

The Peer Leader

vol. 2

President's Notes, May 2019

The Eighth Annual PLTLIS Conference is coming soon (June 5 – 8, 2019) hosted by Pratibha Varma-Nelson, Professor of Chemistry and Founding Executive Director of SEIRI (STEM Education Innovation and Research Institute), at IUPUI (Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis). Our PLTLIS conferences have a relaxed, friendly atmosphere which are conducive to sharing resources and ideas. Come network with other PLTL practitioners and enjoy this opportunity to learn and grow! You will return home with some new ideas for practice to enhance your PLTL program on your campus and increase student success. We are especially excited that this year's conference will host a panel on Saturday with some of the originators of the PLTL Model (described elsewhere in this newsletter).

The target audience of this journal is anyone using or interested in peer-facilitated models of learning, like PLTL.

The Peer-Led Team Learning International Society proudly announces the online journal *Advances in Peer-Led Learning (APLL)*. APLL will publish original, peer-reviewed articles on research, evaluation, and instructional practices related to peer-facilitated models of learning, as well as other topics. PLTLIS encourages the inclusion of content from all academic disciplines and all levels of education. The goal of the journal is to encourage practitioners to engage their instructional practice the way a scientific researcher would. The target audience of this journal is anyone using or interested in peer-facilitated models of learning, like PLTL. Although in many ways originating from higher education, APLL is not limited to submissions from colleges and universities. Manuscripts may be submitted starting July 1st. Articles are assigned to a particular issue by the editors. To be included in an issue, final corrected manuscripts must be accepted at least one month prior to the publication date. An Editorial Committee will review authors' manuscripts and authors will be provided with informative feedback. Full details about the submission process and the journal details will go live online at www.pltlis.org on June 14th.



A New Peer-Reviewed Journal from PLTLIS

The Peer-Led Team Learning International Society is pleased to announce a new peer-reviewed journal, *Advances in Peer-Led Learning* (APLL). The journal will publish original, peer-reviewed articles on research, evaluation, and instructional practices related to peer-facilitated models of learning. PLTLIS encourages the inclusion of content from all academic disciplines at all levels of education. The goal of this journal will be to communicate research and innovations in peer-facilitated models of learning, like PLTL. The editorial board and the journal editor, Dr. Jim Becvar, will oversee a transparent and streamline peer-review process to ensure a fair and informative peer-review process. Manuscripts will be accepted starting July 1st, 2019 and accepted at any point thereafter. The first edition of the journal is planned for online publication late fall 2019. Full details about the submission process and requirements will be previewed at PLTLIS 2019 Conference, June 6th-8th, 2019. The journal website with the full author guidelines will go live June 14th on the PLTLIS website: www.pltlis.org.

Saturday, June 8, 2019 – Special Panel

From Workshop Chemistry to Peer-Led Team Learning

Moderated by Marcelo Sztainberg



2 - Leo Gafney

From "Workshop Chemistry" to Peer-Led Team Learning, an innovative academic methodology implemented across multiple disciplines and incorporated into many founding campus initiatives: Join what promises to be an engaging conversation with some of the "founders" of the PLTL model who will share stories about their more than 25 years working on the development and dissemination of PLTL, look at the current state of implementation and future opportunities to further develop this important model

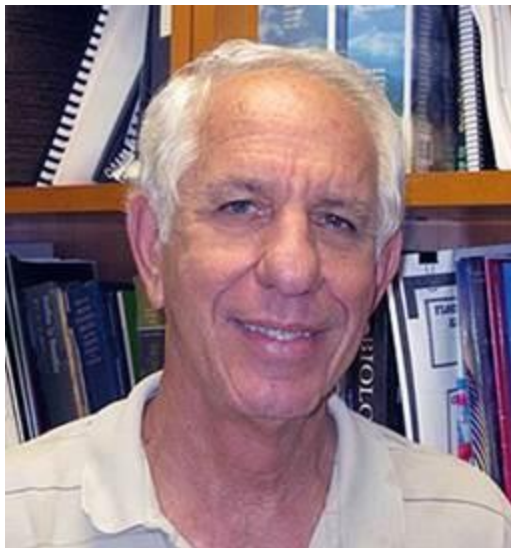
Leo Gafney has worked as a teacher, school principal, school board chair, and is the author of several mathematics texts. For the past 30 years, he has served as an evaluator for more than 80 funded projects, primarily college-level STEM initiatives. Dr. Gafney was the evaluator for the initial PLTL grants and with support from a supplemental grant he wrote, with Pratibha Varma-Nelson, *Peer-Led Team Learning: Evaluation, Dissemination and Institutionalization of a College Level Initiative*. (Springer: Dordrecht, Netherlands, 2008). This text includes: research on PLTL, available at the time; the six critical components; discussions of dissemination and institutionalization.



3 - Pratibha Varma-Nelson

Pratibha Varma-Nelson is Professor of Chemistry and the founding executive director of the STEM Education Innovation and Research Institute at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). She is well known in the STEM education community for her pioneering work in the development, implementation and dissemination of the Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) model of teaching. She has been a Co-PI of three NSF funded National Dissemination Grants. In addition, she was a founding Co-PI of the first NSF funded Undergraduate Research Center Center for Authentic Science Practice in Education, (CASPiE).

Michael Gaines is Professor of Biology and Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Research and Community Outreach at the University of Miami (UM). He is director of UM's Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Undergraduate Education Program. The major goal of the HHMI program is to increase the number of community college students pursuing research careers through innovative curriculum design. He directs a National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) Bridge Program between the University of Miami and Miami Dade College. Its aim is to increase the number of community college students who are underrepresented minorities in the sciences transferring to research universities and completing baccalaureate degrees. He served as the Chair of the NSF Visiting Committee for the Workshop Chemistry grant and then as Co-PI for the NSF Dissemination Grant, focusing on Biology.



4 - Michael Gaines

Mark Cracolice is a Professor of Chemistry Education Research and Practice in the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry at the University of Montana. He teaches general chemistry lecture and lab, undergraduate and graduate courses in teaching chemistry, and graduate courses in chemistry education. His general chemistry courses have included a peer-led team learning component for the past two decades. The general theme of his group's research program is investigations of how students learn chemistry. He was a Co-PI for the MACK (Montana, American, Clark-Atlanta, and Kentucky Universities) grant to adopt and adapt Workshop Chemistry, and was a Co-PI for the NSF National Dissemination Grant.



5 - Mark Cracolice



6 - A.E. Dreyfuss

A.E. Dreyfuss is a Learning Specialist in the field of Adult Learning and Leadership. She was the Project Manager for the NSF National Dissemination Project to disseminate the PLTL model in STEM disciplines, edited *Progressions, the Workshop Project Newsletter*, and the website, organized annual and regional conferences. She trained Peer Leaders who facilitate learning for groups of students at City University of New York (CUNY) campuses for 15 years. She co-founded the Peer-Led Team Learning International Society (www.pltlis.org) and was elected as the first President. She is a co-editor, with Andrea McWilliams and James Becvar, of the *Facilitating Team-Based Learning: A Peer Leader's Guide to Leading Learning Activities*, published by PLTLIS Press (2019).

Marcelo Sztainberg is an Associate Professor and upcoming chair of the Computer Science Department at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU). Dr. Sztainberg has worked extensively with underrepresented students, in particular in the field of Math Development. He has key roles in promoting Peer Led Team Learning (PLTL), Affinity Research Group methods, undergraduate research experiences, and intensive mentored summer undergraduate research. He is also a board member and president elect of the PLTLIS.



7 - Marcelo Sztainberg

PROFILE – Board member



8 - Alice Turchaninova

Alice Turchaninova

I joined the PLTLIS Board of Directors in November 2017 after graduating from the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD). Since then, I have served as the chair of the Standards Working Group, which seeks to establish and maintain standards for PLTL programs and peer leaders. We see this as an important next step for PLTLIS, allowing us to support new and growing PLTL programs and their leaders.

I have also helped to introduce a plan for the certification of peer leaders based on training standards. I'm excited for the upcoming work of the Standards Working Group and would encourage anyone interested in the training and certification of peer leaders to reach out to us.

As a peer leader at UHD, I had the opportunity not only to lead workshop sessions for mathematics and computer science courses, but also to mentor students in the UHD Scholars Academy and work as a tutor in the Collaborative Learning Community Center. These experiences in mentorship, group facilitation, and effective communication have continued to serve me in my current job as a tutor at C2 Education. This August, I will also be able to apply them as I begin a graduate program in physics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I could not have made the transition from mathematics and computer science to graduate study in physics without the support of the UHD PLTL program and the connections I made as a peer leader.

Peer Leader Profile



9 - Jose Miguel Gonzalez

I am Jose Miguel Gonzalez. I am a senior at the University of Houston – Downtown (UHD) in Houston, Texas. My majors are in Computer Science and Control & Instrumentation Engineering Technology. I chose these major as I have a massive passion for robotics, which need a sophisticated design of instrumentation and control system using an algorithm that we learned in Computer Science. During my first year at UH-D, I met two students, Alice Turchaninova & Eloy Perez, who were Peer leaders. I enjoyed how they interacted with students when they were in the Collaborative Learning Community Center (CLCC). From then on, I wanted to be like them, and by the end of the next semester, I had started the Peer Leader training with Ms. Mitsue Nakamura. In my years as a Peer Leader, I have noticed that it has helped me by meeting with peers to discuss and work on course work, and helped me remember the lower level classes' material as students come looking for help in these courses. I have learned a lot from this experience, such as how to communicate a concept to others in a simple matter, as well as to listen for key points to figure out what problem students have to resolve the issue as soon as possible.