



# E – LETTER

Volume One, Number One

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## *From the President*

### Communication is the Key to Growth and Job Security

Happy New Year! We wish you a wonderful 2004, and encourage you to remain positive in this time of budget cuts and crowded classrooms. Remember that theatre in your classroom serves as dropout prevention for many students. It is in YOUR classroom where they feel accepted and encouraged to succeed. You build their appreciation for the arts, the world around them, and each other.

We must work together to keep theatre in our schools through COMMUNICATION. You can do your part by communicating with your students, their parents, your community, school board leaders and state legislators. ENGAGE them in what you do. Invite them to PARTICIPATE in

the process. Through participation they gain appreciation.

SPREAD THE WORD about what you do, the plays you produce, and the awards your students have won. Let your community, the press and your administrators know about your good work. Let your administrators know you support them – they will, in turn, support you.

Please feel free to contact me or Executive Director Murray Mintz if there is anything FATE can do for you.

## Calendar

- February 2** Registration Postmark Deadline  
For State Thespian Festival
- February 7** FATE Executive Committee Meets  
Orlando: Maitland Courtyard  
Marriott, 10:30 A.M.
- March 31- April 3** Florida State Thespian  
Festival, Tampa

***Include your activity in the next calendar.  
Just e-mail the Executive Director.***

## Summer Seminars for Teachers

Florida teachers are invited to apply for an all-expense-paid summer seminar at the Florida Center for Teachers in St. Petersburg. Each week-long seminar is a hands-on program that allows you to explore topics of interest: Asian Religions, Archeology, the African American Literary Tradition, Arts in Culture, etc. FATE members who have participated say it is a great experience.

Sessions include visits to historic sites, museums, communities of interest and meetings with noted authors, artists and community and religious leaders. Each seminar is limited to 25 teachers and in-service credit is available. For details, go to [www.flahum.org](http://www.flahum.org) or phone (727) 553-3808

## *Legislative Update*

Budget committees of the legislature are hard at work, and it begins to look like there might be some hope for the arts this year.

Bills sponsored by State Senator Margolis and Representatives Detert and Sobel favor arts funding, and Speaker Byrd has pledged his support for a restoration of funding.

In a recent letter to President Blanchette, Secretary of State Glenda Hood said, “ I encourage you to work closely with your legislators to educate them on the importance of cultural funding ... I assure you the Department of State will work wholeheartedly to pursue the funding required ...”

We definitely need to remain proactive in this area, consistently reminding our local representatives of the importance of the arts and arts education to the spiritual and financial well-being of our state.

### **Congratulations to ...**

Tim Flay who was named one of America’s outstanding teachers by **USA Today**. Tim teaches at Hialeah-Miami Lakes High. Incidentally, *his* high school drama teacher was Debra Barnum.

Beverly Blanchette for her award as FTC’s Outstanding Secondary Theatre Educator.

Michael Higgins who was FATE’s Educator of the Year award winner.

FATE scholarship winner Ed Blanchette, Katie Lebhar and Daphne Sicre. Be sure to watch for the summer newsletter, which will contain this year’s scholarship application.

#### **Job Opening – Technical Director**

West Orange High School, Winter Garden.  
Full-time position supervising three major productions, two one acts, teaching Drama I and Stagecraft.

Contact Ken Rush at [rushk@ocps.net](mailto:rushk@ocps.net)

### *From the Executive Director*

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What you are looking at right now is an experiment. Our president has said that the priority for the year should be communication, and we have been communicating with state legislators and community leaders. But we also want to improve communication with you. So we are trying this E-LETTER format.

We hope to make it more frequent, perhaps five a year. But that requires your help. If you have any information to pass on to your colleagues, please let me know. Brag a little. Tell us about successful former students. Awards. Honors. Know of a job opening coming up? Let us tell the members about it. Need a special prop for your production? Maybe we can help you find one.

Send your information and requests to me at [murray\\_mintz@msn.com](mailto:murray_mintz@msn.com).

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