



2020-2021 Council

OFFICE BEARERS

President: Dr Lorraine Hammond (WA)
Vice President: Dr Molly de Lemos (VIC)
Vice President: Dr Nicole Todd (QLD)
Treasurer: Renae Watkins (NSW)
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Priscilla Carlisle* (WA)
Olivia Connelly*(VIC)
Jo Hirst* (SA)
David Morkunas (VIC)
Dr Ros Neilson (NSW)
Dr Bartek Rajkowski (SA)
Dr Sally Robinson-Kooi (NSW)
Troy Verrey* (NSW)
Lyn Stone* (VIC)

**New members of council for 2020-21*

Dr Lorraine Hammond

President

B.Ed (ECU), Post Grad Dip SpLD (RSA) London, M. SpLD (Middlesex), PhD (ECU)

Lorraine Hammond is a Senior Lecturer at Edith Cowan University where she co-ordinates post graduate Special Education courses and the Graduate Diploma of Education (Primary). Since graduating as a secondary English Teacher in 1990 and realizing how ill equipped she was to support her students with literacy based learning difficulties, Lorraine undertook further study then began working as a Learning Difficulties Consultant supporting teachers and schools throughout Australia as well as presenting professional learning overseas. After completing her PhD on the relationship between beginning reading and spelling, Lorraine was awarded a Churchill Fellowship and travelled to Canada, USA and the UK investigating services for individuals with Dyslexia. A long standing Board Member of the Dyslexia-SPELD Foundation (DSF) of WA, Lorraine is at her happiest working with her university students and the many teachers she meets at conferences and in schools where she conducts research. Lorraine's current research interests include the prevention of literacy difficulties, teaching vocabulary and evidence-based instruction.

Dr Molly de Lemos**Vice President**

BSc (Hons), MSc (Natal), PhD (ANU), MAPsS

Molly de Lemos was a Senior Research Fellow at ACER prior to her retirement in 2001. Her initial training is in psychology, but since joining ACER in 1967 worked on a number of projects relating to assessment of educational achievement, with a focus on children from different language and cultural backgrounds and the early years of schooling. She has also worked on projects relating to educational provisions for students with disabilities and the educational needs of children in care. She has had an ongoing interest in issues relating to pre-school education, early intervention, and the assessment and identification of children with learning difficulties, and has also worked in the area of psychological assessment, including the adaptation and norming of measures of intelligence, aptitudes and adaptive behaviour. Her publications include the 1994 report *Schooling for Students with Disabilities*, and the 2002 ACER review paper *Closing the Gap between Research and Practice: Foundations for the Acquisition of Literacy*. She has served on a number of committees and advisory groups relating to assessment and early childhood education, and is currently a member of the Developmental Disorders of Language and Literacy Network Group. She has been a member of LDA since 2004, and was also Secretary of LDA from 2004 to 2012. Molly was the recipient of the 2012 Mona Tobias Award.

Dr Nicole Todd**Vice President**

PhD (QUT), MA Special Education (Macquarie Uni), B.Ed. Special Education (UWA), BA Education/Psychology (UQ)

Nicole Todd is currently an education lecturer at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) at the Springfield Campus in Brisbane, and has been in this position for five years. Previously she was a special education lecturer for seven years at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS). Her focus is on inclusive education and, specifically, quality education for students with learning difficulties. She has taught in regular schools and special education settings involving students from 3 to 18 years of age across Australia and also in England. Her varied career in education includes being a consultant in learning assistance for the New South Wales Department of Education and Training as well as director of an education support centre assisting the local school community with students requiring additional assistance with learning. She recently completed her doctorate at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) on the influence of school culture on the role of the Learning Difficulties Support Teacher. She also has an MA in Special Education from Macquarie University, a BEd in Special Education from the University of Western Australia, and a BA in Education/Psychology from the University of Queensland. Nicole served for many years in the 1990s and early 2000s on the Committee of the Australian Association of Special Education (AASE).

Renaë Watkins**Treasurer**

B.Ed (University of Wollongong), Diploma of Special Needs Teaching (Christchurch College of Education), Master of Special Education (Macquarie University)

With over 25 years of experience in education, Renaë Watkins has particular expertise in supporting students with learning difficulties and behaviour problems. She has taught in both mainstream and special education settings K-12 in New South Wales and Queensland, and also in England and New Zealand. Her varied career in education includes roles as a community care teacher, itinerant teacher behaviour support, assistant principal, leader of community intensive literacy centres, director of MultiLit literacy centres, and most recently as a consultant. She has taught in the public school system, the juvenile justice system, in not-for-profit community based literacy centres, and has led and managed large teams in instructional settings. She has a long standing interest and well developed skills in

Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) and has innovated with these to good effect in the various educational settings in which she has worked. Renae is currently working as an Education Consultant with the Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AISNSW) supporting schools in New South Wales to improve literacy levels as part of the NSW Literacy and Numeracy Phase 2 Action Plan. Part of this role has involved the development of an early literacy screening tool app (ESTA-L®) to provide teachers with a quick and easy tool to identify students at risk to ensure intervention occurs early. In addition to this she provides professional learning on literacy, EAL/D learners and behaviour management. She is a representative for the non-government school sector on the NSW Centre for Effective Reading Placement Panel, a member of SPELD NSW and the Dyslexia-SPELD Foundation and a member of Learning Difficulties Australia (LDA). Renae is currently undertaking further postgraduate study in the area of TESOL.

Sarah Asome
Secretary
BA(Ed) Hons

Sarah is currently the Assistant Principal at Bentleigh West Primary School in Victoria. She has been instrumental in leading the change at BWPS and continues to support many colleagues state and nationwide in the implementation of evidence-based literacy instruction in schools. This has led to a significant increase in literacy levels and the 2018 NAPLAN results now place BWPS as a high performing school. In 2015, she was awarded 'Outstanding Primary Teacher' in the Victorian Education Excellence Awards. She previously appeared in 'Outside the Square', a DVD resource for teachers and in 2017 appeared on Insight - 'A teacher Who Changed My Life'. Sarah has completed numerous courses including; Louisa Moat's LETRS training, Dyslexia Action (UK), Associate training with Australian Dyslexia Association, Yoshimoto Orton Gillingham Associate and Advanced and has a certificate as a Certified Structured Literacy Teacher - Certificate Centre for Effective Reading Instruction (CERI) USA. Sarah regularly presents at state and national conferences on literacy and dyslexia and has written several articles.

Priscilla Carlisle
Council Member

Med (ECU), B.Ed (Hons). Special Education, Inclusive Education (UNISA), Advanced Certificate in Special Education, Physical Disabilities (UNISA), Diploma in Primary School Teaching, Certificate of English Language Teaching to Adults

Priscilla lives in Western Australia and is a Consultant Member of LDA. She has over 40 years teaching experience across a variety of educational settings. She has set up, coordinated and led inclusive educational support teams in five countries and taught at a Special Education Center, a Behaviour Center and a Secondary Specialist Autism Unit. She currently works as a Consultant/Visiting teacher supporting Students with Disability (SWD) and has held this role for the past 9 years across both State Education and Catholic Education sectors. She has been responsible for implementing positive behavioural intervention (PBIS) policy in schools and has worked closely with visiting international advocates of PBIS. While working in China, Priscilla was an inaugural member and co-chair of SENIA (Special Education Network and Inclusion). She is an accredited facilitator and has taught online training courses in Dyslexia, Behaviour Management and Autism. Priscilla is also the owner/director of iRise Education - offering tutoring support for students with Literacy and Learning Difficulties. She has a special interest in working with students with a diagnosis of Autism, Attention Deficient Hyperactivity Disorder and students with Dyslexia and other Specific Learning Disorders. She holds dear the values and beliefs that, as a Special Needs educator, she lends a powerful voice to promote an inclusive community that provides meaningful involvement and equal access for students with diverse learning needs to ensure that skills are valued, respected and celebrated by society.

Olivia Connelly
Council Member and Consultant Conveyor
BA, DipEd, GCertEdSt

Olivia is the Director of Gameplan: Language, Literacy and Learning, a special educational and speech pathology practice in the inner north of Melbourne. She has over 15 years' experience working with pre-school, primary, secondary and adults presenting with a range of developmental disorders such as Severe Learning Disorder (Literacy and Numeracy), Autism Spectrum Condition, Developmental Language Delay, Attention Deficit Disorders, Intellectual Impairment and other neurodevelopmental delays. Olivia consults to the AFL Players Association and other elite sporting bodies regarding educational support for players with additional learning needs. Olivia has been a grant recipient from the City of Yarra for the past 4 years providing specialist services to primary schools in the Yarra area. With a particular interest in supporting adolescents with a range of learning difficulties, Olivia also regularly provides training in oral language, literacy and numeracy development to professionals and parents. Olivia is currently the LDA Consultant Convenor.

Jo Hirst
Council Member
B.AppSc (Disability Studies), B.Ed (Special Education)

Jo began her career in the disability field after completing a Bachelor of Applied Science (Disability Studies). She spent time working for Autism Association of SA. During this time, she completed a Bachelor of Education (Special Education), with the aim to work with children in the early stages of their education. In 2002, Jo commenced working in mainstream education. During this time, she has had positions ranging from classroom teacher, JP Co-ordinator, Gifted and Talented teacher and Learning Enhancement teacher. She has a passion for supporting students within an inclusive mainstream educational setting, and is currently a Learning Enhancement Teacher and involved in curriculum development at St Peter's Woodlands Grammar School in Adelaide. Jo is an advocate for students with dyslexia and has been an agent for change around the Science of Reading. A major part of Jo's current role encompasses building teacher knowledge and skill development in the Science of Reading, coaching teachers and education support officers in the pedagogy of EDI, developing curriculum, and setting up and implementing evidence based Tier 1, 2 and 3 interventions for students with dyslexia and other learning difficulties from Reception to Year 7. Jo also provides Tier 2 and 3 tutoring for students with dyslexia and has completed the *MiniLit* training and the *Playberry Dyslexia Solutions Multisensory Literacy Program* - Level 1 and 2.

David Morkunas
Council Member
M.Teaching (Monash University), B.Com (Deakin University)

Before David turned his focus to the classroom, he worked as a financial auditor for a major accounting firm. He was able to leverage his passion and skills in maths and data when he became a teacher, choosing to focus his attention on explicit teaching and the role of memory in learning. David is currently a classroom teacher at Bentleigh West Primary School. In 2019 he spoke about the Bentleigh West approach to mathematics instruction at the Language, Literacy and Learning conference in Perth. In addition, he has spoken several times about the importance of retrieval practice for LDA and ResearchED. David is also involved in research relating to *Cognitive Load Theory*, and he has lectured on a guest basis for the University of Melbourne's Graduate School of Education. He is a passionate advocate for evidence-based instruction in schools and works with educators to improve educational outcomes for all students, especially those with learning difficulties.

Dr Roslyn Neilson**Council Member and Editor, Bulletin**

Ph.D. (Psychology - University of Wollongong), M.Sc. Applied (Human Communication Disorders - McGill University, Montreal), B.A. Honours (Psychology and English, Melbourne University), Life Member of Speech Pathology Australia

Ros Neilson has worked as a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) in the NSW health system, in schools and in private practice. Her clinical experience as a SLP with children with reading difficulties inspired her to complete a Ph.D. in psychology, on the topic of phonological awareness, word identification skills, and reading difficulties. She has researched and published several widely used assessment tools relating to phonological awareness and early literacy. Ros has lectured on a casual basis at the University of Sydney (Speech Pathology), University of Wollongong (Faculty of Education) and Macquarie University (Speech Pathology), and has provided many in-services and conference papers for audiences including speech-language pathologists and education professionals, including a National Speaking Tour for Speech Pathology Australia in 2012. Ros served on LDA Council during 2014 - 2015 and has served as a volunteer on the LDA Publications Committee since then. She took over the role of editor of the LDA Bulletin in 2020. Ros was the recipient of the Mona Tobias Award in 2016.

Dr Bartek Rajkowski**Council Member**

Ph.D., B.App.Sc. (Sp. Path.), CPSP

Bartek Rajkowski is a speech & language pathologist with extensive experience in assessing, identifying, and helping students with literacy difficulties. He has been the principal clinician and director of Adelaide Speech Pathology Services since 2001, where he leads a team of passionate clinicians. Bartek's doctoral research was an investigation of the potential causes of phonological processing and decoding difficulties that are common in children with poor reading skills. He is a passionate advocate for students with learning difficulties. Bartek is also the creator and managing director of ReadingDoctor® Software, a suite of scientifically based, interactive apps designed to improve literacy skills in children. He regularly presents to audiences around Australia on the topics of reading development, reading difficulties and evidence-based literacy instruction.

Dr Sally Robinson-Kooi**Council Member**

PhD (ECU), B.Ed. (TESOL major) (La Trobe University), Dip. Teaching Primary (Phillip Institute of Technology), Certificate EFL (International House, Hastings, UK)

Sally is a literacy and TESOL consultant, providing NESAC accredited professional development to teachers. She has worked with diverse socio-economic groups and non-English background cultures in Australia and overseas. She taught in both the Department of Education and TAFE sectors in Melbourne, before returning to Sydney, where she promoted the position of Community Liaison Officer (NESB) in the Multicultural Education Unit (MEU) in the Department of Education, Metropolitan North. She provided consultation and troubleshooting services; conducted professional development seminars; and supported schools with EALD students experiencing learning difficulties. In this role, she also delivered cross cultural awareness programs for school staff, students, parents, and community workers. Subsequently, Sally taught K-6; co-ordinated an EALD program in a Sydney primary school; and supervised undergraduate student teachers. She then went on to teach in the undergraduate Primary Teacher Program at Macquarie University and present units in the SPELD NSW Teacher Certificate course. Sally provides schools with professional development on scientific evidence-based instructional methods to optimise literacy outcomes, an area which was a focus of her PhD research.

Lyn Stone

Council Member

BA (Hons) Linguistics (UCL)

Lyn is an education linguist and author. She lives and works in Victoria, Australia where she runs her consultancy and tutoring practice, Lifelong Literacy. Lyn creates research-informed professional development seminars for teachers and other education professionals. She is a sought-after public speaker and regularly makes appearances at conferences and on live radio. Her goal is to help teachers awaken linguistic curiosity in their students using creative engaging tools and strategies that are based upon scientific consensus as to what constitutes best practice. Lyn has extensive classroom teaching experience and is regularly employed by schools on a contractual basis to provide specialist literacy education for groups of at-risk students as well as training for teachers. Her three books, *Spelling for Life*, *Language for Life* and *Reading for Life* have attracted worldwide acclaim.

Troy Verey

Council Member

B.Ed., B.Teaching, (University of Wollongong)

Troy spent his early career teaching in London, and has been teaching in the New South Wales system since 2011. His career has included classroom teacher roles for all year groups (kindergarten to year 6), Assistant Principal and Instructional Leader. As a strong advocate for using evidence-based teaching and a knowledge-rich curriculum to overcome social inequities, he involves students in the five elements of effective reading instruction, and explicit teaching of writing and mathematics activities that aim to develop sophisticated academic schema and vocabulary. Troy currently works as an Instructional Leader at Marsden Road Public School. One of his major responsibilities includes building teacher capacity in the areas of literacy and numeracy. He delivers professional development opportunities through a range of approaches including peer observation, structured feedback on lesson observation, and one-on-one mentoring and coaching in specific aspects of pedagogy, content and assessment. Troy also leads a Response to Intervention approach that ensures the provision, monitoring and measurement of scientific, research-based instruction and interventions in reading, writing and mathematics. He is also an integral member of the executive team of Marsden Road Public School, and a committee member of the school's learning support team that provides strategies and support to teachers in catering to the academic needs of students who have learning difficulties. Troy holds the position of advisory board member for the Macquarie University Centre for Reading and is an associate member of the Liverpool Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.