

1999 CESE Annual Meeting Minutes

The 1999 Annual Meeting of the Coalition for Excellence in Science and Math Education (CESE) was held on the afternoon of Saturday, June 26th, at the First Unitarian Church (3701 Carisle, NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico). The meeting was introduced by 1997-1998 president Steve Getty. Steve discussed the degradation of the public school science standards development in the summer of 1996, and how this led to the formation of CESE on February 28th, 1997. The group started with just 12 members, but by March 7th of 1997 had grown to 43 members. Today, CESE has over 450 members.

Steve mentioned the incorporation of CESE, and briefly described the organization's vision and mission statements. He also gave a rundown of CESE's many accomplishments, which include:

- Development/implementation of a standards-based teacher learning project (HOTSPOTS)
- Meetings with the State Board and Department of Education on science issues
- Development of a web site
- Growth of the organization
- Publishing of the Beacon newsletter
- Member participation in the Instructional Materials Commission for selecting state-approved teaching materials (five of twenty are CESE members)
- Attendance at educational forums
- School visits for demonstrations, lectures
- Public lectures on science issues statewide
- Judging at several science fairs statewide
- Awarding of a prize at the 1999 state Science Fair (jointly with NMSR)
- Development of relationships with educational policy makers
- hosting nationally-known speaker Genie Scott of the National Center for Science Education (December 1998) and
- Evaluation of feasibility of correspondence courses on the internet

Steve was especially enthusiastic about the HOTSPOTS project, which is a partnership of SEDL (the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory), the Albuquerque Public Schools, and CESE. The program, which is funded with over 30,000\$, is already helping teachers at Inez Elementary to learn material and innovative approaches in the earth sciences. Linda Charlton, of Inez Elementary School in Albuquerque, presented more details about the program.

CESE member Pam Thomas described the sequence of events that culminated in her election to the Los Lunas School Board in February of 1999. She also gave a moving tribute to her father-in-law, the late David A. Thomas, who was a founding member of CESE.

Christine Trujillo, a CESE member who, along with member Marshall Berman, won election to the State School Board in 1998, talked about the rewards and frustrations of service on the Board. Past President Marshall Berman spoke about The Internet Learning Network (ILN), a web site that will provide a free opportunity for students to assess their math and science performance, and compare themselves to students worldwide. The site will also provide resources for parents and teachers (www.getsmarter.org) Marshall also discussed The Summit on Science (SoS), a four month science education national awareness program that will run from August through December 2001. He discussed his new role at the state board, and how eight new board members have been very active and energetic. (For example, e-mail is now frequently used for communication between board members.)

Treasurer Nancy Shelton gave the Treasurer's report. At meeting date, the CESE balance was \$750.00. Previous expenses included scholarships, legal fees (for 501-C3 incorporation), and awards for the Science Fair.

State Representative Rick Miera, who serves on the state's Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC), spoke to the group. He asked for our continuing involvement in educational issues, and encouraged our attendance at hearings and meetings. Rep. Miera mentioned problems in the schools (such as violence), and the importance of processes like textbook selection. He discussed his vision of better links between public school and college - a sort of K-16 "marriage." He also mentioned his worry about assaults on the schools, such as those from groups which want public education to stop after the eighth grade.

Elections were then held for the 1999-2000 term. The slate was:

- Kim Johnson - President
- Steve Brügge -President Elect
- Dave Thomas - Secretary
- Nancy Shelton - Treasurer
- Steve Getty - Past President
- Members at Large: Marshall Berman, Mark Boslough, Cindy Chapman, Marilyn Savitt-Kring, and Jonathan Weiss.

Member Martin Sherman made the motion to accept the slate, and Christine Trujillo seconded. It was passed unanimously.

Newly elected president Kim Johnson talked about a very important and positive step for CESE: incorporation as a 501-C3 organization. This has many benefits, including tax-free status. Of course, CESE can't formally endorse candidates or legislation, but it can provide analysis, reports, and the like. He encouraged those interested in political participation to speak with Mark Boslough. Kim talked about the critical need for better science education in general, and said CESE must broaden its horizons beyond current threats like creationism. He mentioned several goals for next year; these include scholarships, partnerships with schools and school boards, and continued growth for CESE.

Secretary Dave Thomas performed a little trick wherein he somehow managed to read everyone's mind simultaneously, even though everyone in the audience could choose from an array of playing cards.

One of the high points of the meeting came with the presentation of the Watson and Crick Award, which went to Marshall Berman. This in fact was just a "cover story" for a 60th birthday surprise for Marshall, and was delivered to the stunned board member by all three of his children (Brian, Brandon, and Brenna), who came to the meeting from out of town for this surprise.

After the meeting, food and discussion were enjoyed by all in attendance.

Respectfully submitted,
David E. Thomas
Secretary