

Speakers and Session Leaders

Chestnut Booth is a Journal-listed Christian Science practitioner. Previously, she served Principia College in a variety of capacities: director of the Academic Advising Center, registrar, and most recently, Dean of Students. While at Principia, Chestnut developed a curriculum for the College's Moral Reasoning requirement and a training program in Mary Kimball Morgan's methods of character education. She has a master's degree in educational counseling.

Sholto Bowen has been Principal of Huntingtower School outside of Melbourne, Australia, since 1999. He taught in his native South Africa for eleven years before moving to Australia and joining Huntingtower in 1987. His teaching has been primarily in the sciences, and he is the author of five books on chemistry. He is qualified in the values based "Visionary Leadership Program" and is a trainer in Values Based Accelerative Learning, running numerous courses for teachers throughout Victoria.

Bill Cheney has a wide range of experience in education, teaching at both the elementary and middle school levels in both public and private schools in California and Washington State. He has also served in various administrative posts, including Elementary Division Head at The Harker School in San Jose, Middle School Director at Clairbourn School, and Head of The Branch School in Houston. Bill is currently the Assistant Headmaster at Berkeley Hall School in Los Angeles.

Sandy Clark is a 35-year veteran teacher who has taught at the primary, middle and high school levels in Tokyo, Connecticut, U.S. Virgin Islands, Missouri and Florida. Her major subject areas are English, Critical Thinking & Writing, and Analytical Reading. Her experiences in working with many students over the years have given her insights into the ideas and skills they've found most helpful in moving from high school to college and into their careers.

Traci Fenton is the Founder and President of WorldBlu, a non-profit social enterprise specializing in organizational democracy and freedom-centered leadership. As a leading expert in organizational democracy, she is recognized as one of the business thought-leaders of her generation and speaks all over the world. She has been featured in the *Wall Street Journal*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *US News and World Report*, *The New York Times*, as well as dozens of media outlets around the world. Traci is currently working on her first book highlighting innovative case studies in organizational democracy. She earned a BA in global studies and entrepreneurship from Principia College and a master's degree in international development from American University's School of International Service. Traci was recently featured in the *Principia Purpose*, discussing organizational democracy in education.

Melanie Fisher is the Athletic Director at Berkeley Hall School in Los Angeles, California. She has taught 1st-8th grade physical education and coached after school sports including basketball and volleyball. She is currently working on her MS in Health, Physical Education, and Recreation.

Mike Hufstader just finished his first year of teaching physical education and coaching at Berkeley Hall School. Prior to his time at Berkeley Hall, Mike was the assistant soccer coach at Principia College. He also has five years of experience being a camp counselor at Camp Leelanau and the Leelanau Outdoor Center.

Makengo Ma Pululu is a Journal-listed Christian Science practitioner in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. In 1986, he and his family left the Congo (then known as Zaire) for Rwanda, where Makengo worked as a teacher and translator. In 1994, as the violence between the Hutus and the Tutsis escalated, his family was evacuated across the border to Goma in Zaire. Though his family was able to return to Kinshasa, Makengo stayed on in Goma for almost two more years. His remarkable experiences of healing and protection were recorded in an interview in the June 16, 2003 *Sentinel*. Now back in Kinshasa, Makengo and his family have started a school to help children who have been impacted by poverty and war. The school currently enrolls 400 children, and 99 of them attend the Christian Science Sunday School!

Cathy Mohan is the Head of School at Japhet School in Michigan where she taught for 18 years before becoming Head of School. As an experienced character education teacher, she was instrumental in helping Japhet become a National School of Character award winner. Her integration of character, music, and American History was acknowledged by the American Music Foundation, and she was selected Teacher of the Year by the Veterans of Foreign Wars for her Immigration Unit which included a focus on patriotism, tolerance, and respect. She has spoken at regional and national conferences about integrating character education across the curriculum.

Joan Franklin Smutny is nationally recognized as a leader in the field of gifted education. She is the founder and director of The Center for Gifted, an affiliate of National-Louis University in the Chicago area. Besides teaching young people in her own programs, Joan teaches gifted education to graduate students, presents at seminars around the country, and counsels both educators and parents. She is the author or editor of thirteen books on gifted education and parenting.

Alice Stanley has extensive experience both as an educational leader and teacher. She has taught just about every grade from kindergarten to eighth and has been a principal in several different schools. In every place she has worked, Alice has seen the value that the understanding of Christian Science brings to the field of education, especially in the areas of relationships and teacher expectations. Alice is currently in her first year as the Principal at Claremont Fan Court School. Prior to arriving at Claremont, Alice worked in public schools in the Chicago suburbs and at Principia.

Betsy Stecker taught English Language Arts at Japhet School, a CEP National School of Character, for eleven years. “Japhet not only raises children in good character; it also raises teachers,” she says with gratitude. Prior to teaching she was a professional writer, editor and proofreader. She has a bachelor’s degree in English and Journalism from Oakland University, and completed graduate work for teaching secondary education at Wayne State University. Betsy enjoys sharing specific teaching strategies for integrating character values into the language arts classroom, a topic that has been in demand at local and national conferences.

Alan Steckler is the Executive Director and founder of Creative Connections, the international cultural exchange organization he founded in 1992. Previous to that he taught in elementary and secondary schools, both in England (at Claremont Fan Court) and in the U.S. (at Daycroft.) He serves on the board of CORO, a NYC-based leadership organization and has conducted an “English as a Second Language” class for adult students with Literacy Volunteers of America for a number of years. Receiving a BA degree from Principia College, Alan did graduate work at the Bank Street College of Education, and earned an MA in Educational Theater from New York University.

Laurie Strand has been teaching in public and private schools for 12 years in grades K-8 in both California and Missouri. Currently, she’s an ESL teacher whose students are mostly refugees from Somalia. For the past five or six years she has been passionate about learning to use technology as a teaching tool, and her students learn right along with her. Laurie will finish her Masters in Technology Integration this summer and says, “Join me on Twitter, Delicious and Facebook so we can all share the many educational resources and ideas out there waiting to be discovered!”

Scott Thompson, author of *Leading From the Eye of the Storm: Spirituality and Public School Improvement*, is Assistant Executive Director of the Panasonic Foundation, a corporate operating foundation that is wholly devoted to the transformation of K-12 education in the United States. He is also Editor of *Strategies*, an issue series on systemic change in education from the Panasonic Foundation in cooperation with the American Association of School Administrators. Scott’s articles and commentaries on education, leadership, and spirituality have appeared in *The Christian Science Monitor* and other Christian Science periodicals, *Education Week*, *Educational Leadership*, *The School Administrator*, *Journal of School Public Relations*, *Teaching and Change*, *TechTrends*, and various books.