

# MEMBER profiles

Jared Mader

## Putting the Teaching Back in Technology

In the nine years that Jared Mader was a high school chemistry teacher, his greatest professional joy was that make-a-difference moment when his students grasped the lesson he was teaching. Although he left the classroom behind to become the Red Lion Area School District's director of technology in Red Lion, Pennsylvania, he still has plenty of those moments in a given workday.

"There is no greater reward than to see the eyes of a 'client' light up when they finally get it," he said. "This makes my current position as rewarding as when I was in the classroom. I get to see the same look of accomplishment when a teacher I've taught sees the impact of a technology-infused lesson in their classroom."

Mader's chops as an ed tech expert include current stints as a consultant, presenter, and developer. He is a Pennsylvania State Keystone Technology Integrator, a member of the Discovery Educator Network, and a partner (with fellow ISTE member Ben Smith) in EdTechInnovators, LLC, a company that develops technology initiatives for school districts and conferences.

Keeping this active in ed tech has afforded Mader the wide view of the industry. "The greatest opportunity is seeing the profession of education evolve to where the level of student-centered and technology-enriched activities grow exponentially in the classroom," he said. "But the greatest challenge lies in the sustainability of that technology. As more and more



initiatives and requirements are placed upon school districts, affordability becomes increasingly difficult."

Mader also finds time to volunteer

for ISTE as a NECC presenter and frequent contributor to *Le&L*, but he claims he does it for selfish reasons. "It allows me to develop my own strategy and objectives based on the research conducted by the many peers and volunteers of the ISTE organization," he said. "And I love being able to see the impact that our presentations have had upon individual teachers and entire school districts. It's humbling to think of the number of students that are impacted due to the work that we do."

## Digital Storytelling SIG

## Telling the Story of Ed Tech

Storytelling is one of humanity's most ancient arts. And today's digital tools—from enhanced podcasts to videos with voiceovers—allow digital storytellers to create a sensory experience to share the lessons of their past, present, and future.

Of course, just throwing a bunch of multimedia together isn't enough to make a great story. "After a story is finished, it should be remembered for its soul, not the bells and whistles of technology," said Bernajean Porter, leader of ISTE's new Digital Storytelling Special Interest Group (SIGDS).

SIGDS's mission is not only promoting the learning of technical skills for reading and writing multimedia, but also the artful use of critical elements

of good storytelling, including making an emotional personal connection with the viewer and conveying the author's nuggets of wisdom.

Porter believes that experiencing others' tales and telling one's own should be part of every education. "It is the act of telling our personal story of what we know and understand from an event or topic that provides a 'sense-making' process, enabling our brains to organize a myriad of factoids while also increasing 'sticking power,'" she explained. "Designing and communicating



media information across the curriculum requires students to deepen their understanding of content while increasing visual, sound, oral language, creativity, and thinking skills."

SIGDS has wasted no time launching the Storytelling Corps, an ISTE-wide campaign to recruit StoryKeepers to create their own digital stories about the successes and challenges of using ed tech to make a difference in students' lives. These stories will be exhibited at NECC 2009 in Washington, D.C.

For more information about digital storytelling and how to participate in the Storytelling Corps, visit the new SIGDS wiki at [digitalstorytelling.iste.wikispaces.net](http://digitalstorytelling.iste.wikispaces.net).