state. After hearing concerns from our member schools that do have early learning programs, WFIS has been following the proposed legislation and provided testimony on their behalf as bills have been introduced in committee. We are also working with OSPI to schedule a meeting with the new EL Executive Director in order to address our concerns. These concerns are centered around the five initiatives that the state is proposing: establishing an Early Learning Advisory Council (securing WFIS representation), a Five-Star Voluntary Rating System applicable to both child care centers and homes (concern centers around facilities criteria), develop a public-private (money only) partnership, increase the salary scale for those in early learning, and provide professional development and degree criteria for those teaching our youngest children. While these goals are laudable, we believe there may be unintended consequences for our private schools. By the way, the funding issue was not addressed to the legislature's satisfaction. To date, because of our testimony, the Senate has successfully amended the legislation enacting the Early Learning Council (**HB 5828**) to include a representative appointed by WFIS. This is a great step forward. We will be monitoring the bill when it goes to the house to ensure that this language stays in the bill.

On other legislative fronts, at this writing, WFIS has been successful in inserting "public" in front of the word schools in both house and senate versions of a sex education bill (**HB 1844 and SB 5297**) that disallow abstinence-only sex education in favor of curriculum approved by OSPI. Public schools now must teach from the state "guidelines" or not teach sex education at all.

We worked on an exclusion from an HPV bill, **HB 1802**, that mandates notification at the 6th grade level for all public and private schools using state materials. While we were unsuccessful in amending the bill to exclude private schools in the house, we are going to introduce an amendment from the floor of the Senate to provide that exclusion. Our goal is to continue to foster educational and curricular autonomy for our schools so they can decide when and what curriculum will be used.

The Secretary of State has also proposed a bill that would require all **501 (c) (3)** organizations to register with the state as charitable organizations if they solicit the public for contributions. This registration is similar to the Form 990 private schools do for the IRS. Exemptions for churches and their auxiliaries (church sponsored schools) and private schools that only solicit from their current parents and alumni are in place. All other private schools would need to register. Although, it would not seem to affect their ability to raise funds as they have in the past.

At the request of the Washington State Catholic Conference, we supported their bill that would allow private schools to voluntarily administer the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) without the current additional charge that public school students do not pay. The bill has been sponsored by the Chair of the House Education Committee and was passed out of committee with a unanimous vote. It moved to appropriations and did not get a hearing before the deadline to move to the floor. While we were unsuccessful moving the bill, we have requested the funds be allocated in the

new budget.

Other governmental initiatives WFIS has been working on this year include:

- Removed private schools reporting language from a school pesticide bill.
- Successfully changing legislation to have the same price for public and private school employee background checks. Until this year, private schools have paid more.
- Developing partnerships to allow K-12 private schools to access the K-20 Network (Washington's Education Communication System)
- Partnering with OSPI and the PSAC to provide a smooth transition for the new private school person replacing our longtime liaison, Marcia Riggers.
- Working with the Professional Educators Standards Board to assist state certified teachers in private schools to complete professional certification without leaving private education to do so.
- Working to change rules at individual state-sponsored universities so student teachers can do their practicum in private schools.
- Providing information to private schools regarding participation in Federal Title Programs. To date, approximately 50% of private schools participate at some level. This is a dramatic increase over the past five years.

Judy Jennings
Executive Director

Give Secondary Students a Chance!

You can by applying now to add your school to the growing list of Washington State schools and students now benefiting as a partner with the Saul and Dayee G. Haas Foundation.

During the 2005-2006 school years the Haas Foundation provided funding to 685 schools to support the immediate needs of deserving students. More than 13,692 students were helped statewide. By supporting both public and private secondary schools throughout the state, the Haas Foundation is committed to improving the quality of life among students in need. The goal is to encourage students to stay in school, return to school, or get involved with their learning community. It is an equalizer of opportunity, helping growing students build confidence, hold on to hope, and believe in their goals.

This year the Foundation's successful "Give Secondary Students a Chance!" campaign has raised \$78,472 on a \$100,000 goal and anticipates wrapping up the campaign in May. The case statement for the campaign is to fund NEW secondary schools \$15,000 to \$20,000 which will go toward adding 26 new schools as well as for the Haas portion of the matching grants, which are challenge grants to currently funded schools statewide .

It's easy to apply on-line at www.haasfoundation.org. Full details can be found under the "school eligibility" section, or by contacting the Foundation at 911 8th Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98109. (206) 352-1199. It is also easy to sign up for the Foundation's e-newsletter or become one of the many statewide volunteers.

How does the grant work? Each August checks ranging from \$200 to several thousand dollars are sent to schools. New school coordinators (assigned by the principal of the building) attend mandatory training sessions presented by the Haas Foundation staff on a monthly basis or by utilizing the Foundation's PowerPoint tutorial. The trained and appointed school fund coordinators choose from a list of appropriate uses provided to them by the Foundation. They arrange for the purchase of goods and services on behalf of the students. Whether purchasing a new pair of eyeglasses, providing an ASB card, giving a student a bus pass, providing athletic equipment or paying for a band trip, or helping with college access the Haas Foundation support allows secondary schools to meet the immediate personal needs of students that occur throughout the school year. Checks are not issued directly to students and other than an annual report, no other form or application is required.

You are invited to apply and join the mission of the Haas Foundation. Together, our efforts will continue to give students in need a hand up so they can keep moving toward their dreams, one step at a time.

WFIS MOVES FORWARD - The State of the Federation

Organizationally, the WFIS Executive Board continues to work on the Strategic Initiatives we developed last year. In an effort to acquire more member schools, a task force was appointed which produced a new membership recruitment and retention plan which was approved at our last meeting. It was decided this year that Mrs. Jennings would meet with constituency groups around the state instead of holding meetings by area. While we have been able to articulate WFIS goals to more people, the development of broader relationships outside of the constituencies has not taken place as it has in the past.

We have also worked to continue to improve our member school employee benefits packages. To smaller group insurance eligibility, we have added a \$10 per employee background check which includes a criminal screen, national sex offender database search, national criminal database sweep, the Washington State Patrol check and a judicial search for misdemeanors as well as convictions. We are in the process of adding a death benefit insurance policy for all member school employees.

WFIS hosted our first and most successful Fall Workshops at Spring Valley Montessori School in November. We are working with the Law Firm of Ellis, Li and McKinstry in Seattle to put on a private school legal workshop in May. This will cover the spectrum of topics of interest to private school administrators and boards.

Once again, at the request of WFIS, our Governor has declared February as Private School Month. To celebrate that, we encouraged our schools to visit the Capitol and meet with their legislators. We also continued to hold our Annual Winter Dinner at the Museum of Flight in February as part of this celebration. This year, we were honored to have **Jack Klenk**, Director of ONPE, as our Keynote Speaker, **Donna Foxley** the

Region 10 Representative from the Department of Education as our special guest and **Terry Bergeson**, Superintendent of Public Instruction as our Governmental Official of the Year.

We continue to work to improve the value of our service to Washington's private school community in every way possible. Our Executive Board will meet in May to plot our organizational course for 2007-08.

PUZZLED ABOUT A STUDENT?

The **ARK Institute of Learning** helps schools retain students.

Intellectually able students may be atypical learners. This often frustrates the student, thwarts talented teachers, and leads parents and schools to decide the school is the wrong place for this child.

The ARK Institute of Learning can help. We identify how a child learns and work with schools and parents to bring about academic success. Through research based assessments and instruction, ARK educational therapists find solutions and share them with the student, educators and parents. We invite you to let parents know about these services. Scholarships are available.

ARK Institute of Learning

1916 S. Washington Street
Tacoma, WA 98406
www.arkinst.org
253-573-0311

Wall Street Journal - March 2, 2007 - Commentary

Selective School Choice

By **CLINT BOLICK**
March 2, 2007; Page A11

There's something about our nation's capital that converts many leading Democrats to school choice. Perhaps it's the glimpse that Washington, D.C. affords into inner-city public schools.

But in most cases this appreciation of school choice extends only to their own children -- and not to the millions of children in failing public schools. Indeed, a nearly perfect correlation exists among Democratic presidential candidates who have exercised school choice for their own children and those who would deny such choices to the parents of other children.

When the Clintons came to Washington, D.C. in 1993, they could choose any public school for Chelsea. Being responsible parents of means, Bill and Hillary Clinton sent her instead to the elite private Sidwell Friends School. Two years later Mr. Clinton vetoed a bill that would have allowed low-income D.C. parents to use public funds to send their

children to private schools. (A subsequent version of that program was signed into law by George W. Bush.)

And today presidential candidate Mrs. Clinton continues to stridently oppose school choice. In a speech to the National Education Association she vowed "never to abandon our public schools" -- speaking apparently as a politician, not a parent.

John Edwards, Mr. Populist, decries that "America has two school systems -- one for the affluent and one for everyone else." He should know. When he joined the U.S. Senate he sent his children to a religious school because, according to USA Today, the D.C. "public schools are deeply troubled." Mr. Edwards, however, opposes private school choice for low-income families on the curious grounds that this would "drain resources" from public schools. By such logic Mr. Edwards himself "drained" approximately \$132,000 from the D.C. public schools.

Al Gore, who may yet join the presidential race, has said empathetically, "If I was a parent of a child who went to an inner-city school that was failing, I might be for vouchers, too." But he isn't, and so he is not. Mr. Gore sent all of his children to elite private schools in the nation's capital, like the one he attended growing up. But he militantly opposes school choice for low-income families.

There is only one Democratic aspirant who sent his children exclusively to public schools, and he was also the only one who signed a school choice bill into law in his own state: former Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack, who withdrew from the race when his candidacy failed to gain traction. And there is only one candidate -- Sen. Joe Biden -- who has both sent his children to private school and supported school choice for others.

The mystery man is Sen. Barack Obama, who sends his child to a private school in Chicago yet once referred to school vouchers as "social Darwinism." Still, he says that on education reform, "I think a good place to start would be for both Democrats and Republicans to say . . . we are willing to experiment and invest in anything that works."

Well, school choice works. Every study that compares children who applied for school choice scholarships and received them with those who applied but did not shows improved academic performance. More important, every study that has examined the effect of school choice competition has found significantly improved performance by public schools.

Given their track records it is doubtful how many candidates will agree with Sen. Obama's professed openness to experiment. But as he might say, we can always have the audacity to hope.

Mr. Bolick is president and general counsel of the Alliance for School Choice and senior fellow at the Goldwater Institute.

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Montessori Schools Celebrate Centennial

2007 is the year to honor the centennial celebration of Montessori Education throughout the world. Montessori Education began in 1915 in the state of Washington and the Montessori Method of schooling has contributed to the education of Washington State children in private and public Montessori schools for more than 90 years. In honor of this contribution, Governor Christine Gregoire proclaimed the week of February 26 – March 3, 2007 as **Montessori Centennial Week**.

WASSP Representative Council Meeting

January 28-29, 2007

Chris Gavin, Principal at Bellarmine Preparatory School, represents WFIS to the Washington Association of Secondary School Principals. Mr. Gavin reports the following highlights from their January meeting:

Sophomore students from Western Washington private schools may apply to be the student representative on the State Board of Education. This is a two-year term and a unique opportunity. Forms should be coming to our schools soon.

A student leadership program called RSVP (Raising Student Voice Program) will be starting training this spring. This looks like a great way to develop more leadership within our student bodies. It will augment already existing programs (Link, Natural Helpers, Inner-highs). For more information call Susan Fortin at (360) 497-5323.

“Best of Washington” for 2007

On Tuesday evening, February 13th, the **Washington Federation of Independent Schools** held its **6th Annual Winter Dinner and Best of Washington Awards** at the **Museum of Flight** in Seattle. More than 150 people came to celebrate the work of several outstanding leaders in private education. **Jack Klenk**, Director for the Office of Non-Public Education in the U.S. Department of Education, provided the keynote address. Other distinguished guests included **Donna Foxley**, District 10 Representative to the U.S. Department of Education; **Roger Norrie**, Northwest Director for ACSI Schools; **Elaine Brower**, Northwest Director for CSI Schools; and Sr. Joyce Cox, Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Seattle.

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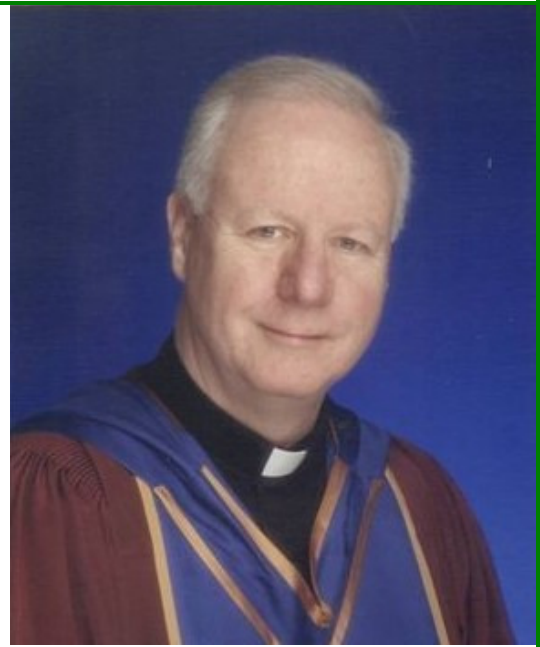
Don Johnson, Superintendent of **Cascade Christian Schools** in Puyallup, Spanaway, and Tacoma, was honored for his more than 20 years of leadership at Cascade. Johnson became Principal of Puyallup Valley Christian School in 1986, acting as such until 1992, when he became Superintendent and spearheaded the consolidation of several schools into an interdenominational Christian school system that today serves nearly 2,000 students. Don Johnson received the **WFIS Outstanding Administrator** award.

Peggy Iversen, from **Silverwood School** in Poulsbo, was presented the award of **Outstanding Program Leader**. Iversen co-founded Silverwood in 1984 with a handful of other parents of kindergartners who wanted to continue into the elementary years the excellent education their children had enjoyed at The Farm Montessori School in Poulsbo. Their first classroom was, literally, a converted chicken coop. Silverwood is now situated on an 18-acre campus, a former farm, where Iversen's outstanding literacy program for first and second graders is housed in the converted barn.



A parent at **Northshore Christian Academy** in Everett, and an employee of The Boeing Company, **Jacqueline Johnson** was chosen as **Outstanding Parent** by WFIS. She has been recognized as the Puget Sound Engineering Educator of the Year by the Puget Sound Engineering Council for her work in educating youth. Johnson has spent the past five years implementing a national award-winning program for students K-12. Her goal is to bring together engineering mentors, students, and teachers to complete an integrated program showing math and science can be fun.

Fr. Stephen C. Rowan, Chair of the **Fulcrum Foundation** of the Archdiocese of Seattle, was selected to receive the **Outstanding Patron** award. Through his efforts and those of others in the Foundation, more than \$26 million has been raised to support and enhance the education of children in Catholic schools in Washington. Rowan has served in a number of educational posts: Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Seattle University, Interim President of Carroll College in Montana, and Vicar for Education and Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Seattle. As a teacher of English in seminaries and universities since 1970 and as a weekend assistant in many parishes of the Archdiocese, Rowan has enjoyed combining the vocations of priest, teacher and administrator in the service of education. **Joe Womac**, Executive Director of the Foundation, received the award on behalf of Fr. Rowan.



Outstanding Board Leadership was the honor bestowed upon **Janet Taylor**, board member at

New Horizon School in Renton. New Horizon specializes in students with learning differences, especially ADD and ADHD. Taylor has been a parent at New Horizon since 1997. After co-chairing two auctions, she was elected to the Board of Directors. Between 1999 and the present, Taylor has served as board secretary, vice-president and president. At the same time she has been very active on the following committees: Ad Hoc Bylaws, Strategic Planning, Development, Board Development, Finance, Policy Development, and Accreditation. She considers her work with New Horizon School her most satisfying volunteer experience and believes the school is absolutely essential for those students and families who are affected by attention deficit and other learning disorders.

Stephen Fikkert of Mount Vernon Christian School was named as the WFIS Teacher of the Year. In addition to serving as the school's guidance counselor, in his 15 years at Mount Vernon Christian, Fikkert has taught high school Apologetics, Ethics, the Bible as Literature, the Book of Hebrews and woodshop. Steve has written much of the Bible curriculum for the high school and has served as the Chapel Coordinator. He is currently the National Honor Society advisor and has served as Student Council Advisor, Senior Class Advisor, middle school soccer coach and middle school girls' basketball coach. He serves on the school's Education



Committee and the Administrative Team, and has served on the board of Northwest Christian Schools International.



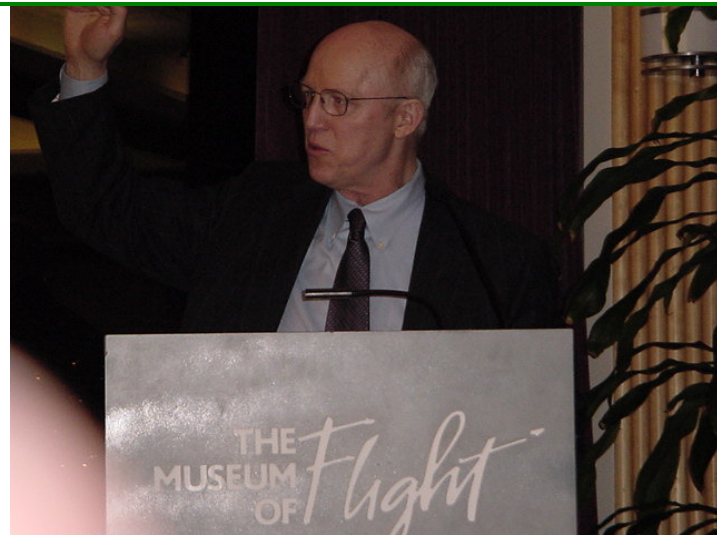
The award for **Outstanding State Official** is one that is presented to a state official who has worked to build strong relationships with private schools. Dr. Terry Bergeson, Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Washington, was chosen to receive the 2007 Outstanding State Official award in

honor of her “hands off” approach to private education. Bergeson has demonstrated respect for the missions of private schools and is supportive of continuing to build the relationship between private and public schools. In 1993, Dr. Bergeson was appointed Executive Director of the Washington State Commission on Student Learning, developing statewide standards for students and a series of assessments students must pass prior to graduation. Throughout her career, she has focused on what is best for students and has worked tirelessly to build partnerships between legislators, educators, parents and community leaders. Bergeson has held the position of Superintendent of Public Instruction since her election in 1996.

The **WFIS Columbia Award** is presented to an individual whose work has been instrumental in furthering collaboration and opportunity between public and private K-12 interests. It is conferred by the WFIS Board of Directors. This year's Columbia Award was presented to **Jack Schuster**, retired principal from **John F. Kennedy High School** in Seattle and current private schools representative on the **State Board of Education**. During his long career, Schuster has served both private and public schools in several capacities, most recently as a member of the Association of Washington School Principals, where he served as the president and was the



only private school principal to serve in that roll for AWSP.



Keynote Speaker for the evening was **John D. "Jack" Klenk**, Director of the **Office of Non-Public Education at the U. S. Department of Education**. Klenk focused on the value of private education and the sense of community that thrives within private schools. He

emphasized the involvement and collaboration of parents and teachers in the holistic education of their children. Klenk is the Department's liaison to the private and home school community, and fosters maximum participation of nonpublic school students and teachers in federal education programs and initiatives. Klenk has been with ONPE for 14 years, and previously directed the Department's Center for Choice in Education, the Issues Analysis Staff, and the Planning and Evaluation Service. He also served in the White House Office of Policy Development. Klenk taught school in Uganda after college and has led several volunteer teams there in recent years.

Guests for the evening were greeted by Student Ambassadors from Holy Names Academy in Seattle **Sabrina Topacio, Taylor Davison, and Carolyn Read**. Background music for the reception hour preceding dinner was provided by **Rory Borcherding** with his viola. Rory is a graduate of Concordia Lutheran School in Tacoma. He is currently a student at Mount Rainier Lutheran High School and plays

with the Tacoma Youth Symphony.

Presenters of the awards were WFIS Executive Director **Judy Jennings** and board members **Eric Rasmussen** of King's Schools in Seattle/Bremerton; **Elizabeth Swift**, Holy Names Academy, Seattle; **Rick Van Beek**, Riverside Christian School, Yakima; **Chris Gavin**, Bellarmine Prep, Tacoma; **Jamie Estill**, Silverwood School, Poulsbo; and **Dr. Steve Stein**, Ellensburg Christian School.

Sponsors of the event included **PEMCO Financial Services**, **School Employees Credit Union of Washington**, **24/7 Educational Services**, **SMART Tuition Management Services**, **Bell-Anderson Insurance**, **Bob Wilkin of Educator Resources**, **Jim Butler of BGR Co.**, **Saxton Bradley** and **Jennings Equipment**. Excellent service and a delicious meal were provided by **McCormick & Schmick's Catering** and the **Museum of Flight** staff.

The Bulletin Board

Seattle Red Cross First Aid Kits:

http://www.redcross-oregontrail.org/miva/merchant.mv?Screen=CTGY&Store_Code=ARCSEA&Category_Code=01

WSAME WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Winter & Spring 2007

MARCH 27, 2007, 9 A.M. – 3 P.M. *The Role of Whites in a Multicultural Society*

In this interactive workshop, for people of all colors, we will move beyond denial, blame, guilt and fear, to take an honest look at race relations in America and to define a positive role for whites in a diverse society. Participants will explore the concept of white privilege, where it comes from, how it works, and why it is invisible to some. We will share models of unity and consult on ways to bridge the barriers between whites and people of color, in order to construct harmonious and productive relationships.

Location: Antioch University Seattle (6th & Battery, Seattle), RM. 100

Advanced Registration Date: February 14, 2007.

No refunds for cancellations after February 27, 2007.

APRIL 25, 2007, 9 A.M. – 3 P.M. *Becoming Culturally Competent*

The key to cultural competency is integrating knowledge about individuals, groups of people and institutions into policies, practices and attitudes that respect diversity. Participants will learn skills and tools to become more culturally competent in working with others.

Location: Antioch University Seattle (6th & Battery, Seattle), RM. 100

Advanced Registration Date: March 9, 2007.

No refunds for cancellations after March 23, 2007.

For questions or further workshop information, contact WSAME at 206-522-5438 or email: WSAME@mindspring.com. Website: www.wsame.org