



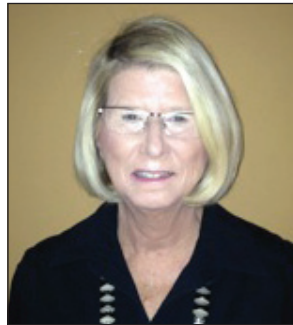
## Academy Holds Its First Webinar

by Amy Lawrence, F/AOGPE

On October 21, 2014, President Shelia Costello introduced the first Fellow Webinar for the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators. During the webinar, three Fellows and one Fellow-in-Training shared their expertise regarding training at the Classroom Educator level. The presenters included Fellows: Norma Jean McHugh, Georgia, Deb Foster Morris, Massachusetts, Dawn Nieman, New York, and Fellow-In-Training Peggy Price, Vermont.

Norma Jean described twenty-two essential components of the Classroom Educator syllabus, which include: the Orton-Gillingham Approach involving the how and why of the Approach, brain research, the history of our language, and the articulation of the letters. She stresses the importance of helping teachers realize that this approach is good for all learners, not just those with dyslexia. She requires that her trainees write a decodable text using the scope and sequence and concepts/phonemes previously taught, excluding those concepts that have not yet been introduced. Each trainee must take a final exam, which includes being able to correctly articulate each phoneme.

Dawn Nieman shared how she uses videos and simulations to help train classroom educators in the Orton-Gillingham Approach. In the simulations, trainees participate in numerous stations, which allow them to experience the situations their students with dyslexia encounter. Nieman, who also uses technology in her training, recommended Letter School for the iPad, which allows students to trace/copy/cover lowercase letters.



*Norma Jean McHugh*



*Dawn Nieman*



*Deb Morris*



*Peggy Price*



*Josie Calamari*

Deb Morris of the Met School presented how to teach morphology and the history of our language at the high school level. Met School students use a morphology notebook to record and color code prefixes, stems, and suffixes. Trainees learn how to set up this notebook and make jewel boxes. They also become familiar with the history of the Academy and its code of ethics.

Peggy Price from the Cynthia K. Hoehl Institute for Excellence, housed within Stern Center for Language and Learning, spoke about the Classroom Educator training, under her supervising Fellow, Chris Evans. Stern Center has narrowed Classroom Educator training for K-5 classroom teachers with the focus on Tiers I and II. The four day course includes many video clips of whole group and small group OG instruction in primary grades. This year, all OGCE candidates are enrolled in a year-long practicum. Eighty percent are within the same school district. Improved student outcomes have been reported.

Questions were collected throughout the webinar, and Josie Calamari facilitated a question and answer period at the end of the presentation allowing for audience participation.

Seventy members of the Academy attended the webinar from all over the country. If you were not able to attend this event, a recording of the webinar is available in the Member section of our website for Fellow and Certified members.



Academy of  
Orton-Gillingham  
Practitioners  
and Educators

*Incorporated Under New York State Education Law*

Academy News is published bi-annually by the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators.

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The purpose of the Academy is to establish and maintain the highest professional standards for the practice of the Orton-Gillingham Approach. We certify practitioners and accredit practitioner training programs and student instructional programs that use the Approach to address the language-based learning difficulties associated with dyslexia. The Academy is also active in professional development and public awareness.

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## President's Message

In 2015 the Academy will celebrate its twentieth anniversary. Since the inception of the Academy, we have seen significant progress in neuroscience and the understanding of the nature of dyslexia. Sadly, national statistics on reading have shown little improvement and many dyslexic individuals continue to be undiagnosed and inadequately remediated. To quote Sally Shaywitz in a recent congressional hearing, "There is not a knowledge gap, but rather an action gap."



As many of you know, IDA has recently adopted the term "Structured Literacy" to describe an approach to reading instruction that is structured, sequential, multisensory, and explicitly taught. IDA is taking action where reading instruction is first taught, in K-3 general education classrooms throughout America. First, in developing knowledge and practice standards for classroom teachers, next in credentialing colleges that teach to this standard, IDA aims to improve the knowledge base of teachers so they are trained and prepared to teach beginning readers and to identify those who struggle. Former AOGPE president, Rosalie Davis, was a member of the committee that developed those standards and remains involved as IDA moves towards credentialing practitioners and organizations. Grass root advocacy groups such as Decoding Dyslexia aim to raise dyslexia awareness, act as a resource for parents, and attempt change at the state level by informing policy-makers on best practices to identify, remediate, and support students with dyslexia.

In these changing times it is critical that we as an Academy remain focused on our mission, and reflect on the origins of the Academy. There is no patent or trademark on the term Orton-Gillingham, and there are many interpretations of the training requirements and practice of the Approach. Over twenty years ago a diverse group of highly experienced practitioners representing expertise in remediating dyslexic individuals came together to determine what constituted the Orton-Gillingham Approach. Paula Rome was one of the mentors of this group. She suggested that Orton-Gillingham practitioners meet and talk about uniting and forming an Orton-Gillingham Institute. Margaret Rawson and Roger Saunders were also mentors. The group of individuals who met over a period of five years became our founding Fellows. They represented different regions of the United States, had trained with students of Anna Gillingham, Paula Rome, or June Orton but came together to articulate what were the essentials of the Approach and the training required for teachers to teach it with competence. The Academy came about when these highly experienced practitioners formulated what were the essentials of Orton-Gillingham instruction and the requirements for training practitioners. The Academy stands alone in embracing the diversity of the seminal works and basing theory and practice on the flexibility of the Orton-Gillingham Approach. The sole reason for its being is to set and maintain professional and ethical standards for Orton-Gillingham practice and certify those individuals and accredit instructional programs that meet those standards. This is a critical difference between the Academy and other Orton-Gillingham programs.

As IDA moves forward in implementing Structured Literacy for all beginning readers, it is essential that the Academy is clear in articulating to parents and professionals the difference between good reading instruction in the classroom and remedial instruction that is individualized, diagnostic, and prescriptive, and is delivered by highly trained and mentored teachers with the intensity necessary for remediation of a dyslexic child. The Academy clearly articulates the essentials of the Orton-Gillingham Approach and the level of training necessary for individuals to thoroughly understand the dyslexic learner and to match a student's individual needs with effective, diagnostic, and prescriptive lessons.

Academy members have met these standards and must continue to uphold them for remedial instruction for dyslexic students. We know that this approach certainly benefits all students, but it is essential in addressing the specific language learning needs of our dyslexic learners. I hope you will join us this April in White Plains, NY as we celebrate twenty years of working together to help our dyslexic learners and their families.

Sincerely,

Sheila Costello, F/AOGPE  
President, Board of Trustees



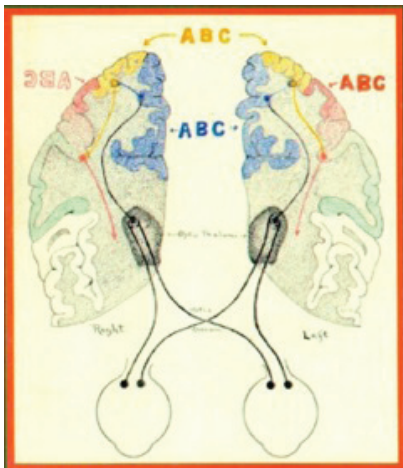
# Reversals

by Diana Hanbury King, Founding and Honorary Fellow/AOGPE

If you believe in Dog, think life has given you melons, walk into a bra, worry about Santa taking your soul, think DNA stands for the National Dyslexia Association, and are still in daniel, you are probably dyslexic.

Jokes aside, reversals and transpositions are very much a part of the syndrome. Dyslexic children and even adults reverse when they speak, read, write, and do math.

Dr. Orton coined the term strephosymbolia, from the Greek meaning “twisted symbol,” to describe the phenomenon he observed. He theorized that the confusion arose from a reverse image stored in the right side of the brain.



He observed the high incidence of left-handedness and of mixed dominance in the population of dyslexics. For many years, tests for handedness, footedness, and eyedness were routinely included in any diagnosis. Anna Gillingham thought it important enough to test eyedness

(have the child play with a tachistoscope or a toy telescope), footedness (watch the child kick a ball or step up a stairway), as well as handedness (“Show me how you brush your teeth,” or “Reach up and turn off that light switch.”). Dr. Orton believed that there was a continuum between the wholly left-handed and right-handed.

Certainly, in diagnosing dyslexia it is important to inquire about handedness - not just in the immediate family, but in the extended family. Again and again, I find patterns of left-handedness, ambidexterity, and mixed dominance of the grandparents, uncles and aunts, and nieces and nephews in the family of a dyslexic child.

Dr. Orton titled his book *Reading, Writing, and Speech Problems in Children*. His title reflects his belief that these are all aspects of language, and that all are to some extent affected by dyslexia.

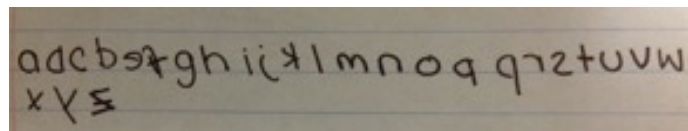
Reversals of concepts are often involved in speech. Roger Saunders reported a child as saying, “An umbrella is what you put under you when it rains,” and I remember a child saying to me, “If I come back to camp last summer, will you be my tutor?” Classic examples of transposed syllables include *flutterby*, *gaspetti*, and *lysdexia*. Sequencing the alphabet, the days of the week, and the months of the year can be a problem

even for teenagers.

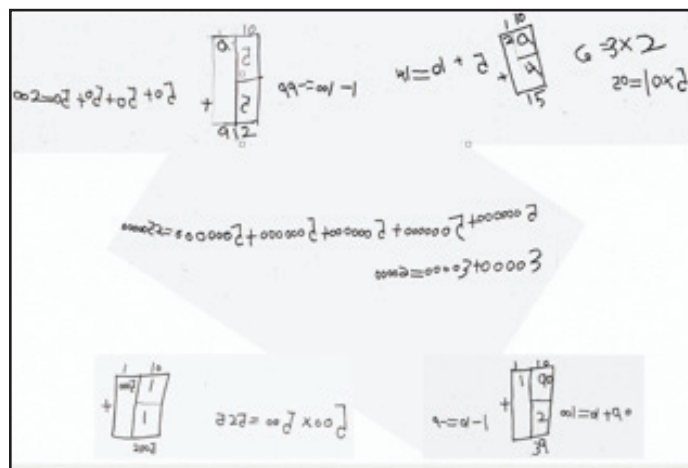
In reading we find the *was/saw* as well as confusion between *b/d*, *p/q*, *fl/t*, *m/w*, and *n/u*. The most frequently transposed letters are the liquids, *l* and *r*, e.g. *gril* for *girl* and *flim* for *film*. The Latin prefixes *pre-* and *per-* are another common source of confusion.

Spelling and handwriting are actually the two areas in which reversals are likely to be the most evident. Just look at this sample of a fifteen-year-old girl’s attempt to write the alphabet.

It is not uncommon to find high-school students spelling at a second or third grade level.



Reversals are less common in math, but they do occur. Numerals are fewer in number, but nevertheless, they do get reversed. I asked a sixteen-year-old to write the numbers from one to twenty on the board. To my surprise, his 9 was a *p*. I waited for him to catch his error. When I finally pointed it out he said, “But that’s the way I always make it.” Of course, errors do occur in computation, e.g. “13 -- put down the one and carry the three”.



What, if anything, can be done to help the problem? The best remediation is in the careful teaching of handwriting. The motor component is the strongest of our memories. Cursive handwriting is preferred, but the correct teaching of print from the beginning is essential. The child should work at first on a whiteboard using large muscles. The “Trace, Copy, Cover, Eyes closed” sequence is important. Forming the letters with eyes closed provides especially strong reinforcement.

*continued on page 4...*

## Reversals ...continued from page 3

Mnemonic devices are useful, e.g. “*b* is tall and has a ball, and *d* is the “*cd*” letter...start like *c* and then go up to make the *d*” and “When you pee it goes down, and *q* starts like *a*.” The practice of asking a child to name the *b*’s and *d*’s on a chart in rapid succession is probably useless.

Directions are another source of frustration. Driving with my dyslexic sister, I am prone to ask, “Which left do you mean?” and have her indicate by pointing.

Indeed, for the dyslexic, these reversals are not a laughing matter. It is important to realize that reversals do seem to be associated with increased activity in the right side of the brain and may well be responsible for the ability to deal with spatial relationships in the arts, in engineering, in mechanics, and in every aspect of design.

For further interesting reading, see:

**1973 Louise Clark: *Can't Read Can't Write, Can't Talk Too Good Either*** includes mistakes made by her son, frog bell, three or two, Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cocktail as well as this spelling Nloond (the capital of England, of course).

**1979 Eileen Simpson: *Reversals*** includes this note to her husband:

Deare

Time for olny a hurried note....Swimming every day despite gary skies.  
Tomorrow we canlabrent M's birthdaqy.

**1981 Susan Hampshire: *Susan's Story***

Thank you it was delieghtfull deileightfull deileightful—it was lovely.



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# Fortune Academy - Indianapolis, Indiana

by Janet George, F/AOGPE

Just a few years ago, a day school for dyslexic children began in a small donated building on the east side of Indianapolis with six children and two teachers. Fast forward, and now, as Fortune Academy enters its thirteenth year, we are proud to share our many accomplishments. Fortune is the only AOGPE accredited school in Indiana and was just recently ranked 18th of the Top 50 Best Private Special Needs Schools in the United States. We have purchased our permanent facility on ten acres of land in beautiful Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis. Our grounds have plenty of open space and large historic trees, a shaded playground, tennis courts, and an outdoor classroom which makes our campus a beautiful and safe place to learn and grow. We are a quarter of a mile from Ft. Harrison State Park, which adds to the beauty of our surroundings.

Fortune Academy, with a student to teacher ratio of four to one, currently serves 90 children in first through twelfth grade. The school specializes in serving children who are diagnosed with language based learning differences and have average to above average academic potential. Students travel from 32 different zip codes across the state of Indiana to attend our school, with our farthest traveler journeying an hour and a half each way. We project to enroll 100 children by the end of the 2014-2015 academic year.

The foundation of Fortune Academy is the Orton-Gillingham Approach. All academic subjects are woven into this approach. We firmly believe that all children learn best from concrete to abstract, simple to complex, in a structured, sequential, multi-sensory approach. Our classrooms are active with children moving, doing, and experiencing!

Lower School students participate in all academic subjects in small group or 1:1 instruction. Orton-Gillingham instruction



takes place for one hour, four days per week either in a small group setting or 1:1 depending upon the needs of the student.

Our High School offers three diploma tracks - General, College Prep, and Honors. We offer dual credits for courses taken at a local college located half a mile from our campus.

Our growing partnership with the college allows us to tailor advanced coursework and electives for our juniors and seniors to meet their individualized academic goals.



Our "all play" athletics encompasses volleyball, basketball, cross country, and track and field. Our full-time Performing Arts Director conducts multiple all-school performances throughout the year, completing plays such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *Peter Pan* and spoofs of *Romeo and Juliet*. Our Visual-Arts teachers have successfully submitted and earned multiple art awards for students including VSA Awards and Indianapolis Children's Museum Haunted House Contest winners.



Fortune Academy employs thirty employees some of which work full or part-time including both educators and therapists. Every student enrolled at Fortune benefits from working with a Speech and Language pathologist. They work on articulation and speech, vocabulary development, public speaking, SAT prep, and interviewing skills.



Janet George, Head of School, surrounded by Fortune Academy Students

afternoon in multi-sensory instruction. This past summer the entire lower school staff, along with some high school faculty, completed a thirty hour multi-sensory Math training which

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## Historical Perspectives Article of David Schenck by Rosalie Davis, F/AOGPE

David Schenck would be one of the first people to tell you about the struggles he had in school. However, it was not until he and his wife Dee volunteered to work at Camp Waya-Awi, a camp for struggling readers in Rangeley, Maine, that he came face to face with his “disability.” It was also at this time he realized that his struggles had a name. Dr. Samuel Orton called the difficulty “strophosymbolia,” meaning “twisted symbols,” but later the condition became known as “specific language disability,” then “dyslexia,” meaning difficulty with language or words. The couple who ran the camp, Page and Laura Sharp, trained under Dr. Samuel T. Orton. David and Dee worked at the camp for two summers before coming to Atlanta.

In 1959, David and Dee Schenck started The Reading School of Atlanta with seven students in the basement of St. Anne’s Episcopal Church. David noted that “It was an insane idea. [He] had no idea what was involved. All those hundreds of little details a sensible person would solve before starting a business never entered [his] thoughts. For a dyslexic person, it is impossible to keep focused on details for any length of time. You just say, “Let’s do it; let’s do it.”

In 1966, a brick house with three acres at the present location of 282 Mt. Paran Road was purchased. The school became incorporated, and the name changed to The Schenck School. By 1974, the enrollment had grown to 62 students and

by 1985 there were 74 students. In the 1980’s, additional adjoining property was purchased, and plans were being made to remodel the house. During the remodeling, the structure caught on fire



and the building was a total loss. Because of the fine reputation of the school, David was able to raise the money to get the school rebuilt. For the first time, the school was housed in a professional looking building. By the 1989 school year, enrollment had grown to 121 students, and by 1994, the enrollment was 150.

At the time the school began, it was rare for private schools serving children with dyslexia to offer the Orton-Gillingham Approach in one-on-one tutorial settings. Those schools had to limit the number of children who could be helped because of their one-on-one delivery. David’s school went counter to this “norm” in that he believed this approach could be delivered effectively in small groups. He also knew that it was essential that teachers be well trained in the OG Approach, and that they must also enjoy teaching the language. In the early 1960’s, Mrs. Samuel T. Orton came to

Atlanta and spoke to a group of parents and learned about the work David and Dee were doing. She later sent David a letter commending him on his school. He really was a pioneer in the teaching of OG in groups. Over the years, several private schools for children with dyslexia have adopted the practice of small group OG instruction, and more and more public school teachers are being trained to deliver OG to their entire class.

When you look back on all that came together to make The Schenck School, it really was miraculous. There is no way

David could have envisioned the impact he would have. He just “happened” upon a camp that helped children with the same struggles in school that he had. He just “happened” to start a school for kids with dyslexia. There just “happened” to be a fire that destroyed the school in the mid 1980’s which led to the expansion of the school and the number of children it could serve. And of course, it was just happenstance that drew in many talented people to the school over the years to teach, lead, and expand the school’s outreach and mission. Most importantly, though, has been David Schenck himself with his sweet, quiet, reassuring manner and his love for the school, those who have worked here, and all the children who have attended which make the school what it is today. His legacy continues through the people who have known and have learned from David, and it will continue for many years to come.

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## Fortune Academy ...continued from page 5

follows the systematic, structured, sequential approach that is the foundation of Orton-Gillingham instruction. In addition, Fortune Academy annually offers an Associate and Certified level training course to teachers outside of Fortune Academy. Practicums must be completed at Fortune Academy to ensure the high-

est level of fidelity is being administered.

Fortune Academy holds firm the belief that the school should obtain the highest credentials possible. That is why the school sought out membership in the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators. The Academy represents the

gold standard in multi-sensory language instruction. We are extremely proud of our affiliation with the Academy and strongly encourage other schools to actively seek AOGPE membership as well.

We welcome visitors to our campus and would love to show you around!

# Thinking Differently

Reviewed by Theresa Collins, F/AOGPE

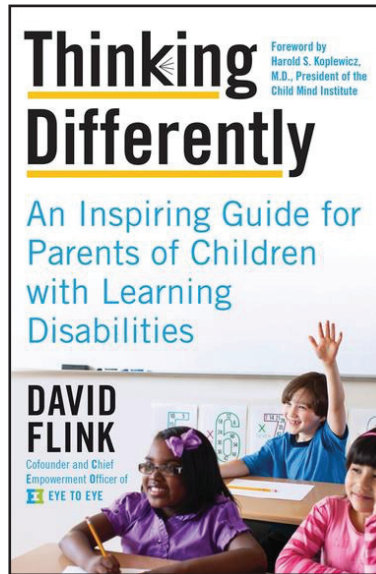
David Flink's *Thinking Differently* is a road map for parents of children with learning differences. Cofounder and CEO (Chief Empowerment Officer) of Eye to Eye, Flink shares his own educational experiences as well as advice gleaned from experts in the field and successful individuals with learning differences who offer information, leadership, and hope.

For parents, the journey begins with recognizing that their children are different; although that process can be painful, it allows parents to open themselves to the support of other parents and professionals. Accepting that learning disabilities are lifelong is challenging, but recognizing that learning disabilities and ADHD have nothing to do with intelligence and beginning to identify and develop their children's strengths can help parents imagine successful futures for their children. Because early identification is crucial to successful remediation, Flink identifies some of the early signs of learning differences. He provides accessible background about learning differences, dispels common myths, and helps parents make sense of some of the terms and acronyms they frequently encounter.

Getting to know their own children is one of the most important parts of the process for parents. Obtaining a comprehensive evaluation that identifies both strengths and weaknesses is essential. While many parents are reluctant to "label" their children, most children find it a relief to assign words to their everyday struggles. Recognizing and building strengths is as important to building self-esteem as identifying weaknesses, and in turn supports the development of resilience, one of the most important keys to success. Armed with an overview of their children's legal rights and general guidelines for choosing evaluators, parents can begin the assessment process. Flink describes the role of a neuropsychological assessment in providing an in-depth description of the child's academic, cognitive, and social functioning and provides an overview of interventions, including his success with Orton-Gillingham at The Schenck School.

Children also need to develop metacognitive skills so they can understand how they think, develop strategies to work

smarter (not harder), modify strategies as needed, and ask for help. Above all, children need encouragement to dream about their futures and develop the resilience necessary for academic risk taking.



Flink's mantra is that success for individuals with learning differences relies on the power of accommodations, allies, and advocates. He discusses a wide range of accommodations available to students with learning differences but emphasizes the need to tailor them to each student's unique profile: "Accommodations free us from preconceptions about how to learn and enable different thinkers not only to meet their potential, but to thrive." Allies play an important role in the success of students with LD and come in many different personas. Children need to know there are people on their side, both caring adults and peers, such as Eye to Eye mentors, who are uniquely qualified to understand their struggles. Children who feel different may

become overwhelmed by failure and shame that undermines their ability to communicate and may lead them to shut down or to resort to risky behaviors. For parents, knowing when to help and when to step back and provide a supportive safety net can be a fine line, but achieving that balance helps children develop competence. Advocates go beyond supporting individuals with learning differences to fighting for what they need. Part of raising successful children with learning differences is helping them find their voices and ask for what they need; owning their differences and knowing how to ask for help are essential parts of their journeys. Once they can advocate for themselves, children may become powerful players in the learning rights movements as they take on the role of advocating for others.



Theresa Collins with author David Flink

On a personal level, *Thinking Differently* encouraged my family to adopt changes that have dramatically improved our quality of life as we struggle with the challenges of raising a

child with ADHD. My husband understood ADHD for the first time since our son was diagnosed three years ago. In his chapter about accommodations, Flink points out that "Alterations in setting, timing, scheduling, and response type may be

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## Thinking Differently

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gin to address some of your child's learning differences." We began to experiment with changes in our environment to cope during the hours from 3:30 to 8:30 p.m., which had become disastrous in our household. Moving homework to 7 a.m. was difficult for us as parents, but our son is fresh and well rested then, and the difference in his focus and quality of work is remarkable. Open to our son's ideas about what might work for him, we changed his evening routine to reduce transitions and provide him with longer stretches of "alone time." We talk openly now about handling transition times, building realistic routines, and planning activities so that they work with, instead of against, his changing focus and energy levels. In a short time, peace was restored to our household, allowing us to focus on identifying and building our son's strengths.

As an Orton-Gillingham practitioner and school administrator, I am grateful to have *Thinking Differently* as my first resource for parents who are beginning their journeys with children who learn differently. Its pragmatic approach highlights the essential steps in the process while Flink's anecdotes, in turn comical, frustrating, heartbreaking, and triumphant, allow parents to relate to their own experiences and begin to imagine successful futures for their children.

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## *In Memoriam, Sylvia Onesti Richardson, MD*

By Marica Mann, Founding Fellow/AOGPE

"Flunking penalizes children for the failure of school systems to develop effective instructional plans for children who need more and better instruction if they are to succeed. More of the same just does not work."

Who better to make this statement, than one of the giants in our field, Sylvia O. Richardson, MD, Past President of the Orton Dyslexia Society, (now the International Dyslexia Association), Past President of the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA), Chair of the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, Professor Emeritus of Pediatrics and Distinguished Professor of Communication at the University of South Florida in Tampa, and Honorary Trustee of the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators.

Sylvia spent her career with a hand in every dimension of the language spectrum, bringing together the disciplines of neuroscience and medical research with the best practices in education. Drawing on her experiences as a Montessori teacher, she championed the move-

ment to establish diagnostic preschools and wrote, "Montessori principles and practices pertain specifically to the direct and indirect preparation of the child for writing and reading".

In a world all too often flooded with mediocrity, Sylvia was a giant among giants. She listened and reached out to parents and children to find out where they were, and then she would meet them there. She spoke, as Margaret Byrd Rawson said, "in plain English." No airs, no pretensions, Sylvia was the real deal. The world is better for it, and we are blessed and honored to have known her.



## *In Memory of Ruth Harris* by Julie D. Wingfield, M.Ed., Head of School, Riverside School

Ruth S. Harris dedicated her life and her career to helping children with dyslexia. She was an educator, an advocate, and a friend. Riverside School would not have been the same without her guidance, knowledge, and passion. It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to our dear friend who passed away at the age of 94 on May 26, 2014.

Anyone who had the pleasure to know Ruth through the years knew that she was a champion for education and a passionate supporter of providing the right instructional approach for children with dyslexia. Ms. Harris began focusing her career on dyslexia when her son Charles was diagnosed with the learning difference in the 1960's. She studied with June Orton, wife of Samuel T. Orton and pioneer of the Orton-Gillingham Approach to teaching dyslexic children. They conducted research, trained teachers in the Approach, and worked with children with reading and writing difficulties. Ms. Harris also continued her studies in the field of dyslexia and learning differences at Greensboro College, the University of Richmond, and Virginia Commonwealth University.



In the 1970's, Ruth brought her knowledge of the Orton-Gillingham Approach to Riverside and established our hallmark Language Fundamentals program. Ruth served countless students with dyslexia at Riverside, both directly in one-on-one instruction and through training our teaching faculty in the Orton-Gillingham Approach. She was a visionary educator and dedicated colleague.

Ruth and her husband Louis Harris also recently gave Riverside School our first major gift towards establishing a scholarship endowment - the Ruth Harris Scholarship Fund. Ruth believed wholeheartedly in Riverside's mission and the Harris's gift will have a monumental impact on our school's ability to serve more students in need.

Riverside School will be forever grateful for Ruth's passion for helping children and the priceless gift of knowledge that she imparted on so many of our students throughout the years. With very sad hearts, we say goodbye. Ruth's legacy will continue to live on through the good work that each of you do to help children with dyslexia and to advocate for dyslexia awareness in your communities.

## *Remembering Ruth Harris* by Marcia Mann, Founding Fellow/AOGPE

Ruth Harris, who dedicated her life and career to helping children with dyslexia, began her studies by working with June Lyday Orton. Academia was no stranger to Ruth, who held degrees from Simmons College and Boston University, and later attended Greensboro College, The University of Richmond, and Virginia Commonwealth University.

Ruth began tutoring other youngsters in the 1970's, and eventually joined Patricia De Orio at the Riverside School, helping to turn it into a premier school for the education of dyslexic children. Ruth was a Board Member of the Virginia Branch of the Orton Dyslexia Society, President of the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, and a recipient of many prestigious awards in the field of education and dyslexia. Ruth was elected to the board of the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators in 2002 and began

working diligently to establish our professional library. She, and her husband, Louis Harris, established a fund to ensure the continuity of the library, and a scholarship fund to support members with limited funds who wished to continue their Academy training by attending our conferences. The Harrises also established scholarship funds at the Riverside School and at Virginia Commonwealth University. It was a remarkable legacy from an exceptional couple.

A gentle and soft spoken woman, Ruth Harris will be remembered as a scholar, educator, and philanthropist, whose work on behalf of children with dyslexia will continue through the institutions she has supported and to the many, many students and teachers who are the beneficiaries of her training.



*The Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators is the only organization expressly established and authorized to set standards for the practice of the Orton-Gillingham Approach, to certify teachers, and to accredit instructional programs that meet these standards. Incorporated in 1995, the Academy derives its authority from action taken by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York and operates under New York State Education Law.*

*For comprehensive information regarding training opportunities, requirements, and applications for Academy membership at all levels, visit our website at: [www.ortonacademy.org](http://www.ortonacademy.org)*

# AOGPE Principal/Administrator Recognition Awards

by Maryann Chatfield, F/AOGPE

Two principals were awarded the AOGPE Principal/Administrator Recognition Award this past year. This award goes to a principal who “has been responsible for incorporating the Orton-Gillingham Approach training and instruction in their school.”

Specifically, the certificate goes on to say:

“The Academy recognizes your dedication and commitment to excellence in education as you incorporate training and support for teachers in your school in using the Orton-Gillingham Approach as a fundamental foundation of your school’s reading and written language curriculum.”

Chris Hennessey from Union Elementary School in Montpelier, Vermont and Diane Reilly from Hyde Park, Vermont exemplified and embraced Orton-Gillingham in their schools.

Chris Hennessey, the principal at Union Elementary says, “As a new principal and former special educator, I was so happy to be able to support our teachers getting Orton-Gillingham training last year. My experience working with struggling learners over the years made it clear to me that all students can benefit from the O-G Approach, and an opportunity to give our classroom teachers this training was a gift we couldn’t afford to pass up.”

Union Elementary School, like many public schools in Vermont, has a model where a teacher “loops” with the same group of students for a two year period. This looping model allows students to receive Orton-Gillingham instruction for two consecutive years with the same teacher, maximizing the instructional power of each Orton-Gillingham Classroom Educator. Thanks to an AOGPE grant for classroom teachers, provided to the Cynthia K. Hoehl Institute for Excellence, housed within Stern Center for Language and Learning, eight K-3 grade teachers from Union Elementary took the Classroom Educator course, and seven completed their practicum. This school year, one Classroom Educator is continuing to Associate level membership and another K-1 teacher is pursuing her Classroom Educator membership.

Mr. Hennessey continues, “More than anything else, I’m excited to give our teachers a chance to work together and collaborate on improving Tier 1 instruction and differentiation

in our classrooms. Our teachers’ enthusiasm for the O-G Approach has been contagious, and I’m looking forward to continue seeing results. Hopefully this is just the beginning.”

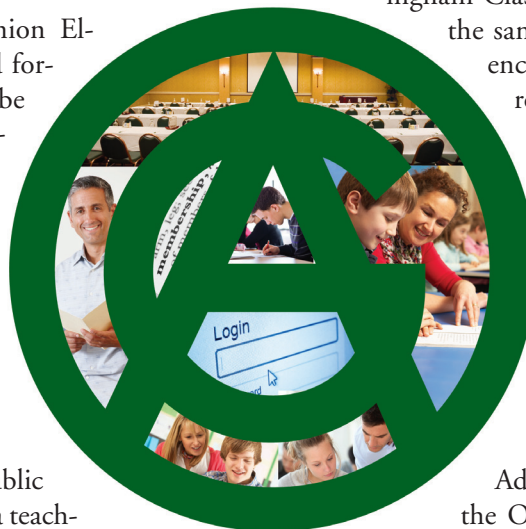
Diane Reilly, principal of Hyde Park Elementary School, was another recipient of the Principal Recognition Award.

The Orton-Gillingham Approach was originally used as a Tier 3 intervention at Hyde Park Elementary School. Ms. Reilly says, “Once my teachers saw the significance of the results from using the Approach they requested training. There has been a domino effect in our school and we now use the Orton-Gillingham Approach at all 3 Tiers.” All special educators at Hyde Park Elementary have also taken Orton-Gillingham coursework and practicum. Three first through fourth grade classroom teachers have Orton-Gillingham Classroom Educator certification thanks to the same AOGPE grant. This year, Ms. Reilly encouraged one of her teachers, a Classroom Educator, to continue to Associate level membership.

At the bequest of the teachers and support by both Chris Hennessey and Diane Reilly, respectively, both schools had end-of-year practicum meetings to discuss the benefits of AOGPE membership and ways to continue collaboration across grade level.

Additionally, Ms. Reilly explains, “Using the Orton-Gillingham Approach has brought a new energy to the classroom, and teachers across the grade levels are excited about being trained. The enthusiasm the teachers have for the Approach is reflected in the students’ active engagement in the activities and learning process. Parents are astounded by their first graders’ depth of understanding and ability to articulate and explain the nuances of the English language system.”

Principal Hennessey and Principal Reilly were nominated by Peggy Price, FIT/AOGPE from Stern Center for Language and Learning in Williston, Vermont. Ms. Price states, “At a time when school budgets for professional learning are being drastically cut, and teacher morale is suffering nationwide, it is inspiring to work with two principals who have allowed neither to happen at their schools, for the betterment of teachers and students alike.”



# 2015 AOGPE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## Celebrating 20 Years!

*“Remembering Our Past, Celebrating The Present, Embracing Our Future”*

**April 24 - 25, 2015**  
**(Friday and Saturday)**

Crowne Plaza White Plains - Downtown  
White Plains, New York 10601  
[www.cpwestchester.com](http://www.cpwestchester.com)



*Guinevere Eden*

### **Friday, April 24th - Keynote Address**

Guinevere Eden, D. Phil.  
Director, Center for the Study of Learning (CSL)  
Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Georgetown  
University Medical Center



*Sally and Bennett Shaywitz*

### **Saturday, April 25th - Keynote Address**

Sally E. Shaywitz, M.D. and Bennett A. Shaywitz, M.D.  
The Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity

### **Open to all those interested in the Orton-Gillingham Approach:**

Members of the Academy, Administrators, Educators, Individuals with Dyslexia, Parents, Physicians, Psychologists, Speech Therapists, Teachers

Check the Academy's website for updates and information on registration: [www.ortonacademy.org](http://www.ortonacademy.org)

### **SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE CONFERENCE**

1. The Ruth Harris Travel Award
2. Ronald Yoshimoto Scholarship for Public School Teachers

Please visit the academy's website for more information: [www.ortonacademy.org](http://www.ortonacademy.org)  
Scholarship application deadline is March 20, 2015



Academy of  
Orton-Gillingham  
Practitioners  
and Educators

*Incorporated Under New York State Education Law*

# New Members - Winter 2015

*The Academy congratulates the following new members*

## Fellows

Renee Greenfield, Hatfield, MA  
Suzanna Greer, Taylors, SC

## Certified

J. Corbin Bettencourt, Charleston, SC  
Jill Dejak, Pinehurst, NC  
Judith Fell, Mt. Pleasant, SC  
Denise Gerstmyer, Concord, MA  
Nancy Grant, Charleston, MA  
Yu Huei Huei, Singapore  
Meredith Hutchings, Halifax, Nova Scotia, CAN  
Catharine Irwin, New Canaan, CT  
Gabrielle Miller, Wellsley, MA  
Gwen Norris, Newton, MA  
Susan Nyman, Mt. Pleasant, SC  
Kathleen Loftus Stewart, Kent, CT  
Christine van de Vijzel, Manitoba, Canada  
Reba Walden, Granite Falls, NC

## Associates

Laurie Andrews, Bennington, VT  
Charlotte Andrist, Columbus, OH  
Stephanie Aulds, Indianapolis, IN  
Keriann Bartley, North Andover, MA  
Meredith Black, Florence, AL  
Carol Bryant, Forest Dale, VT  
Shirley Cappel, Long Beach, NY  
Donna Castiglione, Delaware, OH  
Linda Cherubino, Southborough, MA  
Downing Child, Charleston, SC  
Laura Chiu, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong  
Kinley Christensen, Highland, UT  
Ashley Cirrone, Malden, MA  
Barbara Combs, Madison, FL  
Susan Comerford, Oceanside, NY  
Lauren Dariano, Columbus, OH  
Mackenzie Davis, Belmont, MA  
Joan Dillon, Centerville, MA  
Christine Dinolfo, Levittown, NY  
Karen DiSandro, Providence, RI  
Colby Doetzer, Mt. Pleasant, SC  
Emily Dossa, Damascus, OR  
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Julie Dutczak, Boylston, MA  
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Sandra Giglio, Concord, MA  
Michelle Gilbert, Burlington, MA  
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Sonia Hammond, Suwanee, GA  
Alison Hirsch, Atlanta, GA  
Cynthia Hoemann, Rye Brook, NY  
Amy Holmes, Huntsville, AL  
Patsy Homberg, Portland, OR  
Lorin Hosmer, South Ryegate, VT  
Lisa Howarth, Berlin, VT  
Andrea Hume, Norwood, MA  
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Anne Kahl, Scarsdale, NY  
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Kelly Kattos, Huntsville, AL  
Emilie Kauffman-Woody, Sayville, NY  
Kathleen Kearnan, West Roxbury, MA  
Lennette Koh Huishuang, Singapore

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Amy Kuenzel, Charleston, SC  
Adriane Kuller, Newton Center, MA  
Marsha Kunkel, East Bend, NC  
Stacy Lanzetta, Oceanside, NY  
Leslie Leland, North Reading, MA  
Jaqueline Lin Xiaomei, Singapore  
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Megan Mecum, Boylston, MA  
Susanne Menken, Cedar Rapids, IA  
Debra Mitchell, Midlothian, VA  
Alison Morris, Massapequa Park, NY  
Subhasree Mukherjee, Kolkata, WB India  
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Kim Myette, Morrisville, VT  
Sarah Null, Marietta, GA  
Ellen O'Brien, Vancouver, BC Canada  
Lindsay Oberschlake, Hilliard, OH  
Leigh Ann Olinger, Charleston, SC  
Anne Paidas, Madison, CT  
Beth Perkins, Dallas, TX  
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Heather Powers, Concord, MA  
Hilde Price-Levine, Portland, OR  
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Sarah Rose, Portsmouth, MA  
Victoria Russell, Arlington, MA  
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Ketty Fong, Honolulu, HI  
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Wai Sum Sandy Leung, Tseung Kwan, Hong Kong  
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Stacey Prusak, Dunwoody, GA  
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Greg Shyloski, Clinton, CT  
Caryn Silverman, Atlanta, GA  
Chelsea Smith Bertani, Albertson, NY  
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Lynn Tamashire-Ching, Honolulu, HI  
Alexandria Teryek, Staten Island, NY  
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Jennifer Won, Honolulu, HI

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Judy Brown, Annandale, VA  
Carrie Bryant, Milton, NY  
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Beth Compton, Buford, GA  
Amber Davis, Vernal, UT  
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Carla Goins, Falls Church, VA  
Mary Gundersen, Nacogdoches, TX  
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Marion Idol, Matthews, NC  
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Lisa Lake, Lithonia, GA  
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Angela McCarty, Lumberton, NJ  
Staci McCauley, Scottsdale, AZ  
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Wendy Ricks, Henrico, VA  
Gina Rogers, Daphne, AL  
Sarah Samuel, Metairie, LA  
Lucille Samuels, Jamaica, NY  
Kristin Schaub, Worthington, OH  
Verlena Sexton-Walker, Detroit, MI  
Nikki Shearer, Cochran, PA  
Bronwyne van Zyl, Doha, Qatar  
Richard von der Schmidt, Princeton, NJ  
Natea Wallace, Roswell, GA

# AOGPE Standing Committees

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## AOGPE Standing Committees

The Academy relies on the work of its committees to assist in governing the activities of the organization. Committees have agendas and rules, work on assigned tasks, and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees. Each of the committees reports on its progress, while the Board of Trustees makes decisions on committee recommendations.

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**Accreditation Committee** - reviews all applications and recommends qualified programs for accreditation/approval by the Board of Trustees. Membership on the Accreditation Committee is limited to Fellows of the Academy.

Terri Petersen, <i>Chair</i>	Marcella Fulmer
Lisa Brooks, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Janet George
Gena Calloway	Pam Reynolds
Louise Freese	Susan Santora

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**Fundraising Committee** - responsible for the planning and implementation of fund raising.

Rosalie Davis, *Chair*

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**Information Outreach Committee (IOC)**- plans, prepares, and sees to the timely distribution of Academy information. This includes the planning of educational programs and conferences.

Karen Leopold, <i>Chair</i>	Amy Lawrence
Rosalie Davis, <i>Advisor</i>	Carrie Malloy
Josie Calamari	Kerri McDonald-Schaub
Maryann Chatfield	Dawn Nieman
Colleen Chow	Peggy Price
Louise Dowd	Alicia Sartori
John Howell	

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**Nominating Committee** - nominates candidates to serve as members of the Board and as Board officers.

Kay Howell, *Chair*  
Helaine Schupack  
Trudy Stegelman Odle

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**Research Committee** - encourages research relevant to the Orton-Gillingham Approach and promotes dissemination of such data.

John Howell, *Chair*

**Standards Committee** - determines the curricular requirements for certification and accreditation.

Mary Briggs, *Chair*  
Kay Howell  
Edith “Dee” LaFrance  
Norma Jean McHugh  
Trudy Stegelman Odle  
Concha Wyatt

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## Standing Committees with Anonymous Members

**Certifying Committee** - reviews applications and recommends qualified candidates for approval by the Board. Membership on the Certifying Committee is limited to Fellows of the Academy.

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**Professional Ethics Committee** - inquires into complaints bearing upon alleged failure by individual members and Institutional members of the Academy to adhere to the professional standards of the Academy.

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## Additional Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

### Bylaws Committee

John Howell, *Chair*  
Mary Briggs

**Council of Organizational Members** - promotes the Academy’s mission with special attention to its accredited schools, camps, and clinics.

### Honorary Membership

Edith “Dee” LaFrance, *Chair*  
Jean Osman

### Library Committee

Marcia Mann, *Chair*  
John Howell  
David Katz

### Ruth Harris Travel Award Scholarship Committee

### Ronald Yoshimoto Scholarship For Public School Teachers