As the Special Education Technology SIG (SETSIG) officially begins its new year with this newsletter, I wanted to take a minute and introduce myself as well as discuss some of the plans for the upcoming year. My name is James (Jamie) Basham. I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Kansas. My work and research is grounded in the application of instructional design and technology for all learners, but especially struggling learners and those identified as having disabilities. So, my work incorporates the understanding of individualized technology solutions, namely Assistive Technology, as well as the application of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in a variety of brick and mortar, virtual, and blended environments. From that perspective, I’m continually searching for solutions and environments that have been “designed” to successfully meet the needs of all learners.

The reality of SETSIG is that we’re really not driven by a single person. In fact, each year we come together as a leadership team to put everything in place to support the members of SETSIG. As has been discussed in previous newsletters, we have one of the largest SIGs as well as leadership teams across ISTE. It is only through this team that we have the ideas and dedication to pull everything together. This year, we have a great leadership team.

Things to keep your eye on this year include a variety of professional development opportunities, ways to connect with your fellow SETSIG members, and a great and potentially expanded program at ISTE 2013.

Finally, I want to highlight something I’m really excited about, with themed newsletters. Our SETSIG communications team has done a great job pulling together ideas for themes to highlight the emergent ideas and needs across the SIG. I’m really excited to start the year talking about professional development. I believe professional growth and development is critical to supporting the needs of all learners, especially those with a variety of diverse learning needs and disabilities. To keep with the theme, I’ve been asked to share my own understanding of professional development, which you can read on page 5 of this newsletter.

James Basham, Ph.D.
University of Kansas
Dept. of Special Ed.
Do you tweet? We do! Follow us @SETSIG where we share information about upcoming events, activities & sites of interest.

---

SETSIG Newsletter

---

**SETSIG: Special Education Technology Special Interest Group**

| SETSIG’s primary purpose is to advance knowledge concerning specialized technology products and effective practices for enhancing opportunities for children, youth, and adults with disabilities and for students who are gifted. | SETSIG seeks to provide leadership, policy development, resources, and training for our members and to serve as a catalyst for engaging the special education community within ISTE. Members work individually as well as collaboratively to conduct activities including workshops, trainings, webinars, and other professional development events. | SETSIG has a number of different ways to get involved. From engaging in topical discussion to resource sharing via Twitter, Facebook, the ISTE Ning and Diigo, members can choose from an array of options to participate. The more you get involved, the better SETSIG becomes! |

**Message from the Editor: Christine Southard, SETSIG Vice-President**

The members of our SETSIG Board work in a variety of fields related to special education, assistive technology and UDL. We are a board comprised of K-12 certified teachers, college professors, educational researchers, assistive technology evaluators, administrators and employees of educational businesses. It is very important to each one of our board members to stay current in their fields and all of my SETSIG colleagues go above and beyond the general professional development provided by their places of employment. This newsletter focuses on their professional development perspectives from a variety of positions. We also hope to use this issue of our newsletter to introduce you to an assortment of professional development opportunities provided by our special interest group (SIG) as well as other educational resources that focus on special education technologies and UDL.

**SIGAdmin & SETSIG Article Discussion on Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

This past October, an important collaboration took place between two ISTE Special Interest Groups (SIGs): SETSIG and SIGAdmin. The two SIGs came together for a discussion of a professional article that was of interest to both groups. The article discussion was about Universal Design for Learning (UDL). First, participants read Dave Edyburn’s article, WOULD YOU RECOGNIZE UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING IF YOU SAW IT? (LDQ, V33, Winter 2010) That article is posted here: [https://setsig.iste.wikispaces.net/file/view/UDL2ndDecade.pdf](https://setsig.iste.wikispaces.net/file/view/UDL2ndDecade.pdf). Then, an online discussion took place at the SIGAdmin wiki: [http://sigadmin.iste.wikispaces.net/Article+Discussions+12-13](http://sigadmin.iste.wikispaces.net/Article+Discussions+12-13). While the discussion is now over, you can still see the history of the conversations that took place during this article discussion. Please follow SETSIG on Twitter or Facebook to be alerted to new article discussion opportunities in the future.
As a teacher I started writing professional learning plans in '99, outlining what I hoped to learn as a teacher each year and how I would do it and who would help me. As I moved more into the business side of education, I wanted to understand the connection between professional development and professional learning. One of the books that I found particularly insightful was *Professional Learning to Reshape Teaching* (Hannay, Wideman & Seller, 2006). In this book, the authors made the case that Professional Development is often the directive of the district, focused on implementation or "roll out" of a new textbook, methodology, process or technology. They defined professional learning "...as being the investigative processes that educators willingly engage in to solve authentic problems by changing their practices...Professional Learning is not something that occurs in a series of events, however loosely or tightly connected, in a setting outside of the normal workplace and workday. Professional learning is an ongoing, integral part of the work of educators in which they participate..." When I think of PD and PL, I think of those at the "top" determining where the ship will go, and the teachers at the "bottom" determining how they will get there. Both are important and in many ways interconnected, but for many teachers, caught up in the daily demands of the classroom, I believe their professional learning is often forgotten, relegated to a "to-do" list.

Most of my professional learning has come from what is now called job-embedded professional learning. As a teacher, it was working with others to create accessible learning for students. We would work as a team to discuss how all students could be successful, how we would make text accessible, ways for students to fully participate using their strengths and the technology to support and enhance the learning. Today my professional learning comes from working with both district level people and the teachers in the classroom to help them integrate technology into instruction. It challenges me everyday to help them see the need to focus on teaching and learning rather than technology, to question their teaching practice and not just replicate what they currently do with new technology, to consider the needs of all students not just those that are successful with current methods.

In addition working with my content writers (all veteran teachers) constantly challenges me as a teacher. As we create scripts for instructional videos, design templates or create our professional learning guides, we constantly challenge each other on the intent of the activity, how it supports students' learning, whether the instructional strategy is the correct one, how to support a variety of learners and whether teachers will be able to use our resources for their professional learning.

Lastly, I find a great deal of my professional learning also comes from writing and responding to others. I have written a series of articles for Dr. Dave Edyburn that challenged me to articulate what I believe about AT implementation. I recently wrote a white paper to express why I believe technology-focused teacher training is ineffective to change teacher practice. I also respond on-line to questions and debates such as ISTE's Point/Counterpoint, various NINGs, blogs and even the local newspaper. I find expressing what I believe, locating research to back it up, sharing it with a wide audience and exploring peoples' reactions to it are great ways to keep learning when I can't always be in front of a group of students for a "reality check".

Kendra Grant
Sublime Learning, Inc.
My first opportunity to get involved internationally came after I submitted my doctoral dissertation research as a proposal to the International Association of Special Education (IASE) Conference – held in Alicante, Spain in 2009. This organization has a biennial conference that is held in a different country each time – just not in the US! I had been overseas before, only visit friends or for vacation – never in connection with my field of special education. I submitted to co-present with my major advisor at the University of Rhode Island, sort of a “thank you” for the hard work and support she had shown me during that stressful period of preparing and defending the dissertation. I was thrilled when we were accepted, and we made up our minds that we would definitely go! At this conference, we met and talked with scores of colleagues from around the world. This began my passion for learning through an international perspective.

Next, after a presentation on UDL that a colleague and I did at a TED/CEC conference, a professor from Kuwait University approached us and invited us to present at their first Conference on Special Education in Higher Education, Kuwait City, 2010. Here I had my first opportunity to experience a different culture from that of the US, as Kuwait is not only a monarchy, but it is also a Muslim country. My initial ‘gut’ awareness of this came when we arrived at the Kuwait City airport, and after working our way through customs and clearing our visas we were met by three representatives from the conference – 2 men and 1 woman. Happy to have arrived, I shook the first man’s hand in greeting (with little response), I shook the woman’s hand (which clearly she was not comfortable with), and when I went to shake the second man’s hand – Joseph was his name – he kindly but firmly said “I do not shake hands – I am Muslim.” For a split-second, I was taken aback, but I absolutely appreciated his honesty and clarity – I did not know that Muslim men could not shake a woman’s hand. I had never met a Muslim man before. Joseph and I became friends during the time I was there, and I will always appreciate the lesson that he taught me – not to take things, or actions, for granted; try to learn about the customs of the country you are traveling to.

Another ah-ha moment….the first night of our visit to Kuwait, I woke up in the middle of the night (around 4 am) and could not understand why – then listening more carefully, heard what I later found out was the call to worship being broadcast across the city from the mosques. As a Muslim country, this happens throughout Kuwait, 4 times every day. I remember so clearly that moment… when I realized “I’m not in Kansas (or Rhode Island) anymore.” Throughout the week that we were there, we presented to, worked with, and learned from colleagues from Kuwait, from other Gulf countries, and from as far away as Malaysia. We visited schools, learned about Kuwait’s educational system, and developed a great fondness for Arabic coffee (absolutely fabulous!!!). Again, this was an experience that has greatly influenced my current view and understanding of teaching, of learning, and of the powerful influence of culture on them both.

While in Kuwait I met a fellow disabilities education instructor, who was from the University of Cape Town, South Africa. She was receiving an award for her work on inclusion from UNESCO. We bonded right away and pledged to keep in touch – so when the next year found me at the 2011 IASE Conference in Windhoek, Namibia (just around the corner from Cape Town – by African standards – a brief 2 hour flight), I grabbed the opportunity to visit my friend and to meet her family. Of course, since I would be there anyway, she asked if I would mind doing a workshop on UDL at the U. of Cape Town. I agreed, and somehow the workshop grew into a
As someone who is often called to actually provide “professional development,” my own professional growth doesn’t always come from traditional resources. In fact, as my colleagues and doctoral students will attest, my own professional development comes from a variety of resources. My own professional development generally starts as a “need” or “curiosity” and then moves into an investigation, often requiring a good deal of self-study and collaboration with others. For me, need generally emerges during instruction while I’m practicing what I preach, teaching things such as UDL in a UDL environment (either blended or online) and needing to find a way to effectively meet the learner variability of the class. If a need emerges, I quickly move into a mode of tactical learning, specifically looking for specific answers that can be quickly utilized and deployed to meet the needs of the situation. On the other hand, curiosity is ongoing and is continually emergent as part of being a life-long learner. So, curiosity leads into a series of never-ending rabbit holes.

The tools I use for my own professional growth vary in nature depending on the task. Solution searching generally starts informally from a quick search on Google or Scholar. Google, this leads to more formal investigation that may include readings, viewing, and/or contacting someone to gain understanding. On the other hand, I also find myself entering rabbit-holes by reading something on Twitter and/or reading blogs such as Audrey Watters’ Hack Education (http://www.hackeducation.com/). Nearly all of my professional development contains some type of self-study, self-reflection, and then conversations with colleagues and friends across the field. Often, my growth also leads to research (again, this can be done formally and informally) - gathering data, conducting analysis, and reflecting on the findings to generate further understanding.

So, I’m guessing we all have our own personalized approach to professional development. The key is that you have an approach, that you are continually seeking new understanding to better your life and the growth of those around you. As we start this year, I’m hopeful that SETSIG is part of your professional development plan.

Social Networking with SETSIG!

Expand your online professional learning network of special educators and assistive technology specialists by connecting with SETSIG members online on the social networks: Facebook and Twitter. Search for our public profile on Facebook and look for us on Twitter under our Twitter handle @setsig. You can also connect with us, as well as other SETSIG members, on the ISTE Ning as well as the ISTE 2013 Conference Ning. Please friend us and participate in the discussions on our various website pages.
Your SETSIG Board is in the final stages of setting the events for this year, which will include free webinars, chats, and perhaps even some article and book discussions.

SETSIG has a group on the ISTE Community Ning. You can find SETSIG updates, topical discussions, and other information in our group area. You can also connect with other SETSIG members and engage in discussions related to using technology in the classroom to meet the needs of diverse learners.

**SETSIG Winter Webinars**

Please note: All SETSIG 2012-2013 Webinars are offered free of charge, as a service to our SETSIG membership. We have many webinars scheduled for the upcoming months. Please join us for this year's terrific program of experts!

**ARCHIVED WEBINAR : UDL, AIM and AT: Complementary Supports for the Achievement of All Students**

Joy Zabala is a pioneer in special education and assistive technology. She is currently the Director of Technical Assistance for CAST and for the National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM Center) funded by the Office of Special Education Programs, US Department of Education. Earlier this fall, Joy presented a webinar for SETSIG entitled “UDL, AIM and AT: Complementary Supports for the Achievement of All Students.” She prompted the audience: “What are these initiatives? How do they compare and contrast?” This archived webinar is available to you to explore these questions and to learn more about how they complement instructional technology and other strategies and ways that lead to flexible, engaging learning environments that support improved outcomes for all students. Here is the link to the webinar recording: [http://iste.adobeconnect.com/p2azpeti8ws/](http://iste.adobeconnect.com/p2azpeti8ws/). Here is the link to the PDF of this webinar: [http://setsig.iste.wikispaces.net/file/view/Zabala.ISTE.Webinar.UDL.AIM.AT.Sept.2012.pdf](http://setsig.iste.wikispaces.net/file/view/Zabala.ISTE.Webinar.UDL.AIM.AT.Sept.2012.pdf).

**Archived Webinar: Academy Award Winning Assistive Technology Teams: Educational Blockbusters**

This webinar spotlights the trials and triumphs of a thriving Assistive Technology Team, Sally Norton-Darr and Christopher Bugaj. Assistive Technology & the Universal Design for Learning will star in this production from the best practices of education Walk of Fame. Direct a proactive approach to this ever-changing aspect of education with discussions and solutions highlighted in this webinar. A variety of inventive and successful resources and strategies for providing AT services, training, and awareness will be featured in this archived webinar. Follow the link here: [http://iste.adobeconnect.com/p9seOxjuidt/](http://iste.adobeconnect.com/p9seOxjuidt/).
**ARCHIVED WEBINAR:** Built-in IOS Accessibility and Alternative Access to the iPad

This archived webinar focused on the many universal design technologies built-in to the iOS. This was followed by alternative access options to the iPad – from styluses, to keyguards, to switches. Access options built into the iOS and into specific apps were also discussed. The presenters, Luis Perez and Jane Farrall, covered the range of switch interfaces that offer compatibility to switch accessible apps – and participants are given links to resources for finding switch accessible apps. This year has also seen the release of a few more comprehensive alternative access options – offering switch access between apps as well as within many apps. Some of these also offer control of your iPad via wheelchair joysticks. These more comprehensive hardware and software alternative access options are covered in the webinar – as well as a discussion of the role that the iOS accessibility features of VoiceOver and AssistiveTouch play in alternative access. Follow the link here: [iste.adobeconnect.com/p1tz70qd2m6/](iste.adobeconnect.com/p1tz70qd2m6/).

**ARCHIVED WEBINAR:** Using Interactive Whiteboards to Include Students with Special Needs

In this session, participants explore how to support all students using your IWB to build lessons that address the three principles of UDL. Using videos and SMART Notebook and Promethean Flipchart templates, Kendra Grant explores curriculum examples that build multiple means of recognition, action and expression and engagement into every lesson. Follow this link to the archived webinar: [iste.adobeconnect.com/p2kx1agk755/](iste.adobeconnect.com/p2kx1agk755/).

**UPCOMING WEBINAR:** To SMART: “A” Means Accessibility

On November 20, 2012, from 7-8 pm (ET) Alex Dunn, a Speech-Language Pathologist at the Upper Canada District School Board and president of the Inclusioneers, will present a webinar for SETSIG. During this webinar you will learn how a small group of educators, students and parents and a “little research project that could – Smart Inclusion” are having an impact on the “Design” in Universal Design for Learning. This webinar will focus on how SMART Technologies’ Solutions (SMART Board, SMART Table, SMART Response, SMART Document Camera, SMART Sync) can offer physical/mobility, hearing, vision and social/communication supports to enable ALL students to experience successful academic and social participation. Click here to register for this webinar: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dDRwRzRSbDNXSiLOZlJlbFB6a2dwaWc6MQ](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dDRwRzRSbDNXSiLOZlJlbFB6a2dwaWc6MQ).
On December 4, 2012 between 7-8 pm (ET), Alex Dunn is presenting another webinar for SETSIG. In this webinar, class profiling and goal selection act as the starting point for exploring how apps, accessibility features and the integration of the iPad with external devices (switches, interactive whiteboards) can provide multiple means of representation, expression and engagement for ALL in collaborative, inclusive learning environments.

Upcoming in Winter/Spring 2013

- Intro to UDL & Current Research in the field
- Managing iDevices
- AT and the Cloud
- Using Second Life in Special Education
- QR Codes in Special Education
- Windows Accessibility Features and more!

We look forward to seeing you at our webinars! Please let us know if you have other ideas for webinars that you would be interested in attending.

SETSIG Resources

- SETSIG Wiki http://SETSIG.iste.wikispaces.net/
- SETSIG Group on the ISTE Community NING http://www.iste-community.org/group/setsig
- SETSIG DIIGO Group — SETSIG UDL Playground 2012 http://groups.diigo.com/group/setsig-udl-playground
- Follow @SETSIG on Twitter http://twitter.com/setsig
- SETSIG on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/pages/SETSIG

Register for this webinar by following this link: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dDRwRzRSbDNXSiQZldFlFB6a2dwaWc6MQ
Continued: Getting involved internationally, as a professional
By Betsy Dalton, Ph.D., SETSIG President-Elect

full day’s training with pre-service and in-service teachers and therapists. Having such a pro-
gram to plan for challenged me to stretch my skills and ideas and to develop additional materi-
als and strategies for instruction. Happily, the training was well received, and we have since
written and published (any day now...) an article discussing the training in the online African
Journal on Disability. I was back in Cape Town this summer again, presenting at the World
Down Syndrome Conference and providing more training for teachers and parents on
UDL. South African law supports the right to inclusive education for persons with disabilities
(as do many other countries, I have found), and there is great interest in UDL as an approach
that can help this to happen. My colleague and I are continuing our work together, which began
from our chance meeting in Kuwait.

The final international experience that I’d like to share comes from the Oxford Round Ta-
ble. You may or may not have heard of this, but if you work at a college or university, it is an
opportunity that you really might want to look into. A colleague in early childhood education
was invited to participate, and in turn, she asked OTR if they would extend an invitation to me,
as well. They did – we developed 2 presentations for the ORT; one led by her, and one led by
myself. Both were accepted and off we went to Oxford, UK!! Following the presentations, we
developed papers for each; both of which have been published. These days, to get the most out
of the time and effort invested, each presentation I develop is done with an eye toward publica-
tion. This is a good strategy for every professional, since recognition in the field is really “all
about the publications”. I didn’t learn this until I completed my PhD in 2009 (as a “slightly older
student”) – but I pass this advice along to you…. Try to publish at every opportunity, and don’t
be discouraged if it gets turned back. Review, revise, and submit again, or submit somewhere
else. It will be worth the effort!!

To recap ideas on international PD:

• Look for international conferences that match your interests, and submit to present at
  them;

• Get out there with your ideas at national conferences. Many national groups have in-
ternational subgroups. You might get invited to share your ideas elsewhere – maybe
even in other countries;

• Keep up your connections with colleagues overseas. Opportunities may emerge that
  you had not expected;

• Talk with your colleagues in the USA. They may know of other opportunities, and
  might be able to connect you with them;

• Get your name out there... publish, publish, publish!

Lastly, keep your eyes open for virtual conferences, a growing phenomenon
around the world. If you can present internationally virtually, you will still
connect with professionals worldwide, and you’ll save the money on travel
(but will miss out on the culture). Many opportunities await you... bon voy-
age!

Betsy Dalton, Ph.D., SETSIG President-Elect
Calendar
Date: November 20, 7-8 pm (ET)
SETSIG Webinar: To SMART: “A” Means Accessibility

December 4, 2012 7–8 pm (ET)
SETSIG Webinar: iPads as Part of a Universal Design for Learning Toolkit

June 23–26: ISTE 2013

Call for Participation
Our next SETSIG newsletter will focus on advocacy pertaining to special education technologies. We are calling for articles and success stories from student self-advocates, classroom teachers, and legislative advocates. We also hope to hear from international advocates. If you’re interested in sharing your ideas and experiences, please email us your articles at setsig@gmail.com.

Do You Diigo? Written by Mindy Johnson
For the SETSIG-sponsored UDL Playground (http://setsig.iste.wikispaces.net/UDL+Playground) at ISTE 2011 in Philadelphia, SETSIG created a group to collaboratively collect, bookmark, and tag links to tools, apps, and articles that contribute to a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) environment. Using Diigo (http://www.diigo.com), a collaborative bookmarking and annotation tool, we developed a system for tagging (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tag_%28metadata%29) resources to find and sort them easily. One of our initiatives this year has been to maintain this growing list of resources, and we’d like to invite you to join us (http://groups.diigo.com/group/setsig-udl-playground) in expanding our collection. If you’ve never used Diigo before, don’t panic. As with any tool, there’s a bit of a learning curve when you first start out, but we think you’ll find Diigo’s flexibility and functionality so rewarding that you’ll find new and interesting ways to use this cloud-based social bookmarking and annotation tool beyond the SETSIG group. If you’d like to learn more about Diigo, check out this video (http://vimeo.com/12687333) or explore Diigo’s help pages (http://help.diigo.com/).

The Evolution of Diigo

Towards your dream information management tool!

Collect and organize anything
bookmarks, highlights, notes, screenshot, pictures, docs, audio, bibliography...

Access anywhere and easily share
PC & Mac, any browsers, Android, iPhone, iPad...

+ Personal Learning Network for sharing and discovery

+ Group-based Collaborative Research for content curation

+ Highlighter & Sticky Notes – your best reading companion on the web

Online Bookmarking – great tool if you browse web using different PCs and browsers