

Some Background on the Central West Virginia Writing Project

Paul Epstein, CWVWP Co-director

In 1978 the West Virginia Writing Project (WVWP) was established as a site of the National Writing Project (NWP) at what is now Marshall University Graduate College (MUGC) to improve the teaching of writing across the state. This year, 2005, marks the fifth year of the Central West Virginia Writing Project (CWVWP) whose goal is to serve the teachers in the region immediately surrounding MUGC. While the WVWP held it's highly regarded Summer Institutes in Kanawha and Putnam counties a few times during its years, the CWVWP plans to have one available to teachers in Kanawha, Putnam, and the surrounding region every year for the foreseeable future. CWVWP also offers a variety of professional development opportunities during the school year.

All CWVWP programs and activities are based on the following principles:

- Student writing can be improved by improving the teaching of writing
- The best teacher of other teachers is a successful classroom teacher.
- Programs designed to improve the teaching of writing must involve teachers of all grade levels
- These programs should be cooperatively planned by schools and universities.
- Large-scale change occurs only over time.
- It can best be accomplished by those who work within the schools.
- What is known about the teaching of writing comes from research and from the successful practices of those who teach writing.
- Because writing is fundamental to critical thinking and learning in all subject areas, all writing project programs should involve teachers from across the disciplines.
- Teachers of writing must also write, for only by writing can teachers fully understand what they are asking of their students.