

TWICE Offers Great Workshops at MACUL

MACUL (Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning) celebrates its 30th birthday this year at the MACUL annual conference, March 8-10, 2006 in Grand Rapids. The theme, "Technology Now Technology Wow!" highlights K-12 ideas and best practices for improving student learning through technology. Be sure to visit the TWICE room at MACUL – there will be several great TWICE sessions demonstrating how videoconferencing can support classroom curriculum. If you are a novice distance learning user, plan to attend the TWICE pre-conference workshop, "I've Got All This Distance Learning Equipment – Now What?" During the regular conference, TWICE session attendees can virtually visit the



Cleveland Institute of Music and the Alaska Sea Life Center to learn about those programs. TWICE will present 3 sessions on classroom distance learning projects: "Voices of the Twin Cities," "Megaconference Jr.," and "ASK (Author Specialist Knowledge) Meets Wireman" with *Wireman* author, Sue Stauffacher. TWICE will also connect with Katy, Texas to discover how that school district is using video conferencing. Thursday afternoon of the conference, video conferencing techies from around the state will hold a round table discussion of videoconferencing issues they deal with on a daily basis.

More information about the TWICE sessions is available at: www.twice.cc/2006MACULconf.html

Two-Way News And Views



► **Time to plan for Michigan Week Connections!** This May, have your 4th grade students celebrate Michigan Week by taking part in one of two TWICE-sponsored interactive events: Michigan Exchange Project or Where In Michigan? Exchange Projects are 45-minute point-to-point connections where classes each share a 15 minute presentation about their community with a partner class, then talk with each other about their respective communities. Classes are partnered based on a connection date and time that teachers request. Where in Michigan? events are 2-hour multipoint connections in which students present clues about a city in Michigan, then try to guess the city based on the information presented. Four to six classes can participate in each event. Both projects occur May 8-19, 2006. Registration is open March 6-April 7, 2006. For information on how to verify your equipment and register for either project, visit <http://www.twice.cc/MI>.

Member Feature

TWICE members are not just from Michigan any more! TWICE welcomes our newest member, Alief Independent School District, in Houston, Texas. With 47,600 students, Alief ISD uses videoconferencing technology for a variety of in-district projects, virtual field trips, and many other activities. They participate in Read Across America and are looking to join other TWICE events. Alief Technology Specialist, Amy Yager, says, "We are very excited to be members of TWICE and look forward to participating in sessions with many of your providers. The TWICE provider database is incredible. Just the fact that we can search for exactly what we need on such a quick basis helps immensely."

Mark Your Calendars!

February 2006

1-28 Michigan Week Verification process

March 2006

1-3 Read Across America
6 Registration opens - MI Week Connections
8-10 MACUL Conference
23 TWICE ASK program

April 2006

18 TWICE ASK program
25 TWICE ASK program

May 2006

8-19 Michigan Week Connections occur
11 TWICE ASK program



From the President

Thanks to all of our members, the TWICE organization continues to thrive and expand! The TWICE *Read Across*

America videoconferencing project is still growing in popularity – 2006 will be the project's biggest year yet. However, TWICE continues to add other great programs, such as *Michigan Week Connections*, *Project ASK*, and *Exercise in Hard Choices*. Take some time to check out these programs, and other programs that we sponsor and coordinate.

As TWICE continues to expand, we are gaining national exposure and recognition in books and articles, and at conferences and presentations. Your participation and your referrals are helping to build our reputation. **Thank you**, and keep spreading the word!

The TWICE annual meeting at the MACUL conference will be here soon, along with a full slate of TWICE sessions covering a variety of video conferencing topics. Please stop and see us, and let us know what we can do to help your district.

Mike Richardson, mike@remc1.org

Tips and Tricks – Strategies for Teaching Over ITV

ITV physically separates teachers and students by distance. The teacher's challenge is to minimize the distance with appropriate use of technology, and effective teaching practices that establish a rapport between students and teacher. Here are some strategies for conducting ITV lessons:

- It takes longer to deliver instruction at a distance than face-to-face, so plan lessons accordingly. Prior to class, practice in front of a live camera, and ask a colleague or a few target students to view your presentation and on-camera presence and suggest improvements. Practice a trial run with technical staff so that everyone understands their role.
- Before class, organize all materials and visuals. If using an overhead camera for visuals, know how it operates and its limitations. Ensure that your students have the necessary materials to make the best use of televised lessons. Use study questions to assist in focusing discussions. Prepare students for the technical issues by answering questions about the equipment and equipment operators in the room.
- Maintain viewer interest with a change of voice and presentation style by team teaching or using guest speakers. If using a guest speaker, give students the speaker's background information prior to the class; conversely, give guest speakers the general background of participating students. *Source: University of Idaho*

Featuring the TWICE ASK project

ASK (Author Specialist Knowledge) provides students with the opportunity to interview an author or specialist connected to a book they are reading. Dr. Ray Kettel, U of M-Dearborn, designed the reading-journaling-interviewing process, which has been successfully implemented for the past 8 years in Macomb ISD by Jim Wenzloff. Using videoconferencing technology, TWICE now offers this opportunity to others in Michigan. Last fall, students interviewed Ethel Footman Smothers (*Hard Times Jar*), Margaret Willey (*Clever Beatrice*), and Janie Panagopoulos (*Traders In Time*). The fall program generated great reviews from participating teachers and students. One teacher wrote, "I cannot tell you how much our video conference meant to all of us. In one stroke, this videoconference enlarged these students' world." From a 3rd grade participant: "I'm glad I went to the videoconference. You make wonderful books! The *Hard Times Jar* is one of my most favorite books. You answered all the questions for us. Thank you!"

This spring, TWICE will sponsor four ASK programs for students to interview authors or specialists:

March 23: author Sue Stauffacher, book *Donuthead* (4th-6th grade)

April 18: author Gary Schmidt, Newberry-honored book, *Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy*, (6th-8th grade)

April 25: NOAA meteorologist, in connection with the book, *Night of the Twisters* (5th-7th grade)

May 11: author Janie Panagopoulos, books *Train to Midnight*, *Journey Back to Lumberjack Camp*. (4th grade)

For more information about the spring ASK programs, visit <http://www.twice.cc/ASK>.