

# Leading the Way

## WINSTON BROOKS

Superintendent  
Albuquerque Public Schools  
Albuquerque, NM  
Cable provided by Cox  
Communications

### IT'S A TEAM EFFORT



As the superintendent of Wichita Public Schools in Kansas from 1998–2008, Winston Brooks has gotten results. Student achievement has improved each year of his term and graduation rates have in-

creased from 64 percent to 77 percent. Last school year, Wichita Public Schools narrowed the achievement gap between Caucasian and African American students. After a decade of success, Brooks begins a new post in July as superintendent of Albuquerque Public Schools.

Named a Cable's Leaders in Learning Award finalist in 2007, Brooks believes the gains in student achievement are the result of collaboration. "A good leader knows where he wants to go and gets people to work with him to reach that goal. This is how we have found success in Wichita. To achieve excellence for all students, teachers can no longer work in isolation."

During his tenure, Brooks also used collaboration between the schools and the local police department to improve student safety. He emphasized the importance of cooperation in a written statement: "You don't reduce the number of gun incidents from 47 to 4 within a seven-year period without support and cooperation by the local police department... Leadership from both organizations, progressive thinking from many, and a willingness to take a risk on ideas foreign to many are the keys to our success."

Four educational visionaries share how they evolved into successful leaders.

by Laura Linn

Vince Lombardi, the Green Bay Packers' football coach from 1959–1967, who was named Coach of the Century by ESPN, once said, "Leaders aren't born; they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work."

*Cable in the Classroom Magazine* asked four of the country's most inspirational educators to share their thoughts on leadership and success for themselves and their students.

## DANNY CRAVEN

Multi-Media Center manager  
Jet-14 station manager  
Joplin High School  
Joplin, MO  
Cable provided by Cable One

### LEAD BY EXAMPLE



is how Craven runs the Multi-Media Center at Joplin High School. What started as one television production class of 13 students in 2000

"People need to listen, connect, lead by example, and evaluate themselves to become good leaders," says Danny Craven. This

has grown to six classes and a local cable station run by Craven and his students that broadcasts local Board of Education meetings, a talk show on district education issues, and other programs courtesy of Cable One.

To learn about television production, Craven requires students to participate in all aspects of putting together a show—brainstorming, storyboarding, script writing, camera techniques, lighting, sound, and editing.

Craven says his students learn about leadership by example. "I think one has to lead by example and show respect. It is important to develop leadership skills because it's something everyone needs in life. At some point, one will be faced with the need to lead in some form or fashion."

## FRANCES BRADBURN

Program director, 1:1 Laptop Initiative  
North Carolina New Schools Project  
Former director of instructional technology  
North Carolina Department of Public  
Instruction  
Raleigh, NC  
Cable provided by Time Warner Cable

### LEADERS MUST LISTEN AND COLLABORATE



Over the past decade, Frances Bradburn has played a key role in advancing the technological education of teachers and students in North Carolina Public Schools. Selected as a 2007 Cable's Leaders in Learning Award finalist, Bradburn believes in "the power of media and technology, with a constant focus on student learning at its core." At the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, she led the development of IMPACT: Guidelines for North Carolina Media and Technology Programs and was instrumental in creating NC WiseOwl, a statewide website offering rich curriculum and professional development resources.

Bradburn has successfully implemented such technological initiatives by bringing together teachers, superintendents, and state-level education officials. She believes she was able to integrate these different parties by articulating a clear vision of the programs she conceived.

"The best leaders are those who are collaborative in nature, who never stop learning, and who never stop listening," she says. "If a leader stops listening, she'll miss where people are going and how to help them get there."

As the new director of the 1:1 Laptop Initiative for the North Carolina New Schools Project, Bradburn will determine if the program improves the teaching and learning climate, strengthens student motivation, and increases student achievement.

To read more about Bradburn, visit her blog, *From the Director's Desk*.

## ERIC LANGHORST

American history teacher  
2006 Cable's Leaders in Learning Award  
winner  
Missouri Teacher of the Year (2007)  
South Valley Junior High School  
Liberty, MO  
Cable provided by Time Warner Cable

### LIGHTING THE LEARNING FIRES



Missouri Teacher of the Year Eric Langhorst agrees that leaders are made. When Langhorst began teaching, he thought the best teachers were those who could cram as much knowledge into student's heads as possible. However, it didn't take him long to develop new teaching theories.

"I quickly discovered that the secret is to engage students so they leave your classroom asking even more questions," says this 2006 Cable's Leaders in Learning Award winner. "The analogy of creating a spark is often paired with teaching. I'm not trying to create a spark—I'm trying to start an out-of-control forest fire of learning. My methods for starting that fire include engaging the students in the story of American history and demonstrating the ideal of a lifelong learner with my own experiences and actions."

One way Langhorst fuels the flames of learning is by incorporating new technologies into his lessons. He has developed studycasts, or audio reviews, that students download to iPods, MP3 players, and computers to prepare for tests. Langhorst's students also use blogs, such as *Speaking of History*, video equipment, computer simulations, and cable programming from The History Channel, National Geographic, and other networks to make history more accessible. ■■

*Laura Linn is a freelance writer in Montclair, N.J.*

### RELATED RESOURCES

**From the Director's Desk**  
[itdivision.blogspot.com](http://itdivision.blogspot.com)

**Joplin Schools: Joplin Eagles Television**  
[www.joplin.k12.mo.us/jet14](http://www.joplin.k12.mo.us/jet14)

**NCWiseOwl**  
[www.ncwiseowl.org](http://www.ncwiseowl.org)

**Speaking of History**  
[www.speakingofhistory.blogspot.com](http://www.speakingofhistory.blogspot.com)