

Message from PREL's CEO



PREL's enduring vision is of a world in which all children and communities are literate and healthy global participants, grounded in and enriched by their cultures. As we reflect on the past year, our 20th year as an independent organization, we celebrate the progress we have made on our strategic priorities and new initiatives. We are proud to remain a forward-thinking organization with clear goals and practices that are relevant to our mission and meaningful to our constituencies.

As you read this report, you will find clear evidence of research-proven concepts used to improve schooling and support students in reaching their full potential. Such important work can only be achieved in partnership with educators, administrators, and policy makers of every level with whom we have collaborated for over 20 years of uninterrupted work in Pacific schools. A program that well exemplifies the confluence of research and community is Pacific Communities with High-performance In Literacy Development (Pacific CHILD), a randomized controlled trial of a professional development program developed under the Research Educational Laboratory Pacific (REL Pacific) and delivered in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and Hawai'i.

Essential to PREL's long-standing impact in the Pacific region is our broad network of educators and community-based service centers. Jurisdiction-based PREL staff are crucial to the success of our work, as these educators intentionally bring linguistic, cultural, and contextual expertise to planning and implementation efforts. The Mejrrok Elementary School Academic Literacy Integrating Values Excellence and Economic Empowerment (MES ALIVE) program has yielded meaningful outcomes and is a good example of capitalizing on regional expertise. Delivered in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), the program follows the rationale that community-based learning involves capacity development for the community as a whole, and not only for the students. As we embark upon the future, we will have more to say about our collective efforts to build capacity across the entities we serve.

In 2010, we continued to strengthen our commitment to the Pacific education community through our marquee programs: the Pacific Educator in Residence (PEIR) program and the Pacific Teacher Scholarship Fund. More than 55 educators have participated in the PEIR program, which supports participants' skill development as they engage in PREL program work. The Pacific Teacher Scholarship Fund has granted tuition assistance to over 40 students pursuing a teaching career in the U.S.-affiliated Pacific. PREL takes pride in the coordinated efforts between our partners, staff, and friends, all of which make these programs possible.

We at PREL are fortunate to have strong leadership supported by a very dedicated staff. Paul Dumas is a seasoned Chief Programs Officer, and Gwen Okamoto, Chief Financial Officer, keeps our finances focused and well-organized. I thank our growing PREL family of professionals, partners, and constituents and look forward to a productive year ahead. For my part, it is a great privilege to serve as the President & CEO of this organization.

—Sharon Nelson-Barber, EdD