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DIANE LAPP NAMED RECIPIENT OF INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION'S WILLIAM S. GRAY CITATION OF MERIT

Slate of 2023 award and grant recipients also announced

NEWARK, Del. (July 10, 2023) — The International Literacy Association (ILA) announced today that Diane Lapp, distinguished professor of education at San Diego State University, is the recipient of its 2023 William S. Gray Citation of Merit—the highest individual honor awarded by the organization.

Akin to a lifetime achievement award, the William S. Gray is reserved for those who have made truly outstanding contributions to multiple facets of literacy development, including research, theory and practice.

Lapp was inducted into the Reading Hall of Fame in 2005. She began her career as an elementary school teacher in Kalamazoo, MI, before attending Indiana University for her doctorate (where she served as a research assistant for Roger Farr). She joined San Diego State University in 1978 following an eight-year stint at Boston University. Throughout her career, she has taught elementary, middle and high school, and she currently serves as an instructional coach at Health Sciences High and Middle College, a charter school in San Diego.

Lapp's areas of research and instruction focus on readers who struggle (as well as their families and teachers), particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. She has authored, coauthored and edited hundreds of articles, columns, texts, handbooks and curriculum materials. One coedited book, *Handbook of Research on the Teaching of the English Language Arts*, is considered one of the most comprehensive works in the field. A fifth edition from Lapp and Douglas Fisher is in press.

She is also the coauthor of *Teaching Reading to Every Child*, *Teaching Reading: A Playbook for Developing Skilled Readers Through Word Recognition and Language Comprehension*, and *Close Reading of Complex Texts*.

"When I learned I had received the William S. Gray award, I felt many emotions. I was honored, humbled, excited and also very appreciative to my nominators who believed in me," Lapp said. "I also thought about my numerous students and hoped that as their teacher, I had exemplified Gray's philosophy of planning instruction based on observance of student performance. Finally, I reminisced that my career has afforded me many professional opportunities to engage in research and publishing, but my greatest pride is that I continue to be a teacher of many ages."

Many of Lapp's contributions to the field were done in collaboration with researcher James Flood—so many in fact that ILA has an award in their name: the Diane Lapp & James Flood Professional Collaborator Award.

In addition to decades of service to the field at large, Lapp is a longtime member of and contributor to ILA. She is the former chair of ILA's Literacy Research Panel, and she has served regularly as a conference presenter, digital events speaker, committee member and author.

She is a previous coeditor of *The California Reader*, the journal of ILA affiliate California Reading Association, and she currently serves on the review board for ILA's *The Reading Teacher* and *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*.

The William S. Gray Citation of Merit is named in honor of one of literacy education's foremost pioneers and the first president of the International Reading Association (now ILA). Past recipients include P. David Pearson, Steve Graham, Nell K. Duke and Jeanne S. Chall.

Joining Lapp in this year's ILA awards and grants program are 12 other educators and literacy leaders:

- **Lori Bruner**, Michigan State University | Timothy & Cynthia Shanahan Outstanding Dissertation Award for "Word Learning Opportunities in Preschool Storybook Apps"
- **Rachel F. Knecht**, University of Nevada, Reno | Steven A. Stahl Research Grant for "The Effects of a Syntax-Focused Reading Intervention on Middle-School Students' Syntactic Knowledge"
- **Jan Lacina**, Texas Christian University | Jerry Johns Outstanding Teacher Educator in Reading Award
- **Kyley Pulphus**, Louisiana State University | Helen M. Robinson Grant for "The Writer Is the Sun: A Case Study of a Culturally Responsive and Antiracist Writing Workshop"
- **Marianne Rice**, **Florina Erbeli**, **Christopher G. Thompson**, and **Melissa Fogarty**, Texas A&M University, and **Mary Rose Sallese**, University of Alabama at Birmingham | Dina Feitelson Research Award for their Reading Research Quarterly article "Phonemic Awareness: A Meta-Analysis for Planning Effective Instruction"
- **Chase Young**, Sam Houston State University, and **Timothy Rasinski**, Kent State University | Diane Lapp & James Flood Professional Collaborator Award
- **Mai W. Zaru**, Southern Methodist University | Jeanne S. Chall Research Fellowship for "Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies With Immigrant Families"

More information can be found on [ILA's awards and grants page](#).

About the International Literacy Association

The International Literacy Association (ILA) is a professional membership organization of literacy educators, researchers and experts spanning 112 countries. For more than 65 years, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught and evaluated, connecting research and practice to improve the quality of literacy learning across the globe. Through its Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals, ILA provides an evidence-based benchmark for the development and evaluation of literacy professional preparation programs. ILA collaborates with partners across the world to develop, gather and disseminate high-quality resources, which include three peer-reviewed and edited journals—*The Reading Teacher*, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* and *Reading Research Quarterly*. Learn more at literacyworldwide.org.

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