



MDCSS Chronicle

A Maryland Council for Social Studies
Publication

Fall 2014
Post Conference Issue

Points of Interest:

- 2014 Award Winners
- MDCSS awards Lifetime Achievement Award
- Conference Keynote Highlights

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From the Board of Directors

It is hard to believe that after months of hard work, the 2014 MDCSS Annual Conference has come and gone. This year's conference was held at the Universities at Shady Grove in Rockville, MD, a new location for us. It was a gorgeous fall day as dedicated social studies professionals from around the state filled the space to listen to our keynote speakers, participate in information sessions, visit vendor/exhibitor tables, and network with colleagues.

Some of the highlights of our conference included a keynote address during breakfast by Michael Kulczak, who provided us with an overview of the financial crisis. Then, during lunch, Dr. Robert Rook of Towson University, provided the audience with an overview of the situation in the Middle East. Dr. Rook was kind enough to provide us with an overview of his talk for this issue. This snapshot can be found on page 5 of this issue.

In addition, we found time to honor some wonderful social

studies professionals. Wendy Kanter, Gene Allen Hopkins, Jr., Kate Johnson and Marcie Taylor-Thoma all received awards from MDCSS. More information about these outstanding individuals can be found on pages 2 and 4 of this issue.

Finally, our participants had a chance to browse over 25 vendor and exhibitor tables representing publishers, local historical groups, non-profits and other social studies themed organizations. As always, we would like to thank our conference sponsors, The DBQ Project, the Maryland Geographic Alliance, McGraw Hill, and Nystrom Education, for their generous support.

And so, after a short rest, we will be hard at work on next year's conference. If you have any suggestions you would like us to consider, please send your thoughts to info@mdcss.org. Remember, we want this to be YOUR conference too!

2014 Social Studies Award Winners

On SocialMedia

A sampling from #MDCSS2014, a live conversation during the conference.



The Maryland Council for Social Studies would like to congratulate each of our 2014 Social Studies Award Winners. Each winner was nominated on the basis of excellence in Social Studies instruction.

- **Outstanding New Social Studies Teacher of the Year:** Wendy Kanter, 5th grade teacher at Swansfield Elementary School in Howard County.

- **Secondary Social Studies Teacher of the Year:** Gene Allen Hopkins, Jr. of Milton Somers Middle School in Charles County.
- **Social Studies Instructional Leader of the Year:** Kate Johnson, Social Studies Curriculum Specialist for Harford County. (Not Pictured)



Gene Allen Hopkins, Jr. of Milton Somers Middle School receives the Secondary Social Studies Teacher of the Year award from MDCSS President, Amanda Roberts at the MDCSS Annual Conference on October 17, 2014.

Wendy Kanter of Swansfield Elementary School receives the Outstanding New Social Studies Teacher award from MDCSS President, Amanda Roberts at the MDCSS Annual Conference on October 17, 2014.



Professional Development Opportunities

Dates to Remember:

- November 13, 2014: National Archive's Educators' Open House
- November 15, 2014: Maryland Historical Society's *Achieving Common Core Literacy Through Social Studies: The Colonial Era* Professional Development session.
- November 20-22, 2014: NCSS Conference, Boston, MA

- ***November 13, 2014: National Archive's Educators' Open House***

- Join the staff of the National Archives in Washington, D.C., for a special after-hours viewing of exhibits, including the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Also included in the invite are introductions to classroom resources and primary sources, samples of online learning opportunities, discussions of field trip options, ideas and support for National History Day, and conversations with Archives educators.
 - Doors open at 5:30pm; last entrance at 7:15pm.
 - *Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights* on view until 6:15pm.
 - Light refreshments will be served.

- ***November 15, 2014: Achieving Common Core Literacy Through Social Studies: The Colonial Era***

- This workshop will address how to take students through the process of analyzing and synthesizing multiple sources to draw evidence-based conclusions, an essential skill to be measured by the PARCC assessment. Participants will learn how historical investigations can address Common Core Literacy skills while covering social studies content and engaging student interest. In addition to lesson plan dissections, teachers will tour the Maryland Historical Society museum to deepen their understanding of the colonial and revolutionary eras in Maryland and explore exciting new digital resources offered by the MdHS. To register, email jfrieman@mdhs.org.
 - Maryland Historical Society
 - Saturday, Nov. 15, 2014 from 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
 - For Teachers Grades 3-5

MDCSS Honors Retired State Supervisor

At the annual conference on Friday, October 17th, the Maryland Council for Social Studies took a moment to honor the retired Maryland State Supervisor of Social Studies, Dr. Marcie Taylor-Thoma.

Although Dr. Thoma has been awarded the Social Studies Instructional Leader of the Year award twice, MDCSS felt that her outstanding service to social studies instruction in Maryland was deserving of a Lifetime Achievement award.

As a teacher in Queen Anne's county, Dr. Thoma worked to advance social studies instruction through an integrated content approach. Her efforts positively impacted the learning experiences for her former students who remember her as a no-nonsense yet caring and dynamic teacher. During her tenure at MSDE, Dr. Thoma guided the state in the creation of K-12 content standards and the state curriculum, an exit assessment as a graduation requirement, data analysis, bridge-plan writing....the list is endless.

Dr. Thoma has weathered every assessment measure, from the functional testing to MSPAP to MSA to HSA to PARCC. Her most recent project was in the role of state representative and editor of the College, Career and Civic Life Framework for Social Studies State Standards. Her contribution to professional growth of teachers cannot be overstated. No one has had greater impact on social studies in Maryland than Marcie Taylor-Thoma. Congratulations!



Dr. Marcie Taylor-Thoma receives a Lifetime Achievement Award from MDCSS President, Amanda Roberts at the MDCSS Annual Conference on October, 17, 2014.



Dr. Marcie Taylor-Thoma receives a standing ovation at the MDCSS Annual Conference on October, 17, 2014.

American in the Middle of the Middle East, 1848-2014 by Dr. Robert Rook

The article below features a summary of Dr. Rook's Keynote Address at the MDCSS Annual Conference on October 17, 2017.

Contemporary headlines vividly outline the myriad political and policy challenges emanating from the Middle East for the United States. For U.S. policymakers, and American voters, the problems appear as intractable as they seem inescapable. Failing, or at least foundering, states in Iraq and Syria, a sputtering peace process between Israelis and Palestinians, and radicalism and authoritarianism are resurgent. In thirty-five years of traveling through and living in various parts of the Middle East, I must admit that I have never seen circumstances as bleak and discouraging as they are now.

However, while contemporary circumstances are grim, America's current challenges in the region are neither unprecedented nor entirely unfamiliar. In 1848, while surveying the Jordan River and Dead Sea, U.S. Navy Lt. William Francis Lynch was approached by an Arab leader seeking U.S. assistance against a potential uprising against the Ottoman Turks. Shortly after the end of the American Civil War, a young Alfred Thayer Mahan, sailed through the region and later identified the region, both by name (the Middle East) and in terms of its geostrategic significance, decades before he authored *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*. In the early 1880s, American warships witnessed the British bombardment of the Egyptian port of Alexandria, England's response to a military uprising. This event, in addition to precipitating more direct British control in Egypt, also helped generate concerns in the United States about the safety and security of American ports. What befell Alexandria might happen to New York, or

Boston, to Charleston. While neither event generated any immediate, much less long term, direct American interventions in the Middle East, they do serve as reminders of both the region's dynamism, also sometimes dubbed 'instability,' and America's longer than suspected familiarity with the region.

As Americans contemplate our future courses of action in the region, and our policy emphasizes pivot toward an Asia that is increasingly dependent upon Middle East energy resources, recalling America's longer relationship with the Middle East, and the global interactions that occur within the region, may not offer much comfort but it might help lend needed perspective. A lack of both an understanding of and an appreciation for historical realities and the myriad complexities that underlie those realities are challenges for voters and their elected officials. Fortunately, social studies educators are perfectly positioned to address this situation. We might not shape foreign policy directly but we do interact regularly with future voters and potential actors in the foreign policy process. While it is not our charge to advance any political agenda, it is our responsibility to provide the most accurate and timely information to our students who will find the Middle East and other challenges around the globe no less important and no more escapable than they are currently.