

***THE NWP (R)EVOLUTION:
How and Why the NWP Will Keep Going***

*Spring meeting 2018
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Why I'm here today

- *To offer a perspective on the NWP: How I see its unique strengths and assets going forward*
- *To applaud and encourage you as you shape the NWP's future*

My lenses: Research and practice

With Inverness, lens of research – 1994 to 2017

- Summer institute participants—annual surveys
- Site activities across the network—annual data
- Teacher leadership
- Special initiatives: Project Outreach, Technology, New Teachers, Focus on Standards
- College, Career, and Community Writers Program

With NWP, lens of practice – 1982 to 1994

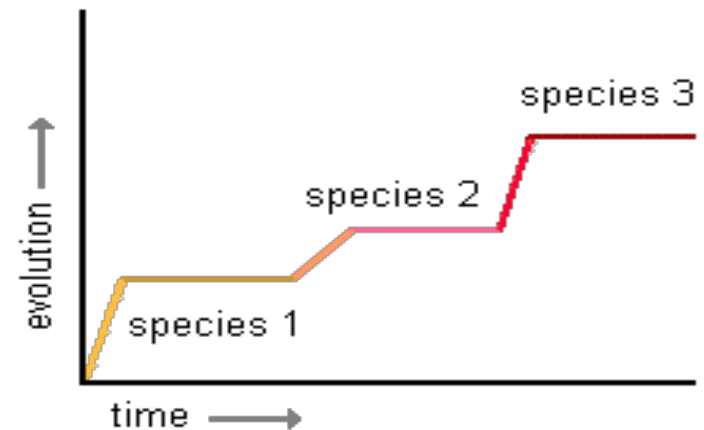
- Writing teacher
- Area 3 WP site director at UC Davis
- CWP co-director
- NWP Advisory Board



36 years!!!

The NWP's 4th Phase in a continuing evolution

1. 1970s and 80s: Patchwork of startup/growth grants
2. 1990s and 2000s: Stable federal support
3. 2011 to 2017: Multiple large federal grants in the competitive era of 2011-2017
- 4. 2018—? Reliance on non-federal sources of support**

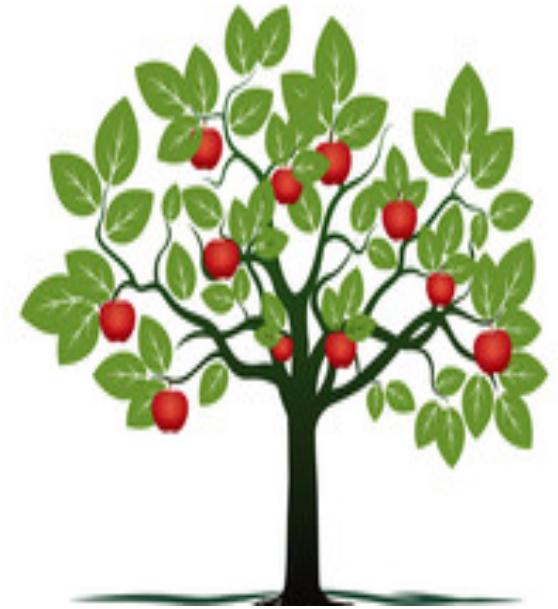


Punctuated equilibrium: “Long periods of stability and short episodes of change” due to “major environmental changes.”

What unique set of strengths will help the NWP survive as it adapts?

Part I. Observable features

- A. Its design as a **NETWORK**
- B. Its capability to develop **TEACHER LEADERS** and promote their many contributions



Yield: A vast reservoir of “capital,” i.,e., assets of many kinds—that you can draw upon for future work

Unique strengths, cont.

Part II. Below the surface

A. **CORE VALUES** that guide and shape the work

B. Bringing into expression the **BEST OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN**

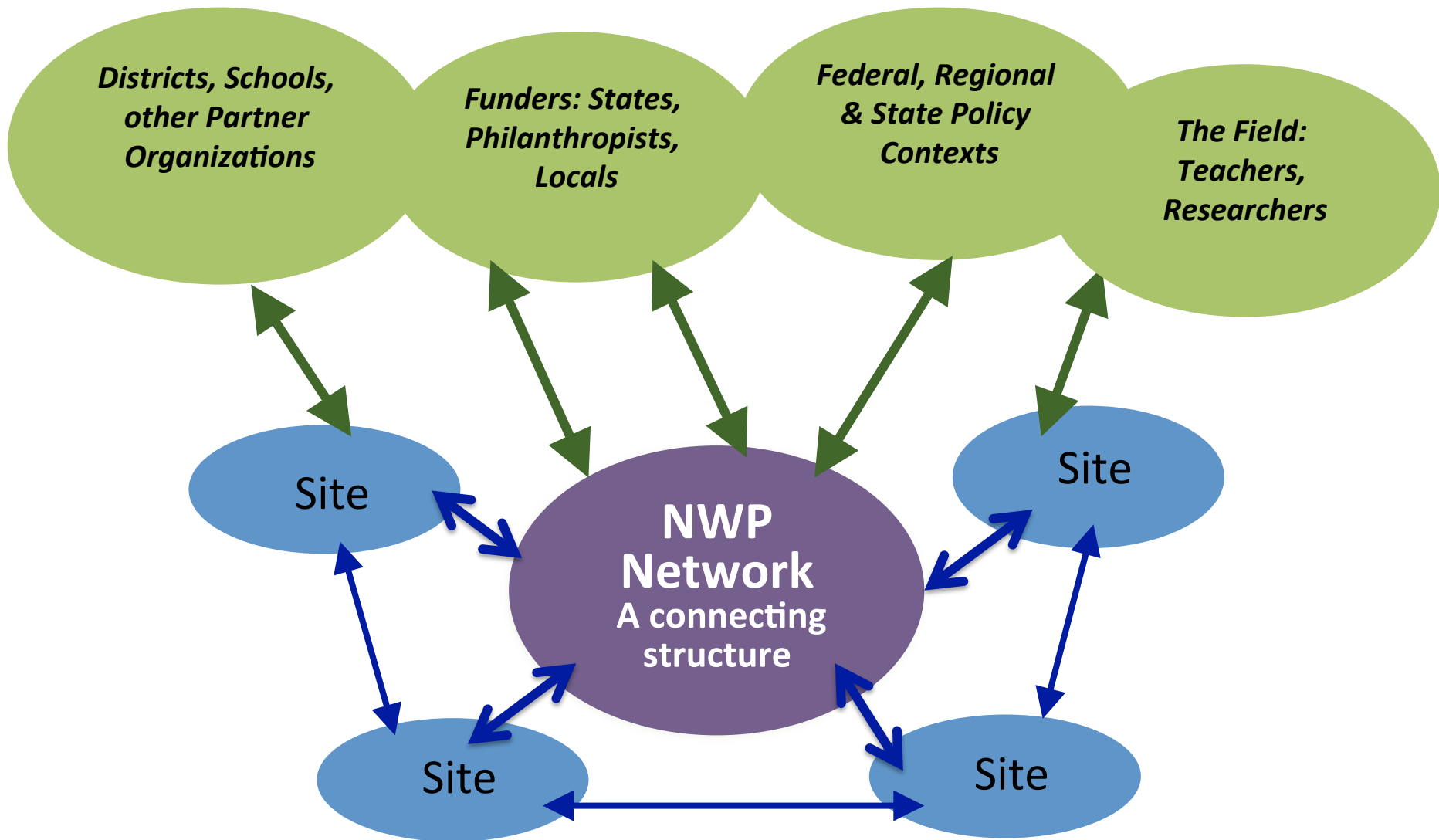


The roots and DNA that inspire, generate, and shape the network and teacher leadership

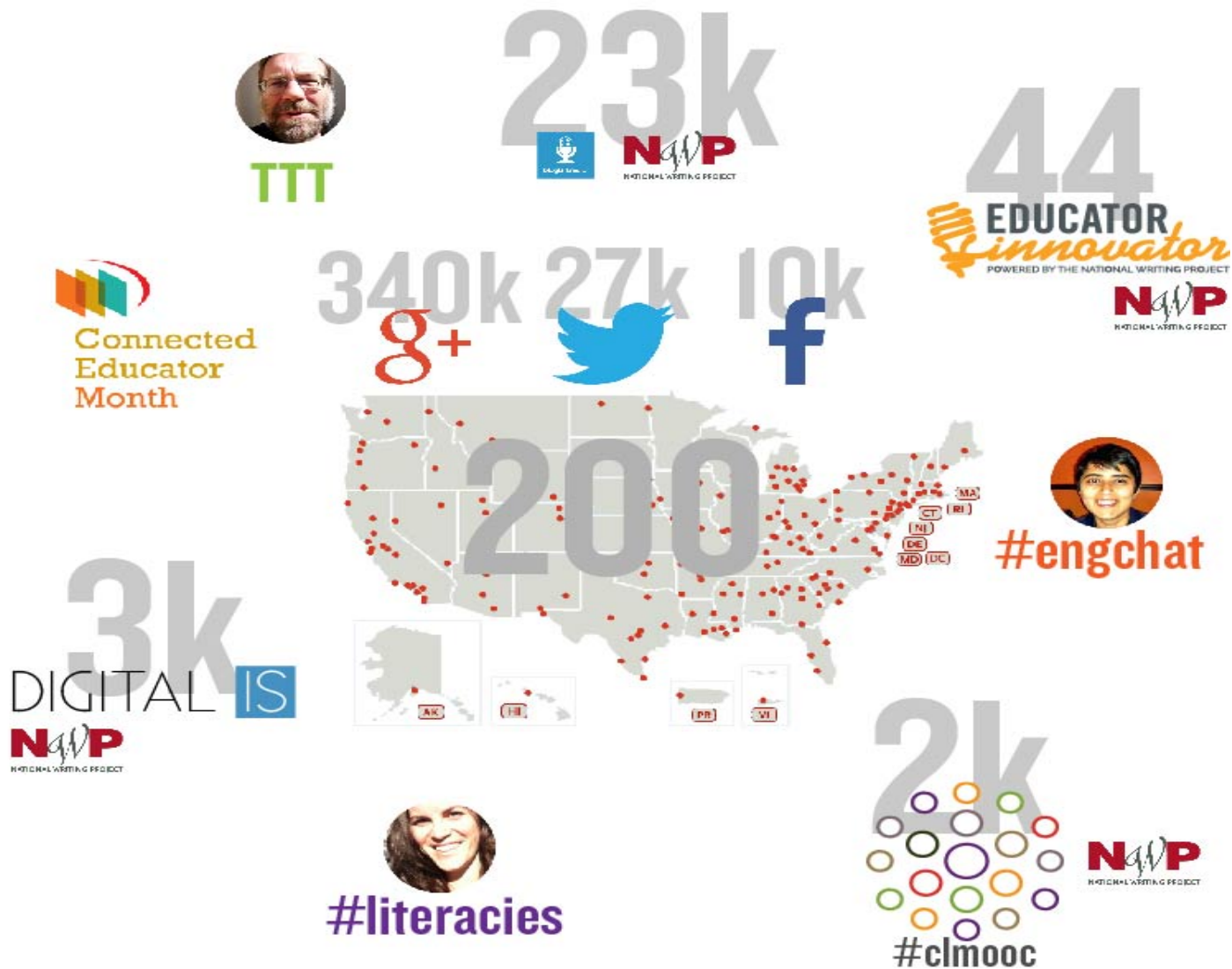
PART I. Observable features

A. THE NWP'S DESIGN AS A NETWORK

The NWP Network is a connected and connecting structure



Network links are not abstractions— they are connected people



The same connection dynamics function in smaller sub-networks

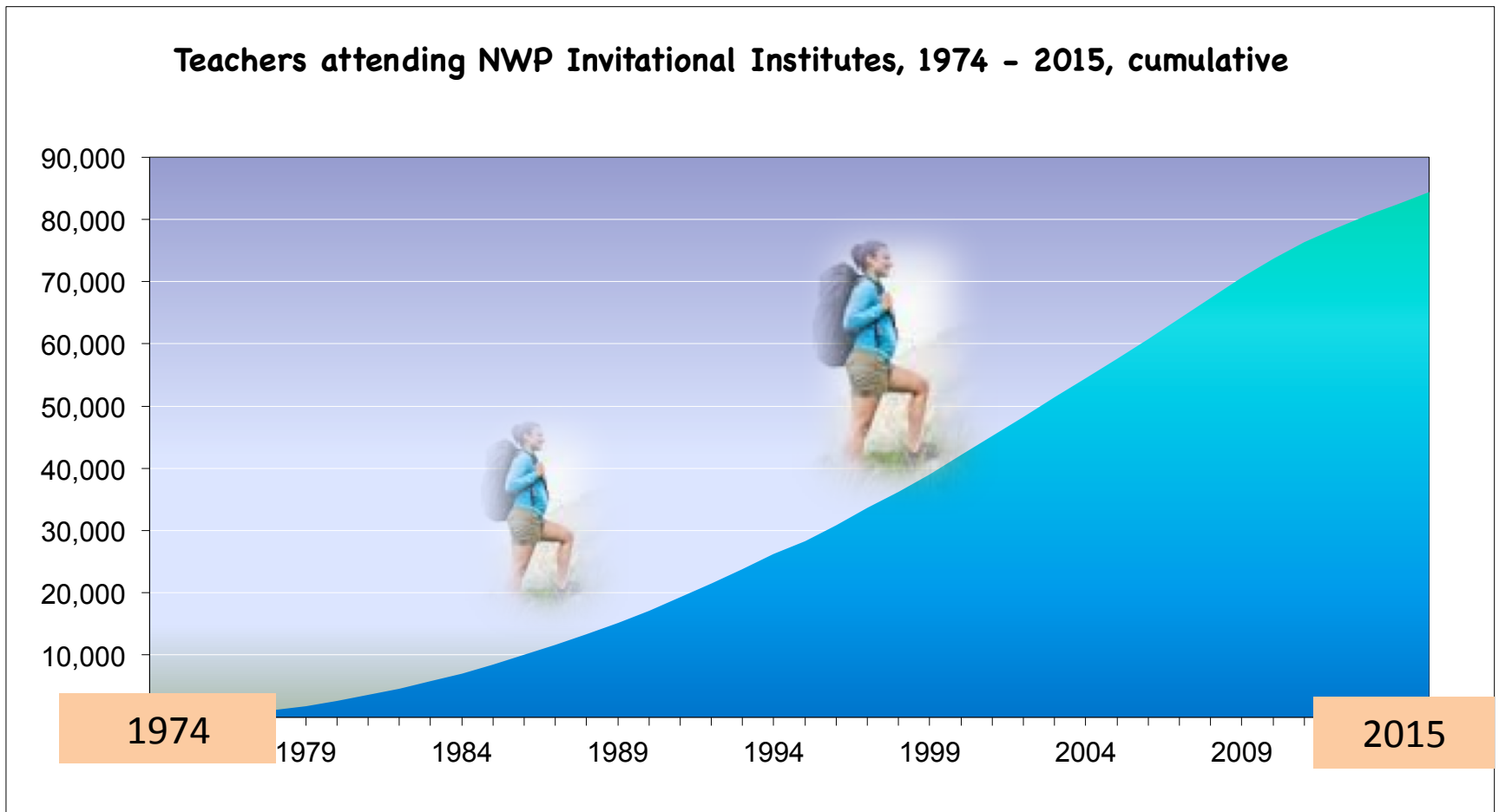
- ***State networks***
 - E.g., Kentucky in the annual report
- ***Regional networks***
- ***Shared interest networks***
- ***Your local site network***



PART I.

***B. THE NWP'S CAPABILITY TO DEVELOP
TEACHER LEADERS AND PROMOTE THEIR
MANY CONTRIBUTIONS***

Nearly 90 thousand teachers have participated in Summer Invitational Institutes since 1974



The NWP is expanding its capacity to generate leadership



Invitational
Institutes



The New Pathways to
Leadership Initiative

Teacher leaders contribute in countless ways

- Advocating for what's right for students
- Staying informed about practice and policy
- Opening the classroom door and going public with teaching
- Working "alongside" teachers and leading collaboratively
- Taking a stand, speaking up, being passionate about teaching
- Learning and reflecting on practice as a teacher and leader
- Sharing classroom practices that work

~7,500 NWP teacher-leaders are active any given year, serving **~80,000** teachers.

NWP Teachers persist

- ***NWP teachers stay in education for 22.7 years***
- ***72% stay in the classroom***
- ***Others become***
 - Principals and district administrators
 - University faculty members
 - Leaders in education improvement organizations

Yield: A reservoir of “capital”—i.e., assets to draw from to keep going

- ***Leadership***—in classrooms and throughout the system
- ***Knowledge***—collective, and in sharable forms
- ***Relationships***—personal and organizational
- ***Designs***—for teacher learning, and for ongoing knowledge forming and sharing
- ***Evidence of effectiveness***
- ***Experience***—individual and shared
- ***Visibility and collective voice***

PART II. The roots and the DNA

***A. THE CORE VALUES AND
PRINCIPLES THAT SHAPE THE NWP***

Community

“A driving principle behind every one of the local sites of the NWP is to offer teachers both a strong, welcoming professional home and community of learners and an invitation to co-create that community.”

-Heenan, et al., 2017

“I am learning so much...it is sort of a networking collaborative thing, and it is really kind of amazing to find so many like-minded people that I can talk with...I feel like I am always in PD because I am always talking with someone about writing.”

- Teacher in C3WP

“She made a comment, ‘If I go to another school district, will I not get to be part of the Writing Project anymore?’ I said, ‘Honey it doesn’t matter where you are, you are going to be part of the Writing Project wherever you are.’”

- C3WP teacher leader

Egalitarianism

Approaching every colleague as a potentially valuable contributor to professional learning and community

“The NTI people stated that specifically at the beginning, ‘The reason we are going to be here—the primary goal—is to treat each other like the professionals that we are.’”

– Novice teacher in NWP New Teacher Initiative, 2006

“When you are a thinking partner to a teacher, it is more than giving her some ideas... it is a whole different mindset.”

– Teacher leader in the C3WP, 2016

The NWP has no place for deficit thinking.

Inquiry

“Permeating the entire NWP culture is the idea that constant questioning and searching are fundamental to good teaching.”

Lieberman and Wood, 2002.

“The core of the idea of our teacher inquiry class is that [inquiry] is helping the new teachers reframe how they look at their work. One of the teachers in the class last week said, ‘Every time something comes up in my class, I stand back and think – Hmmm?’ So as novice teachers assimilate inquiry, and approach what they do in their classrooms in that way, then they are more likely to stay in the profession. And that’s because they are likely to be more successful. Because it’s a way of getting better results, and having teaching be a more satisfying process.”

- Site Coordinator in New Teacher Initiative

PART II.

***B. BRINGING INTO EXPRESSION THE
BEST IN WHAT IT MEANS TO BE
HUMAN***

A voice—and a desire to participate

Helping TEACHERS develop their voices and participate—

- ✓ Every teacher is a writer in the NWP.
- ✓ More than 1,600 authors have contributed to the NWP website.

Helping STUDENTS develop their voices and participate—

- ✓ Letters to the Next President: 13,000 students wrote in 2016.
- ✓ Rural Voices Radio, *Teen Ink*, other outlets
- ✓ The College, Career, and Community Writers program promotes informed writing with a message

A joy in learning—and in sharing learning

“You are always learning something else that you can do better...I think it is exciting to share that, so that other colleagues get that same wonderful feeling...It makes me happy that they are happy, and that their kids are happy.”

- Emerging teacher leader

“I love going out because when I see something that works, I can share it with other sites, and I can share it with my site, and I can put it to use in my classroom, and so it just goes back and forth.”

- Experienced teacher leader

A desire to help—with a belief that all can thrive

“There are thousands of teachers out there with the same capacity as any of us, the same desire. The only difference is that we were given an opportunity. A whole world opens up when you give someone an opportunity to be mentored and to lead.”

- NWP teacher leader

“I will trust [my students] a lot more next year to do some of that harder work...I should have started sooner building some of those skills with them, because they totally can do it...I learned that I could have expected more from them.”

- C3WP program participant

“There will always be people helping. Look for the helpers.”

- Mr. Rogers' mother



***LET'S PUT THIS ALL
TOGETHER***

The NWP at 44 years...

*The visible strengths and the below-the-surface strengths, working together, have formed the NWP as a national and local infrastructure for educational improvement that is **unique** in its effectiveness, scale, and longevity.*

*The NWP remains **revolutionary** in the nature of its commitment to youth development, teachers' growth as professionals, and the strengthening of the teaching profession.*

...And counting!

The accumulated NWP assets will enable you to function and adapt during this phase of evolution:

- ✓ You have leadership, knowledge, relationships, designs for teacher learning, resources and materials.

The NWP still has a strong case to make to policy-makers and funders:

- ✓ While the environment may have changed, the NWP is still the best investment in educational improvement.
- ✓ The NWP's record—grounded in practice, substantiated by evidence, demonstrated over 44 years—is as strong as ever.
- ✓ The NWP is working, and it is here to stay. Support is still needed and will make a difference for students.

How does the aspen sustain itself as the largest living organism?



Shared root
system



A final thought to carry with you

“The thing I love about the Writing Project is that this is going to carry on despite me and beyond me, and I love contributing to something bigger than myself. I can get the ball rolling in a local area, and then it is going to become about what these next generations of leaders do, and I love that idea.”

- NWP teacher leader

Sources

Slide 4: http://anthro.palomar.edu/synthetic/synth_9.htm

Slides 18, 19, 20: Heenan and Houghton. 2006. The NWP's New Teacher Initiative: A Study of Outcomes, Design, and Core Values.

http://inverness-research.org/2016/08/11/ab2006-03_rpt_nwp-nti-report/

Slides 18, 19, 23, 24: Inverness Research. 2017. College, Career, and Community Writers Program Portfolio. <http://inverness-research.org/2017/12/27/portfolio-c3wp/>

Slide 14: Lieberman and Friedrich. 2010. How Teachers Become Leaders. Teachers College Press.

Slide 20: Lieberman and Wood. 2002. The Work of the National Writing Project: Social Practices in a Network Context. The College Board.

Slides 9, 10, 14: NWP Annual reports and NWP web site.

Slide 12: Inverness Research analyses. National Writing Project Portfolio.

<http://inverness-research.org/2017/12/27/portfolio-nwp/>

Slide 15: NWP Legacy Study. 1994-2006.

https://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/doc/results/leadership_legacy.html