

## New Professional Development Classes and Programs

*The Winter/Spring 2001 West 40 Professional Development Catalog is now arriving at schools. In it, educators will find a host of courses and programs that will not only enrich the experience of being an educator, but also earn participants state-required continuing education credits. Among the many offerings in the latest Professional Development Catalog are these new courses and programs:*

### West 40 and Aurora University Present A Master's Program for the Busy Educator

Beginning in the summer of 2001, educators can earn a Master's degree in just 25 months by attending school one night a week during the school year and two weeks each summer! West 40 and Aurora University are forming educational cohorts in the northern and southern sectors of the West region. Earn a Master of Arts in Teaching with a Reading-Literacy track or a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership (including an Administrator's Type 75 certificate.) It's affordable and convenient. Attend an informational meeting on either February 20 or March 1, 2001, and discover how easy earning a Master's degree can be. Registration deadline for the informational meeting is February 13.

*Master's Degree Informational Meeting  
Tuesday, February 20, at West 40, Room 296, or  
Thursday, March 1, River Forest District 90 (school TBD). No fee*

### Substitute Teacher Training Courses

Did you know that during the 12 years the typical student spends in school, substitute teachers teach over one year? Substitute teachers are a chronic need in all districts. Responding to the urgent needs of school districts in the West Cook area, West 40 will offer a Substitute Teaching informational meeting for people who might want to acquire a substitute training certificate, and training for those substitutes who want to improve their skills. The courses will help substitutes navigate the school system and provide practices for becoming excellent substitute teachers. For ad-

ministrators, a class on attracting and keeping substitutes is offered.

*Substitute Teachers:  
Paving Their Road to Success (for administrators)  
Monday, Jan. 29, 2001.  
Fee: \$75*

*Substitute Teacher Information Meeting: Weds, Jan. 17  
No fee*

*Substitute Teacher Training:  
Thursdays, Jan. 11 and  
Jan. 18. Fee: \$65*

*Or One-Day Intensive  
Course: Weds, Jan. 17  
Fee: \$50*

### Meeting the Challenge PreK-2: The Illinois Reading Initiative

Highly motivated children learn more! Increase motivation by learning to create a literate classroom. Use a variety of literary techniques for making the reading and writing connection for every primary grade child. Best practices in the assessment of student literacy and tips for strengthening the vital home and school connection will be

*continues on page four*

### Visit the Illinois School Improvement Web Site

ILSI.ISBE.NET is a new interactive Web site from the Illinois State Board of Education that helps educators analyze their school's achievement test data.

The ILSI (Illinois School Improvement) Web site lets users compare their school's achievement test scores with other schools in their district, and to schools with similar characteristics throughout the state. ILSI also provides easy access to information that helps educators, parents and the public better understand the role of the Illinois Learning Standards. It also gives links to resources and tools proven to boost learning in the classroom.

To see how the Web site can work for you, visit ILSI.ISBE.NET.

## Educators' Accolades

**Lyons Township High School Director of Student Activities Kris Costopoulous was recently named the Illinois Student Activities Director of the Year by the Illinois Directors of Student Activities. Superintendent Dennis Kelly, Ph.D. says, "Kris's attention to detail is seconded only by her drive to do what's best for students. Not only does Kris head an activities**

**program for 3,200 students, she has done so under incredible circumstances. Thanks to Kris' efforts, students are not only involved; they are involved in meaningful and significant ways."**

**West 40 staff members Kay Poyner Brown, Gert Johnson and Sarah Urycki are completing a two-year Professional Development Academy continues on page four**

## Spotlight on: "Those Who Excel" Awards

West 40 congratulates the West Cook area educators who recently received "Those Who Excel" Awards from the ISBE. The Awards culminated in the Teacher of the Year recipient, who is chosen from the "Those Who Excel" winners. This year's teacher of the year is **Jo Crow**, elementary science teacher, Metamora CCSD #1 in Woodford County. Riverside | Brookfield High School science teacher **Carl Koch** was among the ten finalists for the "Teacher of the Year" award.

The ISBE recognized over 300 outstanding educators at the twenty-seventh annual "Those Who Excel" Awards. Awards were given for excellence, the highest honor; merit, and recognition. Also, certificates of excellence were mailed to recipients.

Winners must first be nominated by people in their communities who are chosen by a committee of their peers. The criteria includes:

- How the nominee has demonstrated excellence in his or her duties
- How the nominee has demonstrated concern for children
- Positive effects the nominee has had on the school environment
- Leadership shown by the nominee to inspire others to achieve
- Achievement beyond the normal duties.



Congratulations to this year's "Those Who Excel" winners from the West Cook area: **Donna Czarnecki**, teacher, Lyons Township High School #204, merit award; **The Riverside | Brookfield High School fine arts team**, District 208, merit award; **Judy Henry**, support personnel, Rhodes School District 87.5, River Grove, recognition award; **Mona Johnson**, student support personnel, Proviso District 209, recognition award; **Junior Achievement Team**, Leyden Community High Schools District 212, recognition award; **Washington Irving School PTO**, Oak Park District 97, recognition award; **Carl F. Koch**, teacher, Riverside | Brookfield High School District 208, award of excellence; **Bonnie E. McDonald**, educational service personnel, Oak Park District 97, recognition award; **Debbie Mercer**, community volunteer, Oak Park District 97, award of excellence; **Janet S. Miller**, student support personnel, Oak Park District 97, merit award; **Kathleen A. Nelson**, School Administrator, Oak Park District 97, recognition award; **Peaceable Schools Initiative Team**, Lyons Township High School District 204, recognition award; **Nicholas J. Sakellaris**, teacher, Oak Park District 97, merit award; **Ann M. Synowiec**, educational service personnel, Leyden Community High Schools District 212, merit award. ■

## Nominations Underway for 2001 SCOTY Awards

**A** call for nominations for the sixth annual SCOTY Awards is now underway. School administrators will soon receive information from West 40 on how to nominate a student.

The School Citizen of the Year (SCOTY) Awards is a recognition program for outstanding young people from grades one through twelve in the West Cook area. West 40 welcomes one nomination from every primary and secondary school in West Cook County. Award parameters are very broad, but all nominees must be outstanding role models who set positive examples for other students.

SCOTY winners will be feted at a ceremony at Riverside | Brookfield High School on March 7, 2001. Recipients, their families and friends, school administrators and teachers are invited to attend this uplifting event. Each recipient is acknowledged individually on stage and receives a medal, certificate and congratulations from the West 40 staff. The SCOTY Award winners are also acknowledged in the SCOTY honor roll, a booklet that features a biography of each student. Entertainment and refreshments are also enjoyed by all.

All schools in the West 40 area are encouraged to participate. For further information, please call West 40 at 708/447-6070. ■

Visit the West 40 Web site at [WWW.W-COOK.K12.IL.US](http://WWW.W-COOK.K12.IL.US)

## Tobacco Grant Funds Smoking Prevention Initiative

**M**oney from the well-publicized tobacco companies' court settlement is now funding programs that will promote positive health attitudes in young students. The Illinois general assembly recently appropriated \$10 million from the settlement to the ISBE to develop strategies for tobacco control.

Because national and state data indicate that the early teen years are critical for building skills to prevent tobacco use, the grant will help develop and fund programs that target students in grades five through eight. Not only is it imperative for children never to develop the smoking habit, research suggests that tobacco is a "gateway" drug that leads to further substance abuse.

In a statewide effort, all of the state agencies that received money from this initiative (Intermediate Service Centers and Regional Offices of Education) are working together with organizations like the American Cancer Society, The Lung Association, the Cook County Public Health Department and the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians to develop effective smoking prevention programs.

The role of West 40 and the other intermediate service agencies is to act as a resource to help provide school districts with the necessary skills and information to

develop programs that will help students prevent tobacco use. These can include curriculum, outside resources, and/or pilot programs with universities. Bernardien Austin, who is administering the tobacco grant at West 40, stated, "We want to put in place mechanisms that will be self-sustaining." Toward that end, an advisory board is now forming. Interested parties should contact Berni at 708/447-6070 for information.

West 40, in partnership with the Suburban Cook County Regional Office of Education, recently sponsored a program showcase to provide educators from participating school districts information on available curricula to help them make informed choices best suited for their school population. A video of the showcase is available for review by personnel from districts that did not participate. Contact Berni for information.

"West 40 is fortunate to have strong leadership in this initiative from our Executive Director Gretchen Alexander and Candy Cash [Assistant Superintendent, Suburban Cook County Regional Office of Education, and West 40 Board member]," Austin commented. "The people and agencies involved in this new initiative are energized, excited and enthusiastic to have the opportunity to assist educators who work with students in this age group." ■

### Save These Dates

#### 2001

##### January 24

Writing Talent Search  
Manuscript Deadline

##### February 3

Junior Math  
Olympiad

##### February 10

Speech & Drama  
Festival

##### March 7

School Citizen of the  
Year (SCOTY) Awards



In December, West 40 marked its fifteenth anniversary of service to western Cook County school districts. The agency has come a long way since December 5, 1985, when the superintendents of 40 western Cook school districts met to organize a regional agency. That agency, created by legislation and largely supported by the ISBE, became the West 40

## West 40 Celebrates 15 Years: A History in Brief

Educational Service Center, one of 18 centers in the state. Boundaries were eventually drawn to include 38 Cook County school districts, but the name West 40 stuck. Judy Lipschutz, now Principal of Willard School in River Forest, was named the first Executive Director of West 40. Gretchen Alexander, the current director, assumed the position in 1987.

The service centers were created to assure that school reform information and relevant professional development could be conveyed to all school districts in Illinois through a uniform delivery system. Subsequent legislation in 1993 incorporated the responsibilities of the downstate Educational Service Centers into the Regional Office. *continues on page four*

## Educators' Accolades *Continued*

program through the National Staff Development Council. The Academy program enables participants to link the professional learning of educators with student learning. They are part of a group of 60 people who received intensive training in cutting edge professional development practices for educators. The official graduation will take place in December 2001.

A number of educators in the West 40 area have been recognized by the ISBE's "Those Who Excel Awards." Please see the accompanying article for a complete list of these educators.

Educators, continue to send your accolades to West 40, and they will be published in this newsletter as space permits. Fax information (include your phone number) to Kay Poyner Brown at 708/447-6732.

## New Professional Development Classes and Programs

*Continued*  
studied. This series was developed by the ISBE to support primary educators in meeting the reading challenge.

Tuesdays, Feb. 13, 20, 27,  
March 13, 20, 27.

Fee: \$65

For registration information, see the Winter/Spring 2001 Professional Development Catalog or call West 40 at 708/447-6070. ■

## West 40 Celebrates 15 Years: A History in Brief *Continued*

ofices of Education, and changed the name of the Cook County agencies to Intermediate Service Centers.

While legislation established the basic responsibilities and determined the governance of the Centers, each service region established specific bylaws, policies, and practices. Because of that, each Center has unique characteristics or "personality." West 40's Governing Board meets statutory guidelines by including three teachers, three superintendents, representatives of the Regional Office of Education and higher education, central office staff and principals. Governing Board members serve four year terms

and represent all of the townships within West 40.

As West 40's services grew, the office moved three times. For nine-and-a-half years its office and site for many programs and courses has been Riverside | Brookfield High School District 208. The school district also serves as West 40's Administrative Agent.

West 40's initial offerings were Administrators Academy programs. Soon, a wide range of consulting services and professional development programs for all school staff were offered. The core of West 40's consultants and staff have worked with the agency since 1988, allowing relationship-based service to its school districts. In 1996, organizing and running Regional Safe Schools

Programs was added to West 40's responsibilities. Currently, West 40 oversees 10 RSSP sites.

Ninety-two percent of West 40's funding is from state and federal grants and contracts. The remaining eight percent derives from West 40's workshops, course fees and projects.

In its role of service to schools, West 40 can be compared to the 911 emergency service of the police and the 411 information service of the telephone company. Throughout its history, West 40 has been a partner with its member districts in improving teaching and learning for all. It will continue to build and strengthen this role into the future. ■

## West 40 Governing Board

**George Beranek**  
*Principal*  
Cicero District 99  
Board Secretary

**Candy Cash**  
*Asst. Superintendent*  
Regional Office of Education  
for Suburban Cook County

**Ann Courter**  
*School Board Member*  
Oak Park District 97

**Kim Crawford**  
*Teacher*  
Rosemont District 78  
Past Board President

**Linda Gilmore**  
*Teacher*  
Lyons Township High School

**Charles Klingsporn**  
*Superintendent*  
Riverside | Brookfield District 208  
Administrative Agent  
for West 40 Ex-Officio

**Lilane Koehn**  
*Math Division Chair*  
Lyons Township High School

**Raymond Kuper**  
*Superintendent*  
Union Ridge District 86  
Board President

**Michael Mercer**  
*Superintendent*  
Lyons District 103

**Myra Sanders**  
*Superintendent*  
Westchester District 92.5

**Judy Sayre**  
*Teacher*  
Riverside District 96

**Phyllis Walden**  
*Vice President of  
Curriculum and  
Professional Development*  
Morton College  
Board President Elect