

# 2015-2016 Annual Report



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**ARNA unites action researchers and participatory researchers throughout the Americas and around the world. We support:**

- Practitioner and participatory research efforts to improve professional practices and strengthen community capacity
- Knowledge mobilization across the Americas to extend the benefits of action research to wider constituencies
- Bringing together action researchers from diverse points of the Americas and across the globe both virtually and physically to share findings and further develop practitioner inquiry and participatory research

## Message From The Chair



It is with great pride in the many accomplishments of ARNA members throughout the 2015-2016 year that I share with you this most impressive annual report. Following its inaugural San Francisco conference in 2013 and its first American east coast conference and CARN Study Day in Pennsylvania in 2014, ARNA held its first conference outside of the United States in 2015 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Chaired by Cathy Bruce and John Peters, the Toronto conference—from its inspiring keynote speakers (Budd Hall & Emily Ozer) to its impressive action research sessions, and jam-packed CARN Study Day at the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study—exemplified the theme of joint action, or learning with and from one another. The ARNA Proceedings team, led most ably by Elena Polush, captured the energy and excitement of the 2015 conference in the second edition of the Proceedings, which is now accessible on-line under the Knowledge Mobilization tab of the ARNA homepage at [www.arnacconnect.org](http://www.arnacconnect.org).

As ARNA members headed home from Toronto, the Membership and Sponsorships Committee got to work on its first action items, ultimately increasing ARNA membership from 81 to more than 200 members, growing the roster of ARNA institutional and conference sponsors from 7 to 16, and introducing ARNA to more than 5,000 radio listeners of the National Writing Project. ARNA

members were actively engaged at home and around the world, with important ARNA presentations at the COMIE Conference in Chihuahua, Mexico; the annual Collaborative Action Research Network (CARN) Conference in Braga, Portugal; and the Action Learning Action Research Association (ALARA) World Congress in Pretoria, South Africa. Our ARNA affiliate organization, the Canadian Association of Action Research in Education (CAARE), held its very first conference, while ARNA en Español continued its membership drive promotion by e-mail to Mexican and Latin American universities.

Headed by Margaret Riel, the Web Development and technology team completed a crucial round of projects to archive ARNA's important cadre of electronic documents. Treasurer Shelley Yearley reports that ARNA ended the 2015 fiscal year with a \$10,000 surplus. ARNA's 2016 conference in Knoxville, Tennessee "Making A Difference: Action Research For a Change" was the first to garner more than 100 pre-registrations, and lead conference chair John Peters and the members of his impressive host committee, led by Chief of Staff Janine Al-Aseer, promise a highly interactive, dialogic event, including CARN Study Day at the historic Highlander Center and plenty of BBQ and bourbon to refresh conference goers after hours.

Looking ahead to 2017, conference co-chairs Doris Santos and Lonnie Rowell offer an impressive preview of ARNA's 5th annual conference in Cartagena, Colombia, its first in South America, and the first Global Assembly of Knowledge Democracy, June 12-16, 2017. I also applaud the important scholarship conducted by ARNA members and congratulate fellow ARNA initiators Lonnie Rowell, Cathy Bruce, Margaret Riel, and 83 international authors on the recent publication of the *International Handbook of Action Research* (Palgrave, 2016). Lonnie Rowell, founding Chair of ARNA and Chair of Knowledge Mobilization (KMb), provides an important statement in this report, calling upon ARNA members to reconsider the crucial relationship between ARNA and KMb efforts.

Extra special thanks are in order for our 2016 conference and institutional sponsors, including publishers Palgrave Macmillan, Taylor & Francis, and Social Publishers Foundation; and institutions of higher learning, including the Autonomous University of Baja California, Lamar University, Moravian College, St. Mary's College of California, Trent University, and the University of San Diego. Our hosts at the University of Tennessee Knoxville have provided a record level of support to ARNA from the UTK Child and Family Studies Department; the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences; the Department of Educational Psychology & Counseling; the University of Tennessee Teaching & Learning Center; and Collaborative Communication Practices. ARNA is most grateful indeed.

At the ARNA 2015 Toronto Conference Business Meeting, I explained that in 2015-2016 the leadership of ARNA's action research communities (ARCs) would help us lead the way in building ARNA through (1) **A**ction #1: Grow memberships and sponsorships; (2) **R**esearch: Keep the focus here; and (3) **C**ommunity: Build the infrastructure to support the community. I applauded the efforts of those leaders who share their reports in this document and those countless ARNA members throughout the Americas and around the world who made the work detailed in this annual report possible. Muchas gracias, mis queridos amigos y colegas! Juntos, através da nossa pesquisa-ação, estamos mudando o mundo! Je vous remercie beaucoup pour tout ce que vous faites au nom de ceux que nous servons.

Joseph M. Shosh, Chair, Executive Committee, Coordinating Group

## ARNA 2015 Toronto Conference Report

– Submitted by Cathy Bruce, Trent University, ARNA 2015 Conference Co-Chair

ARNA 2015 took place in Toronto Canada, a sacred land and site of human activity for 15,000 years. This land is the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibwe and allied nations to peacefully share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.



Today, the meeting place of Toronto is still the home to many indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we were grateful to have the opportunity to meet fellow action researchers in the international community, on this territory. As such, it was with great pleasure that we opened the ARNA 2015 with a hand-drumming honour song. Budd Hall presented a keynote focused on the mis-appropriation of lands and systematic (cultural) genocide of Indigenous populations in Canada and more broadly, as the foreground to understanding an inclusive ecology of knowledge, and the development of a discourse of knowledge democracy. The second keynote presentation by Emily Ozer on amplifying youth voice through youth participatory action research also offered some possible avenues for efforts at reconciliation and constructing a way forward.

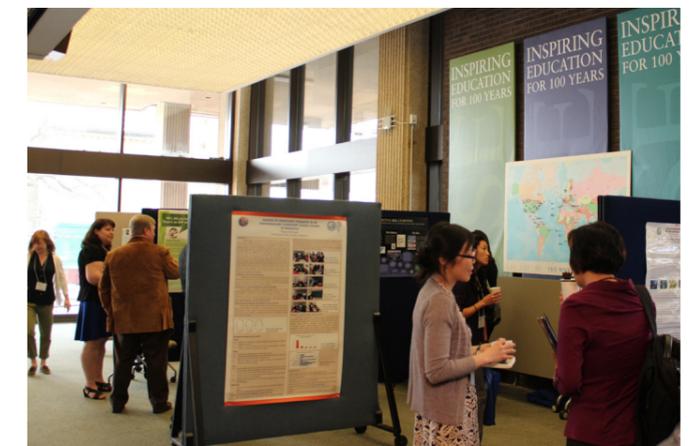
The theme for 2015 was "Joint action: learning with and from one another" and that is essentially what we accomplished - a personal and professional learning conference which also included: a CARN sponsored study day on Lesson Study with a site visit to a local Toronto independent school; a provocative research panel, as well as poster sessions, working group meetings, and over 60 research presentations. Two receptions, a pub night, and a dinner for all conference attendees as well as common break times during the conference, encouraged more dialogue, networking and reflection in informal settings.

The ARNA 2015 Conference closed with special thanks to our many sponsors and to committee members: Cathy Bruce (Co-Chair, Trent University), John Peters (Co-Chair, University of Tennessee), Shelley Yearley (ARNA Treasurer and Program Chair, Trillium Lakelands District



School Board), Rachel Sherman (Conference Materials and Registration Advisor, Affiliate of Moravian College), Rich McPherson (Communications Officer, Trent University), Sarah Bennett (Site Manager and Bookings, OISE & Trent University), Blair Niblett (member at large), Mary McAteer (CARN study day facilitator), as well as Beverly Caswell and Larissa Lam (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education - OISE Contacts). This team worked diligently to prepare a stellar conference hosted by Trent University in partnership with OISE of the University of Toronto and the Robertson Foundation.

Thanks to our important institutional sponsorships and the incredible good will of all volunteers, ARNA 2015 was a deeply engaging conference. One of the final accomplishments of this group beyond actually putting on the conference, was the development of an electronic planning conference support document, to offer guidance for incoming conference chairs and their committees. This document was shared with the ARNA 2016 conference planning team for their use and improvement, and we look forward to continued growth, collaboration and celebration at the ARNA 2016 Conference in Knoxville, Tennessee.



## Annual Award Recipients Announced

– Submitted by Shelley Yearley, Ontario Ministry of Education, Co-Chair, ARNA Scholarship and Awards Committee

Each year, ARNA has presented four awards at the annual conference. The award descriptions and recipients for last year follow. See the ARNA website for active hyperlinks within the recipient text.

### Eduardo Flores Leadership Award

As one of the founders of ARNA, Eduardo Flores not only worked diligently to improve education in Mexico but was instrumental in building the initial structures of ARNA. Eduardo's work to build an inclusive ARNA in both Spanish and English, as well his incredible support for the initial conference in San Francisco, mean that he had a significant impact on the future of ARNA despite being involved for only short time. This award acknowledges an individual who embodies Eduardo's leadership.



**2015 Recipient: Dr. Cathy Bruce, Canada**  
No one has been more actively engaged in the leadership of ARNA since its inception than ARNA co-initiator and 2015 conference co-chair, Catherine Bruce. Cathy serves as Associate Professor and Graduate Director of

the Masters in Educational Studies program in the School of Education and Professional Learning at Trent University. In 2013, she was named one of Ontario's most outstanding university teachers by the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations. Cathy has more than 25 years of combined public school and university teaching experience and in addition to co-chairing this year's ARNA conference and CARN Study Day, she co-chaired last year's conference in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. We have been most fortunate indeed to see the reach of Cathy's profound influence on the action research of local practitioners throughout this year's Study Day and Conference. Link to Cathy's action research at <http://www.people.trentu.ca/cathybruce/>.

### Promising Action Researcher Award

As indicated in the mission statement, ARNA unites college and university students and faculty conducting practitioner inquiry into teaching and learning with fellow action researchers in public schools, private schools, community settings and workplaces throughout the Americas. This award acknowledges an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to rigorous action research as well as valuing the importance of developing knowledge in situ.



**2015 Recipient: Cathy Griffin, Canada**

The ARNA Award for Promising Young Researcher is presented to Cathy Griffin. Cathy is from the Bluewater District School Board in Ontario and has been working tirelessly with her colleagues to improve teaching and learning through action research colleagues. Since earning her Master of Education Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Brock University in 2011, she has written papers and made presentations with Jack Whitehead, Liz Campbell, and Jackie DeLong, among others. She is creator of the Bluewater Action Research Network, ten of whose members presented their action research at the 2015 ARNA conference. Her keynote address to the Teacher Learning and Leading Program provides more details about her work.

### ARNA Community Development Award

The organization and execution of the annual conference depends upon the ability of leaders to engage and motivate the community and to build strong connections with those knowledgeable others. These efforts require significant investment of both time and energy, as well as a long lasting enthusiasm for ARNA and the recipient of this award is such an individual.



**2015 Recipient: ARNA Proceedings Editorial Team, USA and Canada**  
ARNA is a knowledge mobilization organization comprised entirely of volunteers committed to ARNA's mission and vision. The ARNA Community Development Award goes to the members of the 2014 Proceedings Team, led most ably by Elena Polush from Ball State University, and comprised of Trent University's Tara Flynn, West Chester University of Pennsylvania's Heather Leaman, Ball State University's Jose Martinez, and Moravian College's Jamie Hill, published the first proceedings in record time and to universal acclaim. As the editors say in their preface to the inaugural issue, which is accessible from the ARNA home page. The proceedings represent authors who are the members of the action research global community. They live and work in Australia, Canada, Colombia, Finland, Kenya, Mexico, Mongolia, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States. While being a diverse group of scholars and practitioners with different backgrounds and from various fields of practice and research, they share passion for action research,

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social justice, change, transformation, education, environment, livelihood and sustainability of communities, and collaboration, among other key commitments and aspirations. Their work is guided by engagement, reflections, actions, and critical dispositions. This evening we honor Elena and her team for their most excellent first publication. Link to the ARNA Proceedings at <https://sites.google.com/site/arnaproceedings/home>.

### ARNA Social Justice Award

ARNA members are committed to taking action locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally to promote action research that is conducted with a commitment to honesty, integrity, inclusiveness, multi-vocality, engagement, and achievement within sustainable democratic societies. The realization of such a commitment requires individuals, such as the recipient of this award, determined to build relationships that are respectful of cultural and linguistic diversity.



**2015 Recipient: Dr. Candace Kaye, USA**  
The recipient of this year's Social Justice Award epitomizes ARNA's commitment to the development of worldwide efforts in support of teacher action research. Under the most able leadership of New Mexico State University's Dr.

Candace Kaye, ARNA has signed its first official memorandum of understanding with an international higher education institution, the Mongolian National University of Education, which is also an ARNA conference and institutional sponsor. Candace has lead and will continue to lead efforts to engage our Mongolian colleagues in collaborative research with a specific focus on action research projects, lectures, symposia, seminars, and workshops, while supporting the exchange of action research, practitioner research, and participatory research information and materials. Candace has most ably explored the development of new distance technology support system for action research through the promotion of mutually beneficial endeavors. More information about Dr. Kaye's work is available at <http://ci.nmsu.edu/faculty/ckaye/>.

Newly formed this year, the ARNA Scholarship and Awards Committee was formed to increase accountability and transparency. Led by Lonnie Rowell and Shelley Yearley, the committee consisted of:

- Janine AL-Aseer (Conference Committee, USA)
- Miguel Angel Lopez Montoya (Coordinating Group, Mexico)
- Holly Marich (Membership Chair, USA)

- Eva Mendez (Teacher, Mexico)
- Blair Niblett (2016 Conference Program Chair, Canada)
- Doris Adriana Santos Caicedo (Colombia, 2017 Conference Co-Chair)

ARNA awarded two Eduardo Flores-Kastanis Scholarships for attendance at the 2016 conference. The newly formed ARNA Scholarship Committee reviewed the applications and selected two recipients, *Isabel Cristina de Araújo Teixeira (Brazil)* and *Paula Korsakas (Brazil)* each received \$500 USD to aid with travel to the conference. The committee also selected the recipients of the 2016 awards, announced at the 2016 conference in Knoxville. See the ARNA website for details.

### MNUE Partnership Update

– Submitted by Candace Kaye, New Mexico State University, ARNA Global Outreach

Mongolian National University of Education (MNUE) has been associated with ARNA since 2014. As an introduction to the work of ARNA at the ARNA 2014 Annual Conference at Moravian College, they were given institutional sponsorship funding by the Catherine Legg Lee Trust for 2014 with a continuation of the funding in 2015. This funding allowed MNUE to begin active participation in ARNA providing multiple opportunities for MNUE to achieve their goal of becoming a member of the global action research community. This Trust funding was presented by ARNA member, Dr. Candace Kaye, 2010-2011 U.S. Fulbright Teaching and Research Scholar who continues to be a visiting scholar at MNUE, a consultant to the Mongolian Ministry of Education and board president of the Catherine Legg Lee Trust.

In 2015 in Toronto at the ARNA Annual Conference, MNUE President Munkhjargal led a delegation from his university to attend the conference, where four MNUE faculty members made action research presentations that included three poster presentations and one seminar. Additionally, an initial Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in Toronto between MNUE and ARNA to continue collaboration and to support specific mutually agreed upon action research activities. At the present time steps proposed by ARNA to move forward with these MOU activities have been hampered by a lack of consistent communication with MNUE. Therefore, this partnership is currently on hold.

## Conference Proceedings Editorial Team Report

– Submitted by Elena Plush, Ball State University, Proceedings Lead Editor

The ARNA Conference Proceedings is a significant milestone in our network life and an active contributor to the ongoing conversations about the role, definitions, history and meanings of action research within and across our diverse fields of research and communities of practice. The ARNA 2015 Conference Proceeding was the second edition published in February 2016. The team of six editors led this effort and included:

- Elena Polush, Lead Editor, USA
- Tara Flynn, Associate Editor, Canada
- Jamie Hill, Associate Editor, Webmaster, USA
- Heather Leaman, Associate Editor, USA
- Nathan Snyder, Associate Editor, USA
- Nathalis G. Wamba, Associate Editor, USA

Conference Proceedings are part of the ARNA Knowledge Mobilization initiative. The ARNA Proceedings use a single blind peer review process. The ARNA 2015 Conference Proceedings are open access and can be viewed at <https://sites.google.com/site/arnaproceedings/home>.

As with the inaugural ARNA 2014 Conference Proceedings, the ARNA 2015 Conference Proceedings present a beautiful collection of work that our network members, fellows of action research, shared during the ARNA 2015 Conference in Toronto, Ontario, Canada in May 2015. The published work is both inspired by and extends the ARNA 2015 Conference theme “Joint action – learning with and from one another” beyond the physical space and time of the ARNA members gathering in Toronto in 2015. The authors are from Canada, Mexico, Mongolia, United Kingdom (UK), and United State of America (USA). They work within diverse context and settings. They extend our thinking about and engaging with action research by walking across methodological boundaries, seeking new ways to connect people, institutions and communities to share and to dialogue, exploring possibilities, honoring different voices, playing with meaning and re-presenting the richness of experiences using new genres and emerging methodologies – placing their texts in a context of action and positive change.

Publication of the ARNA Conference Proceedings continues serving as a testament to our community of action researchers’ passion for action research, belief in change, commitment to learning with and from one another and dedication to creating “the new architecture of knowledge.” The editorial team remains thankful to the ARNA community for supporting and sustaining the Proceedings!

While the ARNA Conference Proceedings processes and procedures will continue evolving and maturing as our community’s journey un-

folds, in the core the Proceedings are the space to engage, to share, and to learn. To borrow from Luce-Kapler (2004) “through a process of dialogue and opportunities we open ourselves to partners whose understandings differ from our own and through such engagement, new interpretations and [meanings] emerge” (p. xiv). The Proceedings editorial team and the ARNA Coordinating Group encourage all members to get involved in the ARNA Proceedings’ life by serving as a member of the editorial team and/or an external reviewer. The Proceedings editorial team is looking forward to working with the presenters at the ARNA 2016 Conference in Knoxville, Tennessee and, subsequently, featuring their work on the pages of the ARNA 2016 Conference Proceedings.

## July 2015 to April 2016: A Review Through the Months of Memberships & Sponsorships

– By Holly Marich, Northern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program, ARNA Membership and Sponsorships Chair

I would like to begin the Membership & Sponsorships Report by thanking Linnea Rademaker for her excellent work as my predecessor to develop new membership documents, and to work tirelessly to stay current with accurate payment information, new membership updates, and other time consuming yet critical duties. Linnea’s contribution to this initial ARNA infrastructure work has been invaluable. The following report chronicles the work initiated by Linnea and her team through October, 2015 followed by a description of the work that followed as I assumed responsibility for the team’s work.

**July 2015:** The membership committee submitted a fee proposal to the Coordinating Group suggesting a combined membership drive and conference registration with one low membership fee. Additionally, all conference registrants would be automatic members and there would be a reduced rate for students, retirees, and those living in countries with adverse exchange rates with the US\$. The proposal also included a special enticement for faculty who teach action research, indicating that with the faculty member’s paid membership, students in the class could opt to receive a one-year free student membership trial.

**August 2015:** The Coordinating Council and Executive Committee provided preliminary approval of a new 2016 fee structure and an ARNA commitment to a total membership of 200 in conjunction with the Tennessee Conference. Final approval in October set annual ARNA stand-alone membership fees at \$75; 2016 conference registration fee at \$400 (including annual membership) and student conference registration fee at \$300 (including annual membership). At this meeting the Executive Committee also suggested the creation of a professionally de-

signed ARNA recruitment/membership brochure available in English, Spanish, and perhaps Portuguese editions for use beginning early in the 2015-2016 academic year. ARNA membership records indicated 84 current and 69 past members.

**September 2015:** The investment in a small stipend for an ARNA secretary modeled after the work of CARN secretary, Charmian Wilby was proposed to the Coordinating Group and Executive Committee. This paid administrative support would help manage communication with its membership base, and Jennifer Pagliaorli of Moravian College agreed to take on this role. Additionally, during this month the ARNA brochure went through revisions and translations for final approval by the Executive Committee, with printed copies made available to support ARNA’s upcoming international presentations in Mexico, Portugal, and South Africa.

**October 2015:** In keeping with our #1 Action Item of a membership base of 200 by 2016, a new membership team was configured, including an existing member and two new members. The first task for the team was to generate a list of prospective ARNA members, which focused on composing the master database for personalized membership outreach, including contributors to the Palgrave and SAGE AR handbooks as well as contributing authors to the Educational Action Research Journal. An invitational letter along with the newly published ARNA brochure was sent to all identified prospective members. Brochures were also sent to those ARNA members teaching action research classes to encourage new participation by their students.

**November 2015:** This month could be extolled as the month for global networking! During his South African residency and ALARA conference representation, ARNA Chair Joseph Shosh made several efforts to promote ARNA membership. Simultaneously, ARNA Knowledge Mobilization and Founding Chair, Lonnie Rowell worked with our colleagues in Braga, Portugal to strengthen ties between ARNA and CARN. Among other efforts to promote ARNA membership and 2016 conference attendance, Candace Keys represented the ARNA Global Connection Group, while attending the 2015 COMIE conference in Chihuahua, Mexico.

**December 2015:** We began what we anticipate will be a mutually beneficial relationship with the National Writing Project (NWP). I coordinated an initial Google Hangout to introduce ARNA chair Joseph Shosh to two NWP representatives: Tanya Baker, Director of National Programs, and Linda Friedrich, Director of Research & Evaluation. The personalized membership outreach efforts continued as invitations to join ARNA were sent out to a roster of over 1000 contacts from Etienne Wenger’s community of practice database shared by Margaret Riel, an ARNA Initiator and current Webmaster.

**January 2016:** Attempts to grow membership continued into the new year with a New Year’s Greetings letter and membership offer. This letter asked recipients to consider lending their talents to the important work our members are doing throughout the western hemisphere and around the world. January also brought to the forefront candid student feedback related to conference fees. In light of this feedback, the ARNA Conference Planning and Executive Committees agreed to reduce the cost of student conference registration by more than half to \$145.

**February 2016:** After months of focused membership promotion, membership had grown from 84 to 137 members. Through our continued efforts to connect with the National Writing Project, we began to plan how we created a working team of ARNA and NWP members to examine how we might promote ARNA among NWP membership. The Membership & Sponsorships team moved its focus from membership to sponsorship recruitment, and directed ARNA chair to solicit sponsorship to a select list of colleges, universities, and publishers.

**March 2016:** Slow but steady growth marked the month of March with full conference registrations increasing one member at a time and institutional and conference sponsorships rolling in. Further inquiries regarding categorization of conference attendees associated with fees and membership continued, suggesting that efforts to promote ARNA had been successful and pointing out some confusion in terms of those who would classify for “student” rates.

**April 2016:** What a month to celebrate! Through efforts to connect with National Writing Project, the opportunity to promote ARNA through an episode of BlogTalkRadio became reality. Our host for the episode Tanya Baker explained NWP radio listeners tend to be educators with some affiliation to the NWP, with more than 5,000 listeners on average for each broadcast. The program, “Introducing the Action Research Network of the Americas” featured Joseph Shosh, ARNA Chair; John Peters, Lead 2016 Conference Chair; Susan Williams, Education Team, Highlander Center; and Holly Marich, ARNA Membership Chair aired April 7th and can be accessed on demand at [http://www.blogtalkradio.com/nwp\\_radio](http://www.blogtalkradio.com/nwp_radio). By the end of April, four institutional sponsorships and twelve conference sponsorships had been confirmed. Additionally, the membership directory at this time indicates 210 ARNA members, including 93 students.

## CARN Report to ARNA

– Submitted by Mary McAteer, Edge Hill University, ARNA-CARN Liaison

The Collaborative Action Research Network, CARN, seeks to generate visibility, support and networking opportunities for action researchers, through providing communicative spaces for critical dialogue and action in a spirit of equality, mutuality and reciprocity.

It holds an annual conference, which is hosted in the UK and elsewhere in the world, alternately. The very successful 2015 conference was held in Braga, Portugal, and was reported by many participants as ‘the best CARN conference to date’. In 2016, we will be in Lincoln, UK, and for the first time, will host an adjunct CARN/ARNA event, which we anticipate will become a feature of all future conferences. This will consolidate the reciprocity between CARN and ARNA, in mirroring the CARN Study Day, which precedes the annual ARNA conference.

There have been significant developments in CARN in the past year, mainly designed to enable greater connectivity and build relationships in a digital age. Our new jiscmail discussion group contributes significantly to this. We will launch our new website in July, and celebrate that event with an e-study day, hosted by Karen McArdle.

Relationships across the globe are central to the work of CARN, but the relationship with ARNA is one which is of particular significance for us. The mutuality that we have developed since the inception of ARNA has been an important way in which we live out the values of action research. As we move into a period of supporting ARNA in preparation for the Cartagena 2017 World Gathering, we know the relationship will continue to strengthen, and enrich us all through the affirmation of our shared values and vision in a neoliberal world.

## ARNA Shares Information at Annual COMIE Conference in Chihuahua, Mexico

– Submitted by Candace Kaye, New Mexico State University, ARNA Global Outreach

I represented ARNA at the COMIE Conference in Chihuahua, Mexico. Since I was the only member of the round table that was announced and published in the program, I was able to use the entire time of the one and a half hour session to discuss ARNA. In this conference session, I

- presented a power point introducing ARNA provided by Joe Shosh that was simultaneously translated by a member of the action research community in Chihuahua.
- distributed brochures in English and Spanish thanks to the efforts of Joe.

- am grateful to Margaret Riel for sending information about the 2016 conference and the available online tutorials that I also distributed and discussed.
- led a group discussion with those who were interested. All this was accomplished within a bilingual setting.

The session participants most interested in ARNA and its work were from Universidad Autonoma de Ciudad Juarez (UACJ) and represented the Centro de Innovacion Educativa (Center for Educational Innovation). The Center for Educational Innovation (CEI) website is available at <http://www.uacj.mx/SA/IE/Paginas/default.aspx>.

I have also contacted Dr. Rudolfo Chavez-Chavez, a colleague of mine at NMSU, who continues to have doctoral students from UACJ. I am assured he will be able to give me the best contact(s) for moving forward with liaison work with that university for ARNA.

## ARNA Leaders Attend ALARA Conference in South Africa

– Submitted by Joseph Shosh, Moravian College, ARNA Chair

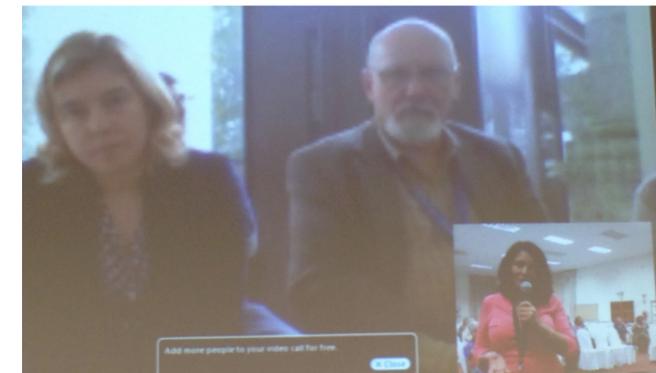
ARNA 2017 conference co-chair Doris Santos, Universidad Nacional de Colombia Bogotá and ARNA chair Joseph Shosh, Moravian College, Pennsylvania, USA represented ARNA at the 2015 Action Learning Action Research Association (ALARA) conference in Pretoria, South Africa, November 7.



This year’s conference marked a special 25th milestone anniversary for ALARA, and the conference began with a special plenary session chaired by ALARA co-founder Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt, who said “I believe we have much to learn from our experiences across these 25 years of international congresses and from our annual Australasian congresses—gathering peo-

ple and ideas from around the world, addressing global issues and concerns, creating new ways of learning and research, and creating knowledge for all to share.”

ALARA leaders reflected on their learning, with Pip Bruce Fergusson (Dublin City University) commenting on ALARA’s facilitation of cross-cultural understanding; Eileen Piggot-Irvine (Royal Roads University) noting how the 1997 World Congress in Cartagena challenged collaboration; Ina Louw (University of Pretoria) commenting on the rich learning that occurs through conference participation; Pieter du Toit (University of Pretoria) reflecting on what it was like to convene the first ALARA conference in Africa in 2003; Shankar Sankaran (University of Technology Sydney) explaining why action research needs to innovate to be of value to organizations; and Margaret Fletcher reflecting on professional learning as a member of the ALARA community.



Richard Teare, President of the Global University for Lifelong Learning, gave a Friday keynote address on designing development pathways with marginalized young adults. Danny Burns, Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University, in his Saturday keynote address, discussed the need to nurture participatory change at scale.

While in attendance at ALARA, Santos and Shosh met with ALARA president Colin Bradley to discuss ALARA’s formal role in celebrating the 40th anniversary of the first Participatory Action Research World Congress in Cartagena as part of the 2017 ARNA Conference.

Assembled ALARA delegates also had the opportunity to connect via Skype with the Collaborative Action Research Network (CARN) Conference taking place simultaneously in Braga, Portugal. At that session, CARN Lead Coordinator Ruth Balogh reflected on the CARN keynote address, and ARNA Knowledge Mobilization chair Lonnie Rowell noted the importance of new international action research network collaboration. Joseph Shosh thanked Lesley Wood, ALARA host site chair, for efforts to bring action research networks together in exciting new dialogic opportunities. Doris Santos commented on the momentum building for new joint action in Cartagena 2017.

## New Canadian Action Research Association Established

– By Kurt Clausen, Nipissing University, ARNA-CAARE Liaison 2015-2016

This was truly the inaugural year for this position, as well as for CAARE. To describe the events of the year:

*The Canadian Association of Action Research in Education (CAARE)/Association canadienne de la recherche-action en éducation (ACRAE)* was established in June 2014. Specifically, it was brought about when the *Canadian Journal of Action Research* collaborated with the Canadian Association for Teacher Education (CATE) to host a pre-conference on the theme of Action Research at the Canadian Society for the Study of Education annual conference in St. Catharines’ Brock University. After keynote addresses from Jack Whitehead (Cumbria University), Steve Jordan (McGill), Ruth Dawson (ETFO) and Zoe Donohue (Institute of Child Studies), the group of sixty came to the decision that a new association had to be created to promote the use of action research across the country.

As of June 1, 2015, CAARE became a fully functioning Special Interest Group of CATE. This included its ratified constitution, its first annual conference, and the election of the first slate of executive members. This included,

- President – Dr. Manu Sharma (University of Toronto)
- Vice-President – Dr. Glenda Black (Nipissing University)
- Treasurer-Secretary – Dr. Sunny Lau (Bishop’s University)
- CJAR Representative – Dr. Kurt Clausen (Nipissing University)
- Member-at-Large – Tara Flynn (Trent University)
- Student Representative – Kelly Kilgour (University of Ottawa)

The first official conference was led by a keynote panel consisting of Dr. Pamela Adams (University of Lethbridge), Dr. Cathy Bruce (Trent University) and Katrina Pollock (University of Western Ontario).

Starting in the Fall 2015, I acted in the unofficial capacity as ARNA-CAARE liaison, attending the ARNA meetings and reporting back to the CAARE executive.

May 28 – June 1, 2016 will be the second annual conference of CAARE. Expanding from the 2015 conference, there will now be a keynote panel, AGM, several panel sessions and a book celebration (including the *Palgrave International Handbook of Action Research*, presented by Dr. Cathy Bruce).

## ARNA en Español Annual Report

– Submitted by Miguel Angel Lopez Montoya, Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, ARNA en Español Chair

The main activities for ARNA en Español in 2015 continue to be the membership drive promotion by e-mail to the Mexican and Latin American universities; translating key ARNA documents and announcements from English to Spanish and vice versa; and collaborating as the key contact for the support of new Latin American members and proposed candidates. This past year, we initiated an Action Research Academic Team in our Faculty at the Autonomous University of Baja California. Our team supported Spanish proposal revisions provided members to review proposals and recommend recipients for the Flores-Katanis Scholarship. The ARNA en Español members also participated in the Spanish documents Proceedings revision process and has supported conference planning for ARNA 2017 in Cartagena, Colombia.

## Website and Tech Development Committee Shares Accomplishments

– Submitted by Margaret Riel, Pepperdine University, Web & Technology Chair

The Website and Tech Development Committee provides technical support for the activities of ARNA. We continue to explore a variety of tools and make suggestions about both the current and future use of technology by ARNA. The ARNA connect wiki-website ([www.arnacconnect.org](http://www.arnacconnect.org)) remains at the center of our hub of organizational and communication tools. From this site our members find links to our Facebook and Twitter Groups, the 2016 conference site, the 2015 Proceedings and our YouTube channel. And soon the 2017 conference planning team will add their website for our 2017 conference. Our goal is to make it easy to move from these different platforms, so members find the connections that create a strong sense of community for them.

Over the past year we have had close to five thousand visitors from 118 countries to the ARNA connect website. About 70% of our visitors are located in the Americas and 30% come from the rest of the world. However this count

does not include the many members who go directly to the 2016 conference site, or access the Proceedings directly, or join us on social media (Facebook, Twitter or YouTube).

The current Website and Tech Development Committee is made up of:

- Margaret Riel, Chair
- Miguel Angel Lopez Montoya, Support of Mexico and South American membership
- Linnea Rademaker, Membership and site sharing
- Elena Polush, Conference Proceedings
- Jamie Hill, Facebook
- Rich McPherson, Conference website connections
- Jenny Robins, Action Research Communities
- Holly Marich, Membership and Twitter

Our accomplishments in 2015-2016 include:

- Development of Templates for the conferences keeping the history of each of the conferences
- Ongoing description of ARNA history and strategies for storing important documents as well as developing an oral history section.
- Development of a YouTube Channel for storing and sharing videos
- Shared photo storage on Google photos
- Development of Google Drive repository for all of the assets used in the websites
- Continued evolution of ARNA Facebook and Twitter accounts to increase the exposure and opportunity for people to connect with ARNA members.

The establishment of an ARNA Oral History Project, led by Elena Polush, was one of the additions this year as well. The purpose of the project is to capture the ARNA network inception, initiation, development, and self-organization as perceived and experienced by its members. The goal is to document ARNA evolution as its future unfolds by interviewing ARNA members during its annual conferences.

The web-tech Committee is holding a session at the 2016 conference for evaluating and envisioning the future of the use of web tools to support ARNA. The goal of the session is create a survey to be sent to all members that will help us reflect on the next stages of development of

our technical and social infrastructures. Areas that we are targeting for growth over the next year are the development of more vibrant Action Research Communities (ARCs) and the further development of some of the knowledge mobilization ideas.

## ARNA Financial Report

<b>Assets</b>	\$
<b>Balance Forward</b> - Moravian	419.84
<b>Balance Forward</b> - PayPal	4,004.00
	<b>4,423.84</b>

<b>Income</b>	
Memberships	9,575.00
Conference Registration/Sponsorship	33,311.24
Eduardo Flores Fund	1,350.00
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>44,236.24</b>

<b>Expenses</b>	
Website Maintenance Fees	157.37
Design and Layout of Annual Report	300.00
Honourarium re: concert	250.00
Office Support	1,250.00
Colour Printing Costs	1,894.00
2015 Conference Expenses	33,740.68
Credit Card Fees (Nov 2014-June 2015)	894.38
Miscellaneous Expenses	102.67
<b>Net Expenses</b>	<b>38,589.10</b>

Net Income/Loss	5,647.14
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>10,070.98</b>

## 2016 Conference Planning Team Welcomes ARNA to Knoxville

– Submitted by John Peters, Co-Chair, 2016 Conference

Our conference theme, *MAKING A DIFFERENCE: ACTION RESEARCH FOR A CHANGE*, will draw inspiration from the history of Highlander Research and Education Center and the legacy of change that it has spawned. One of the core principles of Highlander's work is its focus on joint action and interaction among varied constituencies engaged in change efforts.

As with Action Research, *this will not be your typical conference*. It will be a platform for *Inter-Action*. Dialogue will be our primary form of interaction with skilled facilitators encouraging participants to think together collaboratively. Presentations are limited to short time frames so

conference attendees can be actively involved in facilitated dialogue in each session. Poster presentations will be displayed during a boxed lunch session so participants will have time to mingle and network with presenters. Also new this year, we will have PechaKucha presentations. These presenters will show 20 slides, for 20 seconds each, and a talk for approximately 6.5 minutes, followed by 45 minutes of dialogue among attendees and presenters. With four conference tracks, there will be something for everyone: Action Research for Social Change, Action Research for Pedagogical Change, Action Research for Change in helping Professions, and Action Research for Change... in Action!

This year the CARN Study Day will be held at the Highlander Research and Education Center in New Market, TN. Highlander serves as a catalyst for grassroots organizing and movement building in Appalachia and the South as well as nationally and internationally. Highlander works with people fighting for justice and equality, while supporting their efforts to take collective action to share their own destiny. Highlander holds a strong commitment to participatory research, aligned with ARNA goals. This event will take place on Thursday, June 16th from 10:00 am to 4:00pm and will include a review of Highlander's history, facilitated dialogue, a walking tour of Highlander, group presentation of historical roots, and lunch on site. The conference will include exciting informal and fun activities including Barbeque and Bourbon tasting, live music, a party on the first night of the main conference, and an International Reception on the second night. Participants will have plenty of opportunities to learn, play, think, and act together. Credit for making all of this possible goes to a wonderful Conference Planning Committee. These talented and enthusiastic educators have spent an enormous amount of time in conversations, completing uncountable tasks, and working together to imagine, design, and implement a complex array of conference activities. Here are their names:

- Janine Al-Aseer, University of Tennessee, Conference Coordinator and Chief of Staff
- Donna Azodi, Lamar University
- Cathy Bruce, Trent University, Past Co-Chair and Conference Planning Advisor

- Mary McAteer, Edge Hill University, CARN Representative
- Rich McPherson, Trent University, Technical Specialist
- Mary Jane Moran, University of Tennessee, Coordinator of Sponsorships and Recruitment
- Blair Niblett, Trent University, Program Chair
- John Peters, University of Tennessee, Conference Co-Chair
- Doris Santos, National University of Colombia, Conference Co-Chair
- Janel Seeley, University of Wyoming, Facilitation Coordinator
- Andrew Seidler, University of Tennessee, Entertainment Coordinator
- Rachel Sherman, Bethlehem Area School District
- Maranda Ward, George Washington University, Social Media Lead
- Susan Williams, Highlander Research and Education Center, Study Day Coordinator
- Shelly Yearly, Ontario Ministry of Education, ARNA Treasurer and Conference Planning Advisor
- Andrew Seidler, University of Tennessee, Entertainment Coordinator

### **Knowledge Mobilization: A Reflection and a Call to Action**

– Submitted by Lonnie Rowell, Chair, Knowledge Mobilization Working Group

An Overview. Knowledge mobilization has been a part of ARNA's mission and operations since the founding of the network in 2012. At the least, one might say, it has been on the minds of ARNA leaders. Knowledge mobilization is often defined as the meaningful use of evidence and expertise to align research, policy and practice and improve outcomes for children, youth, and families. In that sense, all action researchers have a stake in knowledge mobilization, as those engaged in action research know intrinsically that their work is focused on strengthening practice and improving outcomes for the groups they work with. The founding of ARNA came through a recognition on the part of the five "network initiators" (Cathy Bruce, Eduardo Flores-Kastanis, Margaret Riel, Lonnie Rowell,

and Joe Shosh) that action was needed to better position action researchers in relation to the use of evidence and expertise in shaping social policies, in particular in education.

However, the initial phase of ARNA's development did not include either an explicit application of the recognized strategies and practices associated with knowledge mobilization (KMb) or a critical reflection on those strategies and practices, for what certainly seem to be understandable reasons. Because it appeared to ARNA's initiators in a broad sense that virtually everything we were doing, from the launch of a website, to the organizing of our first two annual conferences, the establishment of conference proceedings, and the initiation of digital storytelling as a part of the website, was a part of knowledge mobilization we simply dove into the work of creating ARNA comfortable in the assumption that the work fit within a framework of mobilizing knowledge associated with action research.

At its core, according to its advocates and practitioners, KMb involves knowledge sharing between research producers (e.g. university researchers) and research users (including professionals or others whose work can benefit from research findings), often with the help of third parties or intermediaries. The concept is said to have grown out of increasing recognition that verified empirical knowledge should be the basis for policies and practices in a variety of social sectors, including education and social services. KMb thus fits within the long-standing concern in the social sciences with bridging the gap between research and practice. The important point here is that this "gap" is strongly contested ground, with significant criticisms going back decades. In our rush to action, ARNA leadership chose to keep in the foreground the opportunities associated with bringing together the growing number of people in North and South America drawn to action research and to let stand in the background the tougher issue of the politics of knowledge production and knowledge dissemination.

Now, as ARNA prepares to begin its 5th year, a reconsideration of the relationship between

KMb and ARNA is beginning to take shape, led by the Knowledge Mobilization Working Group. We anticipate that this reconsideration will be a central part of the Working Group's efforts over the coming years. With a growing membership base in North America and South America and with the development of much deeper ties with the South American traditions of participatory research (in particular, through our work on preparations for the ARNA 2017 Conference to be held in Cartagena, Colombia), ARNA is better equipped to give careful consideration to the critical background issues that surround any efforts to promote and sustain action research, practitioner research, and the variety of participatory approaches to social changes. In a sense, from 2013-2015 ARNA leaders just put our heads down and charged forward; now it is time to look up, to reconnoiter, and to carefully plan for moving ahead again. (I will return to this topic in the concluding section of my report.)

Accomplishments in 2015-2016. With the background and limitations noted above, ARNA knowledge mobilization efforts in 2015-2016 have focused on three initiatives: 1) organizing the Palgrave International Handbook of Action Research (forthcoming, July 2016); 2) maintaining momentum in ARNA and ARNA-related publications; 3) taking some first steps towards reconceptualizing the goals of the Working Group. The combination of the three has resulted in a busy year for ARNA members participating in the Knowledge Mobilization Working Group.

Regarding the Handbook, the four editors (Lonnie Rowell, Catherine Bruce, Joseph Shosh, and Margaret Riel) were all members of the originating group that organized ARNA beginning in the spring of 2012. The Handbook project became a way for us to expand our individual networking within the global action research community and to deepen our understandings of the histories, varied contexts and critical issues being faced by action researchers across the globe. The project also became a way for us to represent ARNA in a broader context and to learn from the leaders of more established action research and participatory research networks around the world. In other words, as we worked on the Handbook ARNA was never far from our thoughts.

Following a rigorous review process, we selected 41 manuscripts by 83 authors and added an additional seven chapters authored and co-authored by the four of us. We also co-authored an introduction to the Handbook and worked individually and in pairs to write brief introductions to each of the manuscript's six parts. Although the Handbook was a pretty monumental undertaking, I think we all knew going into the project that our proven abilities to work well together, as evidenced by the year-and-a-half we had shared in organizing ARNA prior to the Handbook project, would propel us forward and help smooth out rough spots we would encounter, and that did prove to be the case. By the time we convened an Editors' Retreat at Joe Shosh's home in Pennsylvania in May 2015 and stepped back to consider the wealth of knowledge contained in the submitted manuscripts, we felt confident that the forthcoming Handbook would make an important contribution to the literature regarding the current global state of action research and would constitute a unique examination of themes and issues relevant to its future.

Regarding maintaining momentum in ARNA and ARNA-related publications in addition to the Handbook project, Joe Shosh and I proposed a Special Issue on Action Research Networks for the international journal Educational Action Research. Our proposal was accepted and the Special Issue was published in March 2016 as Volume 24, Number 1. The nine articles in the Special Issue, including an article by Joe Shosh and CARN's Mary McAteer examining the CARN/ARNA Study Day held in conjunction with the 2014 ARNA Conference at Moravian College, addressed important topics related to action research networking and brought together in one volume brief histories of six networks operating in different contexts in various parts of the world. As Joe Shosh and I stated in our Editorial for the Special Issue, we believed that the volume might "contribute significantly to the discussion and developments now taking place globally regarding the role of networks in action research and the potential of networks to impact the formulation of regional and global strategies for challenging the current hegemonic view of educational research" (p. 1)

In addition, through the committed efforts of Elena Polush, Tara Flynn, Heather Leaman, Jamie Hill, Nathan Snyder, and Nathalis Wamba, ARNA published its second Conference Proceedings, the Proceedings of its 2015 Conference in Toronto, Canada (<https://sites.google.com/site/arnaproceedings/home/2015>). Under the guidance of Lead Editor Elena Polush, the Editorial Team continued to utilize an inclusive approach to sharing content from the conference. Our Conference Proceedings are published annually on the ARNA website and have proven to be a useful open access resource for action researchers around the world as well as here in the Americas. The mix of Spanish and English papers reflects ARNA's commitment to multi-voice in all of our work, and the effort to include reports of practitioner research along with the more formal contributions of university researchers indicates the starting line of ARNA's work in knowledge democracy (see below for additional comments on the use of this term).

The 2015 Proceedings include Budd Hall's keynote address on ecology of knowledge, paper and symposium presentations, workshop session summaries, and a summary of a virtual Town Hall session held via Skype links with participants at the conference and in India, Ireland, the UK, South Africa, and the USA. Also included in the Proceedings are Poster Session materials, and Addendums documenting ARNA interest group meetings held during the conference. Taken together, the Proceedings provide a kind of snapshot of the sessions and dialogues that took place in Toronto and serve as an indicator of the range of issues being addressed by ARNA members. Plans are now underway for the 2016 Proceedings, and I hope that conference presenters in Knoxville will take advantage of the opportunity to publish in the Proceedings and thus disseminate your work beyond the actual conference.

Lastly, this year included continued work in other aspects of ARNA's current approach to knowledge mobilization. The ARNA website continues to be a crucial component of ARNA's presence in the Americas and beyond (<http://www.arnacconnect.org/home>). ARNA's partnership with Social Publishers Foundation (SPF)

(<https://www.socialpublishersfoundation.org/>) has continued, and through this partnership ARNA is able to support both the development of a comprehensive knowledge base for completed practitioner research and the use of crowdfunding to generate financial support for practitioner research projects. Given the work described above, two other Knowledge Mobilization initiatives, the Digital Storytelling project and the Action Research Oral History Project have not been as active this year. I am hopeful that more work in these areas will be visible in the coming year.

Looking Ahead: Reconsideration. The framework for ARNA reconsideration of its relation with Kmb is being co-constructed by members of our Working Group and involves finding a balance point between conventional uses of the term knowledge mobilization and challenges to the conventional notion posed by the emergence of knowledge democracy as an alternative to the underlying foundation of the traditional knowledge enterprise. In a conventional sense, knowledge mobilization is most often discussed as the use of evidence and expertise to align research, policy and practice and improve outcomes for children, youth and families. Examples of knowledge mobilization efforts include:

- Publications such as journal articles, books and reports
- Events such as workshops and conferences
- Teaching curricula development or improvement
- Knowledge transfer, synthesis, exchange and co-creation

In this context, ARNA can certainly claim that it is a part of knowledge mobilization. ARNA's efforts, although still taking place in a much smaller social and policy space than that occupied by major organizations such as American Educational Research Association (AERA), do include publications, events, and knowledge transfer, exchange and co-creation. Yet there is, as previously mentioned, a more formal dimension to how Kmb was introduced and has evolved, and in that context ARNA struggles with the marginalization of its knowledge products just, as do action researchers and practitioner-researchers in general.

When "evidence and expertise" are put forward as being crucial to aligning research, policy and practice, in other words, the reference is most likely not to the forms of evidence and expertise associated with action research. However, this assessment has to take into consideration differences across the Americas, with such consideration being a central value in ARNA. In this context we certainly will want to increase our understanding of the Canadian experience with Kmb. In Canada the social science and humanities fields use the term "knowledge mobilization" fairly extensively. The term gained wider use after publication of an evaluation report of the Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) program of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) in 2004. Based on this report, SSHRC created a division of Knowledge Products and Mobilization to enhance and accelerate the movement of research findings into policy and program development. This history is noteworthy given the more widespread acceptance of practitioner research in Canada than is evident in the US.

Yet, although the battle over the legitimacy of knowledge claims emerging in the context of participatory approaches to social sciences has been taken up many times over the past four decades and continues today, developing global discourses on knowledge democracy point towards significant new considerations that all groups involved with knowledge production and dissemination, including ARNA, should discuss and debate. Overall, it is possible we are closer to constructing a global knowledge democracy than any of us would have imagined even five years ago. Given recent global developments suggesting the possibility of new convergences in thought and action regarding knowledge production (e.g. considerations of a network-of-networks within the global action research community, the emergence of the Urban Commons and Peer2Peer initiatives, and the continued development of the World Social Forum [<https://fsm2016.org/en/>]), ARNA has decided to convene the first Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy in conjunction with our 2017 Conference in Cartagena, Colombia.

Leading up to this historic event, ARNA's Knowledge Mobilization Group will be working to prepare a White Paper examining the relationship of Kmb, Knowledge Democracy, and action research. The Paper also will include recommendations both for ARNA strategic planning considerations and for the consideration of delegates to the Global Assembly. We hope that all ARNA members will participate in the discussions that will emerge beginning this coming fall as conference and global assembly planning move forward. We will base our considerations of the ARNA perspective on Kmb on the three commonly recognized components of knowledge mobilization:

1. Raising awareness and prompting change
2. Bringing people together
3. Putting knowledge into action

A Final Word. I would like to thank the members of the 2015-2016 Working Group for their contributions to ARNA's knowledge mobilization efforts. Those participating included:

- Donna Azodi, Lamar University, Beaumont, Texas
- Kurt Clausen, Nipissing University, North Bay, Ontario, Canada
- Scott Merkel, School Counselor, Battlefield High School, Haymarket, Virginia
- Sarah C. Negrete, Director, Northeastern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program (NNRPDP)
- Elena Polush, Lead Editor, ARNA Proceedings
- Joseph Shosh, Chair, ARNA Coordinating Group and Executive Committee
- Brittany (Britt) Wilczewski, English teacher, Warren Harding High School, Bridgeport, Connecticut

One of ARNA's deepest commitments is to promote active involvement by members in all policy and program initiatives and operational work. I am looking forward to working with all members interested in knowledge mobilization and to helping find ways to insure that the participation is meaningful and doable. ARNA members lead busy lives and none of us can devote ourselves full time to the work described in this report. We are, after all, primarily a volunteer organization. Our approach has been that the more we achieve active involvement by the



maximum number of members, the more we can accomplish as a network. I remain committed to the vision of active involvement, and I welcome inquiries regarding getting involved.

Respectfully Submitted  
May 31, 2016

<sup>1</sup>See, for example, Rowell, Polush, Riel, & Bruewer (2014). Action researchers' perspectives about the distinguishing characteristics of action research: A Delphi and learning circles mixed-methods study. *Educational Action Research*, 23(2), pp. 243–270.

<sup>2</sup>A helpful source: <http://www.kmbtoolkit.ca/what-is-kmb>; also, useful background information can be found at: Wikipedia (September 26, 2015): [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge\\_mobilization#cite\\_note-9](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge_mobilization#cite_note-9)

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Kapoor, D., & Jordan, S. (2009). Education, participatory action research, and social change: International perspectives. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. My co-authored (with Eunsook Hong) chapter on knowledge democracy, in the forthcoming (2016) Palgrave International Handbook of Action Research, takes up this debate from a variety of perspectives. Two excellent earlier sources include Fals-Borda, O., & Rahman, M. A. (Eds.) (1991). *Action and knowledge: Breaking the monopoly with participatory action research*. New York: Apex Press, and Park, P., Brydon-Miller, M., Hall, B., & Jackson, T. (Eds.) (1993) *Voices of change: Participatory research in the United States and Canada*. London: Bergin & Garvey.

<sup>4</sup>Rowell, L. L., & Shosh, J. M. (2016). Editorial. *Educational Action Research*, 24(1), pp. 1-3.

<sup>5</sup>The term "knowledge democracy" seems to have first emerged in the 1990s in relation to evolving learning and dialogue among various leaders associated with participatory approaches to knowledge production, including action research and participatory research. The term was included in the title of a chapter by John Gaventa in the 1991 book *Action and Knowledge* edited by Orlando Fals Borda and Mohammad Anisur Rahman and also appeared in Volume 1, Number 1 of the journal *Action Research* in 2003. A chapter in the forthcoming Palgrave International Handbook of Action Research examines the concept in depth (Rowell & Hong, Chapter 4).

<sup>6</sup>See, for example: Beaulieu, R. J. (2013). Action research: Trends and variations. *Canadian Journal of Action Research*, 14(3), pp. 29-39. For an earlier discussion see Gaventa, J. (1991). *Toward a knowledge democracy: Viewpoints on participatory research in North America*. In O. Fals Borda & M. Rahman (Eds.), *Action and knowledge: Breaking the monopoly with participatory action-research* (pp. 121-131). New York: Apex Press.

<sup>7</sup>Source: [http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/knowledge\\_mobilisation-mobilisation\\_des\\_connaissances-eng.aspx#a1](http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/knowledge_mobilisation-mobilisation_des_connaissances-eng.aspx#a1)

<sup>8</sup>Two chapters in the forthcoming Palgrave International Handbook of Action Research address historical development of action research in North America: Kurt Clausen contributed a chapter on Action Research in the Canadian Context (Chap. 6) and Allan Feldman contributed An Emergent History of Educational Action Research in the English Speaking World (Chap. 7)

<sup>9</sup>See, for example, Santos, B. D. (Ed.) (2007). *Another knowledge is possible: Beyond northern epistemologies*. London: Verso.

<sup>10</sup>source: <http://www.kmbtoolkit.ca/what-is-kmb>

## ARNA Announces Plans for 2017 Cartagena Conference & Global Assembly

– Submitted by Lonnie Rowell, University of San Diego, ARNA 2017 Conference Co-Chair

The Action Research Network of the Americas (ARNA) is finalizing plans for its 2017 annual conference, its first in South America, and for the 1st Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy. The events will take place June 12-16 in Cartagena, Colombia through a partnership between ARNA and the National University of Colombia. The National Pedagogic University of Colombia and many other Colombian, Latin American, Caribbean, and global universities, networks and institutions are also serving as affiliates and sponsors.

Planning for the **ARNA 2017 Conference** has been underway since the fall of 2015. The conference, ARNA's 5th, has adopted the theme **"Participation and Democratization of Knowledge: New Convergences for Reconciliation."**

The theme recognizes emerging understandings among scholars, other professionals, scholar-activists and citizens in the Global South and the Global North regarding the need for democratization of knowledge, convergences among those creating knowledge through diverse approaches grounded in participatory frameworks of thought and action, and the place of such approaches in reconciliations associated with the end of social conflicts. A special feature of the five-day gathering is the celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the First World Symposium of Action Research, held in Cartagena and convened by Colombian sociologist Orlando Fals Borda (1925-2008). The life and work of Fals Borda will be highlighted throughout the conference and the days leading up to it, including a video presentation of his address at the 1977 First World Symposium, an exhibition of his scholarly work and letters, and special pre-conference recognition ceremonies in the Capitol, Bogota, held in conjunction with the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the National University of Colombia.

Keynote speakers for the conference include Lola Cendales (to be confirmed), a leading figure in popular education and critical pedagogy in South America; Boaventura de Sousa Santos,

Portuguese sociologist and a leading global advocate for knowledge democracy; Joanne Rappaport, Georgetown University (USA), a Fals Borda scholar and President of the Latin American Studies Association; Stephen Kemmis, Charles Sturt University (Australia), a leading figure in global action research and author of numerous landmark books on practitioner research and critical social science; Michelle Fine, a Distinguished Professor of Psychology, Urban Education, and Women's Studies at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (USA) and a leading voice in Feminist psychology; Eileen Piggot-Irvine, Royal Roads University (Canada), editor and author, founder and former Director of the New Zealand Action Research and Review Centre, and a leading global researcher on compassionate confrontation; and Michel Thiollent, Universidade Unigranrio (Brazil), a Franco-Brazilian scholar and author of numerous action research books, and a leading global authority on modalities of participatory approaches to investigating social and organizational problems. In addition to this extraordinary group of Keynote Speakers, the conference will feature several Distinguished Speakers as well as a large number of breakout sessions organized in conjunction with several conference strands.

The Conference Co-Chairs are Lonnie Rowell (USA) and Doris Santos (Colombia). Prof. Santos is on the Faculty of Humanities at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia in Bogotá and is Director of the university's Education Research Institute. She is a leading member of the international PEP – Pedagogy, Education, and Praxis network. Prof. Rowell, a faculty member in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences at

**ARNA 2017**  
ACTION RESEARCH NETWORK OF THE AMERICAS  
**CONFERENCE**

**1ST**  
**GLOBAL ASSEMBLY**  
**FOR KNOWLEDGE DEMOCRACY**

**PARTICIPATION AND DEMOCRATIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE:  
NEW CONVERGENCES FOR RECONCILIATION**

CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA - JUNE 12-16 2017

the University of San Diego, is an ARNA founder. He served as the first Chair of ARNA, from 2013-2015, and now Chairs the Knowledge Mobilization Working Group. He is the lead editor for the Palgrave International Handbook of Action Research. The Planning Committee includes, in addition to Professors Rowell and Santos, Kurt Clausen (Canada), Elena Polush (USA), César Osorio Sánchez (Colombia), and Thomas Stern (Austria).

An International Advisory Committee for the Conference and Global Assembly is Co-Chaired by Budd Hall (Canada) and Rajesh Tandon (India), who share the UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education. Prof. Hall attended the 1977 World Symposium in Cartagena, and Thomas Stern and Rajesh Tandon attended the 20th anniversary gathering in 1997. Members of the International Advisory Committee include Mary Brydon-Miller (USA), Colin Bradley (Australia), Lesley Wood (South Africa), Tomas Rodriguez Villasante (Spain), Ileana Molito (Venezuela), Jack Whitehead (UK), Liza Grandia (USA), Jose Ramos (Australia), Vincent Steinhauer (Canada), and Tina Cook (UK), among others.

ARNA is now seeking a full range of conference affiliates and sponsors. The leading action research networks around the world already have become affiliates for the Cartagena gathering, including the Action Learning, Action Research Association (ALARA), the Collaborative Action Research Network (CARN), the Pedagogy, Education, Praxis network (PEP), and Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA). Others will be added soon. ARNA also is excited to be collaborating with CIMAS, a network of professionals committed to social transformation and participatory democracies, which has participants in several European countries and throughout Latin America. Headquartered in Madrid, Spain, CIMAS brings together social scientists united in support of social transformation through participatory methodologies in a context of sustainability and putting people and communities at the center of life.

Also collaborating in organizing of the 2017 gathering is the Council for Adult Education in

Latin America (CEAAL), which was established in 1982 and now involves 195 civil organizations (NGO's) in 21 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The first president of CEAAL was Paulo Freire, with Orlando Fals Borda serving as the second president. With a powerful heritage, CEAAL today has a very significant presence in Latin America and the Caribbean and supports numerous initiatives related to strengthening the skills and comprehensive training of educators and supporting social transformations in civil society. Representatives from CEALL included in the conference planning include: Alfonso Torres, a professor of the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional in Bogotá, Colombia; Alfredo Ghiso, professor of the Universidad Luis Amigó in Medellín, Colombia; and Ileana Malito, an educator and researcher in CESAP, a popular education and participatory action organization based in Caracas, Venezuela.

To date, several leading universities in Colombia have agreed to be conference sponsors, including the National University of Columbia (Universidad Nacional de Colombia), the National Pedagogic University (Universidad Pedagógica Nacional), Universidad de los Andes, and Universidad Distrital Francisco José De Caldas. Moravian College is our initial North American higher education sponsor, with many more to follow. We invite institutions and organizations interested in sponsorships to contact either of the co-chairs now.

In addition to the three-day conference and one day pre-conference, ARNA is convening the 1st Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy in conjunction with a wide variety of networks, organizations, and institutions involved with action research and participatory approaches to creating knowledge. This gathering, which will take place in Cartagena on June 16, will examine global convergences emerging in relation to knowledge production, social progress, respect for epistemological diversity, and alternative globalization. A key question for those working in the social spaces created by the global action research community, Urban Commons movement, the World Social Forum, the Peer2Peer network, the Indigenous Sovereignty and other anti/decolonizing movements, and the flourish-

ing culture of alternative networks in general, is the extent to which epistemological, ideological and political differences can be reconciled in the interest of a sustainable and socially just world. The Global Assembly will take up this question in the context of an ecology of knowledges. Our interest lies in “the geopolitics of Knowledge, its eagerness to problematize the equation of who produces knowledge, in what context, and for whom.” Thus, the 1st Global Assembly for Knowledge Democracy is being organized with the intention of initiating a thoughtful and strategic assessment of the politics of knowledge creation and the potential of participatory approaches as alternatives to a monolithic knowledge enterprise based on the domination of the Global North and the marginalization and subordination of other knowledges.

The keynote address at the Global Assembly will be given by Prof. Boaventura de Sousa Santos, a Professor of Sociology at the University of Coimbra (Portugal) and a Distinguished Legal Scholar at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. Among his many books in English are *Law and Globalization from Below: Towards a Cosmopolitan Legality*, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide*, and *Another Knowledge is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies*. Regarding the latter book, Immanuel Wallerstein, senior research scholar at Yale University, wrote “Boaventura de Sousa Santos has assembled social scientists from Latin America, Africa, and Asia to describe another kind of democracy, full of lessons for the benighted countries of the North, where it should be mandatory reading for serious people.”

The conference and Global Assembly website will be launched in late August, and announcements of the call for Presenters and Conference Registration (including Early-Bird Registration) will be made in September. We anticipate 1,000 attendees at the conference and early registration is strongly recommended, as the conference venue will have limited space. A range of price options for housing will be available, including low-cost options for students and others with limited income.

<sup>1</sup>Sousa Santos, B. (Ed.) (2008). *Another knowledge is possible: Beyond Northern epistemologies*. London: Verso. P. xxxiv.

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# ARNA 2017 Conference: Cartagena, Colombia



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