

Pacific Science Center and LASER Make Big Splash at Annual WSTA/WORD Conference

Representatives from the Pacific Science Center's Education Department will attend this year's annual Washington Science Teachers' Association (WSTA) conference in Spokane. The conference will be held at the Spokane Convention Center, October 12th-14th. To support this year's theme, *Linking Science and Literacy*, the WSTA has teamed up with the Washington Organization for Reading Development (WORD) to offer a program of presentations that integrate science and literacy.

The conference schedule is packed with state-renowned speakers with a broad range of backgrounds in education and curriculum development. Washington State Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform (LASER) Program will be represented by two speakers, Dennis Schatz and Debra Jordan. Pacific Science Center's Science on Wheels Program Supervisor Zeta Strickland will also be doing a presentation.

Dennis Schatz is the Vice President of Education and Co-Director of Washington State LASER at the Pacific Science Center. Dennis is a "Featured Speaker" at the conference and will be presenting a workshop entitled "How Do I Know They Got It – Tools and Tricks of the Trade to Ensure Students are learning the Science You Teach." Dennis reminds educators that "teaching science involves building mental pictures in students' minds, with the hope that their mental picture is the same as ours." Under Dennis's instruction, teachers will discover approaches for maximizing the likelihood that those mental images will match.

Washington State LASER and WSTA are co-sponsoring a session presented by Deb Jordan, entitled "I Teach Science...Not Literacy!" Deb is a science educator who works in the Centers for Curriculum and Professional Development at Biological Science Curriculum Study (BSCS). At BSCS, Deb was able to direct the revisions to BSCS Science Tracks: Connecting Science & Literacy. Now, Deb is helping develop literacy strategies for essays in BSCS Biology: A Human Approach. Deb's WSTA/WORD Action Lab will help teachers explore strategies that integrate science concepts with literacy learning.

Zeta Strickland, the Pacific Science Center's Science on Wheels Supervisor will collaborate with Dennis Schatz and Paul Allan to present the Center's "Astro Adventures Curriculum: Experience Astronomy." In addition to Paul's current position as the Program Coordinator for the University of Idaho's Department of Physics, he is a former Washington State LASER Program Supervisor. Dennis, Zeta, and Paul will give teachers a hands-on introduction to the Science Center's nationally recognized 4th-8th grade astronomy instructional material, Astro Adventures.