"No matter how much I say to promote the OLRC’s Writers’ Conference to my students, its true impact is not evident until the students have been there. They travel home with a new realization of having accomplished something that most of them had never dreamed possible. Their words not only have been heard, but also been published. Watching an adult student’s self-confidence grow is one of the greatest rewards an ABLE teacher can experience."

Larry Klingler
ABLE Instructor

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Ohio Writers’ Conference
May 9, 2008
Columbus, Ohio

The Ohio Literacy Resource Center’s Celebration of Outstanding ABLE Authors.

Dork Hernandez,
Beginnings 10 Author

Beginnings xi
Every year since 1998, the Ohio Literacy Resource Center celebrates the outstanding writing accomplishments of adults who are participants in Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) programs throughout the state of Ohio.

The OLRC invites ABLE students to submit original writings for review. All genres are acceptable. The submissions, however, must be original. Original means that the work must not be copied from any source.

Accepted submissions are published in a softbound book, Beginnings. Students whose work is accepted are invited to attend the day-long Ohio Writers’ Conference, along with their teacher and one guest.

The conference begins at 9:00 a.m. with registration and a continental breakfast. Storyteller, Lyn Ford will continue the tradition of kicking off the event with her special brand of “Home-Fried Tales.” Keynote speaker, J. Patrick Lewis will present “Sailing the Craft of Children’s Poetry.” An interactive session, lunch, awards ceremony and Beginnings Author reading will follow.

The Ohio Literacy Resource Center is proud to feature award-winning author, J. Patrick Lewis as the 2008 keynote speaker. Mr. Lewis has had seven short stories and over ninety poems published in literary journals. In 1991 he was awarded an Ohio Arts Council Individual Artist Grant for his adult poetry.

He has three grown children and four grandchildren. He lives in Westerville, Ohio, with his wife Susan. Lewis writes full-time, makes over forty elementary school visits a year, keynotes at literature conferences, and presents teachers’ workshops on introducing poetry in the classroom.

He has published 57 children’s picture books to date (6/07), 48 of them children’s poetry or nonsense verse, with 14 publishers.

Lewis’ poems have also appeared in CRICKET, SPIDER, LADYBUG, CICADA, ODYSSEY, RANGER RICK, HIGHLIGHTS FOR CHILDREN, Ms. Magazine, YOUR BIG BACKYARD, CREATIVE CLASSROOM, STORYTIME, STORYWORKS, CHICKADEE, AHoy, JOURNAL OF CHILDREN’S LITERATURE, BOOKBIRD and over 70 anthologies. He also reviews children’s books for the NEW YORK TIMES.

Fourth-generation storyteller Lynette Ford shares "Home-Fried Tales" rooted in her family’s multicultural African American storytelling traditions. Lyn’s programs are enhanced with rhythm and rhyme, history and mystery, humor and heart.

Lyn is an Ohio teaching artist who has facilitated workshops for literacy, early childhood education, storytelling, and diversity events across the country. Lyn has also provided opening and closing activities for storytelling conferences and various types of retreats.

Lyn calls her stories "Home-Fried Tales" to honor her father, who was a terrible cook (the only things he consistently made well were home-fried potatoes and barbecued ribs doused with Lyn’s mother’s special sauce), and the best storyteller she ever heard. Lyn learned to "stir up, season, and simmer" her folktale adaptations and original stories while sitting knee-to-knee with elders who passed on their own special gifts from the oral tradition.