



PREL PRESENTS...

The Focus on Professional Development in Early Reading Forum

By Janis Michael

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) presented its fourth national forum in a series focusing on early reading June 8–9, in Honolulu, Hawai‘i. The forum, which concentrated on professional development (PD), was attended by more than 200 practitioners, state literacy leaders, and teacher educators from institutions of higher education. Twenty-three states, the territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republics of Palau and the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia were represented.

Dr. Michael Kamil, Stanford University, Chair of the Forum, set the stage for the proceedings with a review of key findings of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) legislation and cur-



Photo: Liane Sing

▷ PREL’s fourth national forum in series focusing on early reading.

rent research on PD in early reading.

Forum participants then took advantage of the opportunity to listen to and engage in dialogue with nine of the nation’s leading reading researchers on compelling and practical issues including the nature of PD; PD implications regarding English language learners; what’s working; and possible next steps.

Dr. David Dickinson, Boston College, utilized the medium of video teleconferencing to present on the topic of the use of technology to foster effective literacy development. Dr. Gerald Duffy, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, emphasized the necessity of thoughtfully adaptive teachers as the key to high achievement in reading, which requires changes in what, how, and when PD occurs for teachers. According to Duffy, PD must promote autonomous and independent decision making, which is far more effective than training teachers to be compliant to prescribed reading program practices. Other Forum presenters included Dr. Margarita Calderon, Johns Hopkins University; Dr. Anne Cunningham, University of California, Berkeley; Dr. Jana Echevarria, California State University at Long Beach; Dr. Richard Johnson, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa; Dr. Dorothy Strickland, Rutgers University; and Dr. Ed Kame‘enui, University of Oregon, a native of Hawai‘i.

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