

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 1 1

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# the IEA- SP StudentSpeak

## A Word from Your Chair



I hope you had a great start to the spring semester! For all of you who are student teaching like me, Good Luck! I am confident that you will all do extremely well in the classroom. Do not forget to register for our Spring Conference. This is a great opportunity for all members to get professional development, but is especially important for seniors who are heading out into the work force!

The Student Program Spring Conference is April 1-2<sup>nd</sup> at the Holiday Inn SW Chicago in Countryside/LaGrange. The theme is “Making A Grade “A” Teacher”. I hope to see you all there! We will have plenty of helpful sessions, and will also be having our elections! If you’re interested in running for a position on state board, please visit [www.ieasp.org](http://www.ieasp.org), get the name and contact info of the person currently in the position, and contact them.

Save the date for our state Outreach to Teach! On March 26<sup>th</sup>, we will be working with active and retired teachers to renovate an elementary school in Danville. Please contact our Outreach Coordinator, Matt Hiser, at [mhiser2@illinois.edu](mailto:mhiser2@illinois.edu) if you are interested in helping make this a success!

I want to thank the local leaders who attended our Advisory Board meeting in Springfield, January 22<sup>nd</sup>. I feel quite confident saying that this was our best Advisory Board meeting yet and I have extremely high hopes for the local chapters and the student program as a whole. I hope that your representatives have shared some of the topics we discussed with you. We focused on our three pillars: Teacher Quality, Political Action, and Community Outreach. I gave a brief presentation on Bloom’s Taxonomy and then each of the local leaders was able to make a foldable to help organize types of questions into different levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy. We also had a very interesting conversation regarding teacher evaluations and RIFs and whether they should go hand in hand. We brainstormed ideas to help get better teachers into the Chicago Public Schools and visited [www.facethedebate.com](http://www.facethedebate.com) and discussed the fact that teachers need to make the public aware of how we see things. We are the experts in the classroom and our voices need to be heard.

Finally, we had a very successful food drive! We raised over 300 cans of food for the local food shelter. Again, thank you for your commitment to our program and its three pillars.

*Christle Kiely - IEA-SP Chair*

# Check Out the Locals

## McKendree College:

McKendree is having a great semester! We have a new president, Jennifer Gann, who is coming up with amazing ideas for teacher quality, political action, and community outreach. She is a strong leader and is going to be an awesome educator. McKendree is increasing in membership every year. We are proud to be a part of IEA/NEA and want to continue to add members.

We try to promote the three pillars into all that we do at our chapter. We have monthly meetings that include speakers and/or workshops which help us grow as professionals, teach us about the politics of education and how we can get involved, and offer community service opportunities. We just held our kick-off meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup> and had several new members join, which is always exciting. At our first meeting of the semester we try to explain the benefits of IEA and have a time for questions. We talk about the issues surrounding education and what kind of political action needs to be taken. We also incorporate community service by asking our members to bring school supplies to donate. We love to have snacks at our meetings, because who doesn't love snacks! And of course we ALWAYS have lots of giveaway incentives for our members. Our meetings are a good combination of social interaction and professional growth.

We love to help our community! For the month of February, we are collecting school supplies for a school in Jamaica. Two of our SIEA members are going to Jamaica with their sociology class and we thought this would be a great way to support our members and the children in Jamaica. On February 10<sup>th</sup>, we are hosting a game/study night to prepare for the Content Test. This idea came from the spring advisory meeting, so I do recommend attending the next one; we all have amazing ideas to share. We are planning to go to a school in our area on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and host a "Read across America" event. In March we also participate in "Bowl for Kids Sake," which is an event for Big Brothers Big Sisters. On April 16<sup>th</sup> we are having our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual "Spring into Teaching Conference." We will send out information to everyone soon! At the end of each semester we also go around to the dorms and collect food for the Violence Prevention Center. We look for new ways every semester to reach out and help others.

McKendree is looking forward to the IEA Student Conference in Countryside! We have a goal to bring more members than we ever have to this conference. We are confident if we can get our members to a state event they will "fall in love" with the IEA/NEA. We want our members to realize how much support, networking, and opportunities they have as members of this local, state, and national organization. We appreciate the opportunities for professional growth that the meetings and conferences offer. We look forward to seeing everyone in April at the "Making A Grade "A" Teacher" Conference.

*Amanda Downard*



## Loyola University: Check It out!

At Loyola, our chapter has a lot of great things going on this semester. We are working away at increasing our numbers. At the end of last semester we only had around seven people attending our meetings. Now, we have twenty-two people attending our meetings and are on their way to joining the IEA Student Program. The IEA Program Director, Meredith Byers, helped our incentives this year. For every member that signed up with Loyola by Sunday February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011 each receives a free t-shirt from the IEA.

Other great things that we have going on this semester specifically at Loyola are: Read Across America on March 2<sup>nd</sup> with one of our sister schools Harold Washington, "Race to Nowhere" Film Screening on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, and our very own spring conference on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

For Read Across America we have made plans to visit Northside Catholic Academy on Dr. Seuss' birthday to read to the different classrooms. We have begun working closely with Harold Washington and have decided to run this event with them. It was a great way to get out in our community and to keep close ties with other universities around us.

The film "Race to Nowhere" has become a very popular documentary throughout the United States. Loyola has applied for and thus has been granted to show this film at our school. Our chapter is so excited and it has been opened to the public to come watch as well. It should be a successful event and we are looking forward to it.

Our Spring Conference is something that Loyola has held every year. This year we are calling it "The Teacher's Toolbox". We are having speakers come in from all over the Chicago area. The speakers have included kindergarten teachers, to high school teachers, and even a superintendent of a school system. The event is very successful and lasts for one Saturday morning and afternoon. It is a great tool that Loyola has been proud of for many years and we are very excited to be doing it again.

Thus far, Loyola has had a great kick-off to the new semester and cannot wait to keep the great things rolling!

*Breanna Pustai*

# Do You have a Mentor?

## Mentor of the Month



This year, the IEA Retired Mentor Program has organized a mentor of the month award. Each month, student mentees nominate great IEA retired mentors to be chosen as “Mentor of The Month”. Our December “Mentor of The Month” was Marlyn Spivek and our January “Mentor of The Month” was Janet Kilgus. Both Marlyn and Janet are mentors for numerous IEA student mentees. We are so thankful for the wonderful advice and words of wisdom these ladies have contributed to our student mentees. If you would like to nominate your mentor please send an email to Katie Kreis at [kekreis@ilstu.edu](mailto:kekreis@ilstu.edu) with a brief paragraph on why your mentor should be “Mentor of The Month”. Also, please include a piece of advice (website, lesson plan advice, resume building tips, etc.) to be shared with the entire IEA Retired Mentor Program. Each month the mentor is chosen and their advice is sent to all of the student mentees. It is a great way to spread great tips and advice while thanking our wonderful and dedicated mentors!

*Katie Kreis- IEA-SP Vice-Chairperson*

## Student Spring Conference

Make Sure you register today for the IEA student spring conference held on April 1 and 2 at the Holiday Inn in Countryside, IL. The theme this year is “Making A Grade “A” Teacher.” Register today- you won’t want to miss it!



## Save the Dates:

- February 23 - NEA RA Nominations Due
- March 1 - IEA Student Scholarship Application Due
- March 11 -12- IEA RA
- March 26 - Outreach to Teach
- Friday April 1-2 - Student Spring Conference



# Read Across America

In an attempt to promote reading in children across the nation, the National Education Association began its Read Across America program thirteen years ago. Although it is a year round program, there is an emphasis to have events around March 2<sup>nd</sup> of every year to celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday.

This year, the Illinois Education Association Student Program is going to participate in Read Across America by reading to children at Navy Pier in Chicago. In the spirit of Dr. Seuss, the student members participating will be wearing "Cat in the Hat" hats and "Thing One and Thing Two" costumes. We will also be giving handouts such as bookmarks to those children who attend.

If you are interested in participating in our Read Across America festivities this year, feel free to contact me at [hiser.matt@gmail.com](mailto:hiser.matt@gmail.com). The tentative date for the event is March 12<sup>th</sup>, the weekend of the IEA Representative Assembly. We hope to see all of you there! It will be a great time!

*Matt Hiser  
IEA Student Program  
Community Outreach Coordinator*



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# What's The Scoop On Political Action

Winter break is a time where we can relax, catch up with our family and friends, and put our worries on the back burner for a little while. However, what we thought would be the start of a relaxing vacation turned out to be a rush to contact our legislators. At the very beginning of our winter break, Ken Swanson urged us to contact our legislators immediately. Things were being voted on in Springfield, and we needed to work together as a team to make sure that our right of collective bargaining was not touched, and that all of our students in public schools were getting the best education as possible. Here are the main things the IEA was concerned about:

We urged our legislators to say “no” to TABOR (Taxpayer Bill of Rights). This basically blurs the restrictions on how the state spends its money. This includes money gained from property taxes. The IEA does not support this bill of rights because along with the drop of home values and the amount of debt that Illinois has, this would ultimately decrease the amount of money that schools would receive from property taxes.

We also wanted to preserve our collective bargaining rights. Collective bargaining ensures that teachers have the right to bargain with their employers about employee benefits, salary, and certain working conditions. Teachers also have the right to strike. We have already seen many states like Texas have collective bargaining rights taken away from their teachers, and this ultimately decreases the voices teachers have as public employees.

Finally, we encouraged our legislators to be supportive of “Accountability for All.” Ken Swanson explains Accountability for All by saying: “The union-proposed legislation would streamline the process for removing teachers found to be chronically unsatisfactory from the classroom, tie performance evaluations to tenure and RIFs, expand training and mentoring, as well as force school administrators and school boards to accept responsibility for what happens in a school district, placing accountability on the heads of more than just teachers.” Our legislators were very pleased with Accountability for All, and shows that teachers are actively working to better improve our school systems.

With all our hard work, all of this legislation was voted in our favor. However, Ken Swanson warned us that the battle is not over. Some of this legislation was being reworded and could definitely be voted on again. Until then, we congratulate ourselves on this small victory, and that when the time comes, we can come together once again to convince those in Springfield what is best for the public education system in Illinois.

*Jessica Hourigan*  
*IEA-SP Political Activist*