



## Fall News

Welcome to the Center for Philosophy for Children's inaugural newsletter! We plan to publish *Reflections* each fall and spring. We hope you like it!

The Center is growing rapidly and we're thrilled about the increasing public support for and interest in what we're doing. This fall over 40 faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and volunteers are leading philosophy sessions in Seattle public schools, co-coaching local high school Ethics Bowl teams, and working to develop new relationships with teachers and administrators at various Seattle schools.



Read inside about our new philosopher-in-residence program at John Muir Elementary School, the first Washington State High School Ethics Bowl program that's being organized by the Center to take place this winter, our new graduate fellowship program, and more!

## Ethics Bowl



young students, such as questions about cheating, plagiarism, peer pressure, use and abuse of social media, privacy, and relationships, as well as political and social issues such as free speech, gun control, cloning, parental consent, and stem cell research.

Students from Roosevelt High School, Lake Washington High School, STEM School, Lakeside, Seattle Academy, and others will compete in the February 1 competition. The winner of the event will advance, with expenses paid, to the [National High School Ethics Bowl](#), which will be held at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill on April 4-5, 2014. UW graduate and undergraduate philosophy students are helping many of the high school teams prepare for the competition.

Although the event is competitive, it is intended to promote collaboration. Unlike debate, Ethics Bowl teams are not forced to take adversarial positions or to hold fast to an assigned perspective. Instead, students offer commentary on one another's arguments. Teams are judged according to how well they reason through the issues, present arguments, analyze the morally relevant features of the cases, respond to commentary and questions, and engage in civil exchanges with their peers. Judges for the University of Washington event are being drawn from the local judicial, legal, and philosophical communities.

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## From the Director

I'm excited about this new way for us to communicate with the Center's community! With the help of the talented Kate Goldyn, Department of Philosophy Outreach Coordinator, we plan to send this e-newsletter out twice each year. Suggestions welcome!



Our center has had a year of exponential growth. We're very excited about the expanding regional and national K-12 philosophy field and our role in supporting new programs around the country, including our role in the national organization [PLATO \(Philosophy Learning and Teaching Organization\)](#).

The University of Chicago has started a pre-college philosophy initiative modeled on our center, and in connection with this initiative held a wonderful [launch event](#) earlier this month. We are also hoping to organize with the University of Hawaii a philosophy for children symposium there that will bring together people in the field from Washington, Hawaii and Japan.

Our Philosophers in the Schools Program has seen significant development this year. We have now established the first philosopher-in-residence program in the Seattle School District, started at John Muir Elementary School this fall. We continue to work to introduce philosophy to young people around the region, and this year we were able to create three annual Philosophy for Children graduate fellowships at the university.

The Center held its annual workshop for teachers this past June at UW, with overflow attendance. The workshop focused on ways to introduce philosophy to young people, with separate tracks for elementary school and middle/high school teachers. Teachers from 12 different schools attended. Our efforts to reach high school teachers is being enhanced by our organization of the first Washington State High School Ethics Bowl this winter.

Formerly known as the Northwest Center for Philosophy for Children, we are now known as the University of Washington Center for Philosophy for Children, to build awareness of our connection with the University of Washington and to reflect the Center's national and international work.

We're delighted about the increase in philosophical inquiry in schools in the Pacific Northwest and around the country, and very much appreciate the support and interest of our growing community!

- Jana Mohr Lone

[www.philosophyforchildren.org](http://www.philosophyforchildren.org)

Find us on Facebook and Twitter!



## Philosophers in the Schools

Faculty, students and volunteers working with the Center are leading philosophy sessions in 20 different K-12 classrooms so far this year, including a new class on ["Philosophy and Critical Thinking" Saturday program](#) at the Robinson Center for Young Scholars, taught by graduate student Janice Moskalik and former undergraduate student Dustin Groshong, and classes at two high schools and three elementary schools in Seattle.

This summer the Center received a three-year grant from the [Squire Family Foundation](#) to launch the [first philosopher-in-residence program](#) in the Seattle public schools, which started this fall at [John Muir Elementary School](#). John Muir is a culturally diverse K-5 school in Seattle's Rainier Valley, and many students there are among those least likely to have access to academic enrichment programs. The Center has been working closely with teachers and staff at John Muir for the past three years to bring philosophy into most of the school's classrooms: philosophy has been introduced into every grade level at the school, Center staff are facilitated a monthly philosophy professional learning community for teachers and staff for the third consecutive year this year, and many John Muir teachers have attended at least one of the Center's annual summer workshops.

This new program involves the regular presence at the school of philosopher Karen Emmerman, who received her Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Washington in 2012 and started working with the Center and teaching philosophy classes at John Muir in 2010. Karen is also teaching a philosophy class at Nova High School on Capitol Hill.



Our fall Philosophy for Children class at UW involves 26 graduate and undergraduate students who, as part of the Center's "Philosophers in the Schools" outreach program in the Seattle public schools, are observing and facilitating philosophy sessions at both John Muir and Whittier Elementary Schools. A recent issue of the UW's community newsletter [Front Porch](#) highlighted this program.



## Focus on the Classroom

With each newsletter, we'll provide a lesson plan for motivating a classroom philosophy session. The following session works well with students in grades 5 and up.



*Good News, Bad News*  
Created by Education Director David Shapiro

Time: about 20 minutes

Description:

To begin the exercise, say you are going to have the students do an exercise that gets them thinking about two sides of an issue by thinking about possible consequences -- both good and bad. As an example, consider that old joke: "A guy goes to the doctor for some tests. He comes back a week later and the doctor says, 'Well, I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is, the tests came back and we determined that you only have 48 hours to live.' The guy says, 'That's the good news?! What's the bad news?'" The doctor says, "Well, we tried to get in touch with you all day yesterday."

After the groans that this inevitably solicits, another more tasteful example might be in order, something like, "The good news is, our hometown baseball team won yesterday. The bad news is, their star player was injured." With this basic illustration on the table, the class will be ready to move into the exercise.

## How it works

1. Pass out sheets of paper on which are pre-printed alternating lines of "The good news is: \_\_\_\_\_," and "The bad news is: \_\_\_\_\_" The paper is filled; there are three of each, alternating one after another, starting with good news.
2. Explain to students that the idea is to follow the line of consequences where they lead -- and they might enjoy being surprised by the result. But stress the serious point behind the exercise -- predicting consequences is an important preliminary to making judgments.
3. Students begin by writing, along with their name, ONE piece of good news on their paper. Emphasize this! Often a student will already be in the process of filling out the entire sheet. Reiterate that students have been asked to merely fill out the first piece of good news; go no further!
4. After all the students have completed writing their first piece of good news, they each hand their paper to the person next to them; that person reads the good news and writes a piece of bad news that might follow from it. Again, emphasize, just the bad news! The second student then folds down his or her paper so only the last piece of bad news is visible. He or she then hands that paper to another student who reads the visible piece of bad news, writes an associated good news, then folds down the paper so only the good news just written is visible, and then hands it to another student, and so on and on until the paper is completely filled.



5. Arrange the activity so students don't pass their papers to the same person every time. As each paper is completed -- it ends with a piece of bad news -- have students return

it to a pile in the front of the room. When all the papers are turned in, hand each one back to the original writer of good news. Students read the papers and are asked to notice especially the first and last lines and the degree to which they could have predicted that last line from the first.

The game is fun and pretty lively. Students enjoy trying to guess claims from the reasons offered for them. And they generally do a pretty good job of it.



## Comments

The exercise tends to be good fun, albeit a bit silly. Students routinely use the opportunity to be somewhat inappropriate in what they write, or scatological, or just goofy. It's a good idea to set as a ground rule that no names of anyone in the class can be mentioned, though, so even if students use the anonymity of the exercise as an opportunity to be nasty, no one's feelings will be hurt. (And indeed, if they do so, an opportunity for discussion—about how people treat each other differently when they're anonymous, for instance—can ensue.)

Despite the somewhat frivolous nature of the activity, students write, reflect and respond to the ideas of others. They allow themselves to follow a chain of consequences where it leads without any preconceived notion of where it's supposed to end up. And they can look for connections among the various statements.

## Philosophy for Children Fellows 2013-14

[Three annual Philosophy for Children fellowships](#) for graduate students in the Philosophy Department or the College of Education began this year. This year's fellows are Janice Moskalik and Amy Reed-Sandoval from the Philosophy Department and Alain Sykes from the College of Education. The fellows are involved in our Philosophers in the Schools program, including mentoring the undergraduate students participating in the program.

**Janice Moskalik** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Philosophy Department at the University of Washington, Seattle. She is writing a dissertation on interpersonal moral blame. Janice teaches courses at UW on moral theory, contemporary moral problems, philosophy of law, and philosophy of criminal punishment. This is her second year participating in the Center's Philosophers in the Schools Program, teaching philosophy to children in Seattle Public Schools, and mentoring undergraduate student participants in their teaching in Seattle Public School classrooms.



**Amy Reed-Sandoval** is a Ph.D. candidate in Philosophy at the University of Washington, where she is currently writing a political philosophy dissertation on immigration. She has studied and taught with the UW Center for Philosophy for Children for over three years. Amy has spent three summers facilitating Philosophy for Children courses in Oaxaca, Mexico as part of the Oaxaca Philosophy for Children Initiative (Filosofía para Niños Oaxaca), a program that she founded to give socioeconomically marginalized youth in Oaxaca the opportunity to pursue philosophy at the K-12 level. The program has received awards and grants from the UW Center for Human Rights, the UW Department of Philosophy, and the UW Center for Philosophy for Children.



**Alain Carmen Sykes** has Bachelors degrees in English and History and a Masters degree in Education. She is currently working towards a Ph.D. in Education at the University of Washington. Previously, Alain taught English, History, Theory of Knowledge, and Politics at middle and high schools in the United States, Greece, and the Netherlands. Alain loves working with kids and is very excited to be part of this program.



## 2013-14 Center Intern

Introducing Our Intern Aaron Flaster!

Aaron Flaster graduated from Lewis & Clark College last spring with a B.A. in Philosophy and a focus on ethics. Aaron grew up in Marin County, California, and moved to Seattle after graduating this year. He enjoys reading, hiking, and spending time with his family.



*What led to your decision to become a philosophy major in college?*

As a first year student at Lewis & Clark, I never expected to be a philosophy major because philosophy seemed abstract and arcane. Fortunately, I was inspired to study philosophy by several wonderful professors, peers, and a passion for ethics. I developed a passion for ethics (especially virtue ethics) because my professors raised really compelling questions about character traits and human flourishing. I grew up in Marin County, CA and I moved to Seattle after graduating this year. I really enjoy reading, hiking, and spending time with my family.

*Why did you become an intern at the Center for Philosophy for Children?*

During my senior year at Lewis & Clark, a friend told me about Professor Jana Mohr Lone and the Center for Philosophy for Children. The center immediately sparked my interest because I wanted to learn more about the role of philosophy within the

K-12 curriculum. I wrote to Jana and explained my background, hoping for a response. Fortunately, Jana replied to my email because she wanted to organize the Washington State High School Ethics Bowl and needed help with the event. So here I am!

*What has been the most interesting part of your time at the center?*

The most interesting and exciting part of my work at the Center for Philosophy for Children is visiting different high schools and speaking about the Ethics Bowl. It is just fun-I go around to schools and get students excited about ethics! I share my passion for Ethics and encourage students to try something new by participating in the Ethics Bowl. Most high school students have never taken a course in ethics or philosophy, so the Ethics Bowl is a great opportunity for these young adults to wrestle with their deepest convictions and moral judgments.

*What part of your internship has been surprising?*

I continue to be surprised and humbled by how quickly these high school students dive into the material. They raise sophisticated questions and share ideas that have been debated by philosophers for thousands of years. More importantly, it is clear that these students really care about ethics. They share heartfelt anecdotes and lead energetic discussions. They engage with one another as peers, citizens, and scholars.

*What do you hope to accomplish by the end of your internship?*

By the end of my internship, I want the Washington State High School Ethics Bowl to be a success. The event will be a success if enough teams participate and if teams offer their own ideas, rather than just quoting philosophers. An Ethics Bowl is not about citing famous philosophers or memorizing moral theories. On the contrary, these students should use their ability to reason and arrive at interesting conclusions.  
*Thank you, Aaron!*

**Know someone who is interested in an internship for 2014-15?**

Please contact [Jana Mohr Lone](#)



## Our Donors

The breadth of the Center's work is made possible by individual donations. This year gifts from donors helped fund the growth of our Philosophers in the Schools program, three Philosophy for Children graduate fellowships, and our ability to run our annual summer workshop for teachers, including food, parking and clock hours, without any charge.

### Focus on a Donor

Eva Corets ('84), Senior Director at Microsoft, donor since 1996.

"Since 1996 my husband, Josh Beloff, and I have been proud to support the University of Washington Center for Philosophy for Children. Their efforts dedicated to introducing philosophy to K-12 students have inspired countless children, especially students with little access to academic enrichment programs, throughout the Seattle public schools and beyond. Helping students have the confidence to ask questions and examine their own views and express their ideas, while learning to appreciate that there are many ways to understand the world, are skills that empower children not only in philosophy classes, but also prepares them to be more open-minded, confident and successful in life. Please join us in supporting the Center!"



## We hope you will consider supporting our work.

You can donate online [here](#).

You can also send a check to the Center for Philosophy for Children, mailed to:

UW Center for Philosophy for Children  
University of Washington Box 343350  
Seattle, WA 98195

**Your gifts make all the difference - thank you very much!**

## Board of Directors

This year we revitalized our board of directors. Our current board is as follows:

**Kenneth Clatterbaugh**, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at University of Washington

**Karen Emmerman**, Lecturer, Department of Philosophy & Comparative History of Ideas Program at University of Washington and Philosopher-in-Residence, John Muir Elementary School, Seattle

**Sara Goering**, Associate Professor of Philosophy at University of Washington and Center Program Director

**Judith Howard**, Divisional Dean of Social Sciences in the College of Arts & Sciences at University of Washington

**Polly Hunter**, Director of Development at Children's Hospital at University of Virginia

**Jana Mohr Lone**, Center Director

**Terrance McKittrick**, Teacher at Nova High School, Seattle

**David Shapiro**, Faculty in Philosophy at Cascadia Community College and Center Education Director

**Christine Stickler**, Director of the Pipeline Project at University of Washington

**Julie Trout**, Teacher at John Muir Elementary School, Seattle

## Of Interest Around the Country

### NEH Summer Philosophy Seminar on Existentialism for Teachers!



This seminar will acquaint teachers with the basic philosophical ideas of existentialism by introducing them to the writings of such thinkers as Søren Kierkegaard, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, and Franz Fanon. In addition to philosophical treatises, readings will also be drawn from novels, and films will be shown. The existentialists are known for their emphasis on the actual lived experience of human beings and their attempt to show that there are more authentic possibilities for living than those chosen by most people. Directed by Mount Holyoke College philosophy professor Thomas E. Wartenberg, the seminar will explore how the existentialists argue for this view of life and assess its validity both historically and for our contemporary society. The seminar will be held at Mount Holyoke and is open to both full- and part-time school teachers and will take place from July 6, 2014, until July 31, 2014. Two spaces are reserved for graduate students intending to pursue a career in K-12 education. Please see website for more information: <http://existentialismseminar.com>



### NAACI Conference - "The Community of Philosophical Inquiry and Its Diverse Applications"

Laval University, Quebec City, Quebec, Canada,  
June 25-27, 2014

Please see website for more information:  
[http://www.naaci-philosophy.org/2014\\_Conference.html](http://www.naaci-philosophy.org/2014_Conference.html)



### American Philosophical Association 2013-14 Sessions on Pre-College Philosophy

Baltimore, MD December 28, 2013

Chicago, IL February 28, 2014

San Diego, CA April 2014

Please see website for more information:  
<http://plato-philosophy.org/organizations/apa-conferences/>



### PLATO (Philosophy Learning and Teaching Organization)

advocates and supports introducing philosophy to K-12 students through programs, resource-sharing and the development of a national network of those working in pre-college philosophy. PLATO promotes philosophy classes for all K-12 students, including those in classrooms least likely to have access to academic enrichment

programs. The organization provides education for teachers about ways to introduce philosophy in pre-college classrooms, supports faculty and graduate students working in the field of pre-college philosophy, and advocates in both the philosophical and educational communities for more pre-college philosophy instruction.

**PLATO High School Essay Contest** – Entries Due by January 31, 2014 Please see website for more information:

<http://plato-philosophy.org/plato-2013-14-high-school-essay-contest/>

**PLATO Awards for K-12 Philosophy Teachers** – nominations due by January 31, 2014 Please see website for more information: <http://plato-philosophy.org/new-annual-plato-awards-for-teachers/>

**The PLATO journal Questions: Philosophy for Young People** publishes philosophical work by and for young people, including stories, essays, poems, photographs and drawings, etc. The journal also publishes articles related to doing philosophy with young people, reviews of books and materials useful for doing the same, lesson plans (include description or transcripts of student responses), classic thought experiments redefined/modified for modern audience interests and demographics, transcripts of philosophy discussions, photographs of classroom discussions, and more. Submissions for the next annual issue should be sent by March 31, 2014, to [QuestionsJournal@gmail.com](mailto:QuestionsJournal@gmail.com). Please see website for more information: <http://questionsjournal.com>