



ISTE Is Storming the Hill at NECC!

VOICES CARRY

By Hilary Goldmann

Hilary Goldmann, ISTE's director of government affairs, has 20 years of experience in public policy and advocacy, and serves as a volunteer columnist for L&L.

Congratulations to all ISTE members on our advocacy efforts for the first half of this year! We sent thousands of e-mails to Capitol Hill through the Education Technology Action Network (ETAN), and that translated into a dedicated funding stream for classroom technology and professional development in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The Achievement Through Technology and Innovation Act was introduced in the House and the Senate with strong bipartisan support. Now we are in the midst of advocating for FY10 funding for the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) program and the Preparing Teachers for Digital Age Learners program.

With NECC in Washington, D.C., we couldn't have timed this activity better. ISTE is leveraging this opportunity to take advantage of our collective voices at the nation's capital. For the first time ever, NECC attendees will "storm the Hill" to meet with members of Congress and ask them to provide students with the technology, the information skills, and the tools necessary for success in the 21st century. Show support for your NECC colleagues who are making the Hill visits and cheer them on if you see them wearing blue "Invest in 21st Century Learning with Technology" T-shirts at the convention center. We hope to be a sea of blue on the Hill!

Congratulations to Sheryl Abshire of Calcasieu Parish Public Schools, Louisiana, who is past-president of the Louisiana Association of Computer Using Educators. We will honor her at NECC as the first recipient of ISTE's Public

Policy Advocate of the Year Award. We will also recognize Jennifer Bergland of Bryan Independent School District and Texas Computer Education Association, and Christopher Johnson of the Arizona Technology in Education Alliance as trendsetters in public policy advocacy.

Don't miss the concurrent session, The Economic Stimulus Package, Obama's Education Plan, and other Policy Activity, set for 12:30 p.m. Monday, June 29, at NECC. We will focus on the ARRA funds that should now be flowing to schools, how ISTE members are using this additional funding for 21st-century learning, and how you can, too. We'll also focus on the new U.S. administration and high-profile policy issues. Finally, we'll share strategies for how to become involved in advocacy.

The NECC experience is not complete without visiting the ETAN booth—now a destination at the conference. Please stop by to make your voice heard by sending an e-mail to your representatives in Congress, and don't forget to enter the raffle. Some NECC attendees find the booth so much fun that they stick around and volunteer. Please visit us!

ISTE is collecting data about how schools and districts are using the ARRA monies for technology and professional development purchases. Make sure to complete this important survey at www.iste.org/arra-survey. Also, continue to check my blog on the ISTE Community Ning at www.iste.org/goldmann. I keep it updated with the latest policy information on 21st-century learning from inside the Beltway.