

# LearningExchange

December 2018

“School ends, but education doesn’t.”

Volume 35, Number 2

## Bringing Play to your Organization:

Mitchel Resnick’s (2017) *Lifelong Kindergarten:  
Cultivating Creativity through Projects, Passion, Peers, and Play*

**Dustin Fife, Director of Library Services - Western Colorado State University**

*“An investment in interest always pays off with the best knowledge.”--Mitchel Resnick*

Mitchel Resnick, PhD, is the LEGO Papert Professor of Learning Research for the MIT Media Lab in Cambridge, MA. He is also the author of *Lifelong Kindergarten: Cultivating Creativity through Projects, Passion, Peers, and Play*, which is the subject of this book review. This book is about changing how we teach, changing our understanding of learning, and changing the way we interact with technology and other creative tools in our teaching and learning practices. Throughout this inspiring book, Resnick attempts to answer the question, “How can we help young people develop as creative thinkers so that they’re prepared for life in this ever-changing world?”

### New ideas to share?

Send your articles to the editors at  
[editor@alalearning.org](mailto:editor@alalearning.org)

Resnick believes the answer is to infuse the traditional ideals of kindergarten into all levels of education and beyond, by focusing on passion, play, creativity, and critical thinking. Technology plays an important role in this conversation as well, and while we continue to wrestle with the role it plays in learners’ lives, Resnick argues that technologies “...if properly designed and supported, can expand opportunities for all children from all backgrounds to experiment, explore, and express themselves--and, in the process, develop as creative thinkers.” *Lifelong Kindergarten* is not only a call for educational and technological reform, but a persuasive argument for rethinking all lifelong learning opportunities.

Resnick grounds his work in the early history of kindergarten, along with the constructivism of Jean Piaget and the constructionism of Seymour Papert.

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# ALA Midwinter - LearnRT Meeting

Are you heading to ALA Midwinter in Seattle?

Be sure to join us:

Sunday, January 27, 8:30 AM-10:00 AM at the Washington State Convention Center, Room 309.

Board meetings are open to all members and are a great way to get learn more about our organization. Hope to see you there!

## Annual Fund Opportunity

ALA is your national voice for libraries. Support our work to advance the core values of the profession with a gift to the ALA Annual Fund!

This is a wonderful opportunity to support the various activities in LEARNRT. Consider giving to one of the following areas:

LEARNRT General which ensures that your gift is applied to essential projects most in need of funding. (i.e., the Pat Carterette Professional Development Grant awarded to an individual on an annual basis to provide monetary support to participate in continuing educational events)

Training Showcase Funds help support staff development, continuing education, and training initiatives. <https://ec.ala.org/donate/projects>

No gift is too small! Thanks for your support in these efforts.

# Bringing Play to Your Organization

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He bemoans that kindergarten is being stripped of creative play in favor of memorization. He writes, “In short, kindergarten is becoming like the rest of school. In this book, I argue for exactly the opposite: I believe the rest of school (indeed, the rest of life) should become more like kindergarten.”

Learning, at any level and in any organization, should be shaped by what Resnick calls the Creative Learning Spiral. This process repeats the sequence of: imagine, create, play, share, reflect, imagine, and so forth. It is also shaped by his four Ps of creativity: projects, passion, peers and play. “In short, we believe the best way to cultivate creativity is to support people working on projects based on their passions, in collaboration with peers, and in a playful spirit.” Resnick’s work fits well with recent work on connected learning, which Kumpulainen and Sefton-Green describe as follows: “Connected learning is realized when the learner is able to pursue a personal interest or passion with the support of friends, caring adults, and/or expert communities and is in turn able to link this learning and interest to academic achievement, career success, or civic engagement.” Resnick creates a model, which like Piaget’s or Papert’s, has the learner actively engaged in shaping their learning and advancement.

The great thing about Resnick’s work is that it is built upon a lifetime of practice and research in the MIT Media Lab and it has created projects available to people around the world, such as Scratch (<https://scratch.mit.edu/>). His work is powerful because it is implementable at any level. While we struggle for systemic change at the national, state, or organizational levels; any teacher, trainer, or program developer can actualize, at least in part, the principles of Lifelong Kindergarten to create a transformative learning environment. Teachers and trainers alike can play the many roles that Resnick enumerates to transform their teams and organizations. “As I see it, good teaching involves playing a variety of different roles, all in the service of helping others learn. Good teachers and good mentors move fluidly among the roles of catalyst, consultant, connector, and collaborator.” As we fulfill more and more of these roles, and help more and more learners, Resnick believes that we can build “the creative society”, which is the ultimate goal of his framework. “...people must learn how to adapt to constantly changing conditions. Success in the future--for individuals, for communities, for companies, for nations as a whole--will be based on the ability to think and act creatively.”

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# President's Message

## Training and Time: The Struggle is Real

Angela Glowcheski

No matter your library size or who you serve, training is the heart of what makes us successful. An easy statement to make, given the audience of our newsletter. I know you all get excited about training, exploring training opportunities, and connecting staff or patrons to the right tools. It's one of the reasons I love LearnRT.

I often struggle with connecting public service staff to the best training tools. The content isn't the struggle. They often share with managers and myself what they would like to be learning about and our library system is always exploring new tools and resources, so the 'what' is always easy. The struggle is the how. Our library system operates with just enough staff to serve our community. When it comes to taking time away from public service and stepping off the floor, devoting time to training can be a real and strategic struggle. Something always comes up - someone is sick or a staff member is needed elsewhere. And I finally accepted finding that perfect time to learn and train was never going to happen. So instead of fighting time I decided to explore other training sessions, focusing on microlearning.

In October 2016, at our Georgia State Library Conference, I learned about a training method implemented at Spartanburg County Public Libraries. It involved what I now refer to as one-sheet learning. One sheet of paper (sometimes double sided) highlighting a new tool, service or resource created in such a way to allow the trainee to consume the material over the course of the month. No audio to juggle, no webinar to log into. Simply, a very purposeful and thought out training tool with no frills, just the facts. And as Spartanburg County Public Libraries referred to it, a simple point of need training tool.

Point of need. I ran with that, and our system created our one one-sheet learning system. Every month a new training review comes out. We refer to them as the RTS Training Review (reference, tool, service). What our staff loves most about the RTS is the format, that allows them to quickly and easily digest new information. Our one-sheet training is divided up into four sections. We start with an elevator speech.

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## Play - Continued from Page 4

Resnick's is a call to action to change education and learning opportunities in order to prepare ourselves and our organizations for the future and build a truly "creative society".

As members and followers of the Learning Round Table of the American Library Association, Lifelong Kindergarten should resonate with the work we each do to help develop our organizations and team members. Early in the book, Resnick wrote, "In my work, my ultimate goal is a world full of creative people... who are constantly developing new possibilities for themselves and their communities." After reading Resnick's work, I ask myself: how are we going to enable creativity in our organizations so that team members can unlock possibilities for themselves and our communities? How are we going to unleash training and professional development opportunities to empower team members to use creativity, play, collaboration, personal passion, and the Creative Learning Spiral to transform our institutions? In short, I want to pose one of Resnick's questions to each of us: "The Creative Learning Spiral works in kindergartens and at the MIT Media Lab. How can we help it take root everywhere else? If the future of libraries and work is collaborative, then the Creative Learning Spiral, and the work of Mitchel Resnick to build a "creative society" is essential to our futures. .

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## Time - Continued from Page 4

This is simply three to four sentences that staff can refer to when sharing information with other staff members or patrons regarding the service, resource or tool. Next, we introduce how it can be used. This is usually step-by-step instructions on how to start or use whatever is being explained. After the how, we move to the why. Trainees can find a bullet list of reasons of why they would share this with someone, and what solution it offers. And finally, there are review questions that allow the trainee to reflect on the information they have taken in.

The simplicity of this training has produced an outcome in my system that I was not planning on. Because of the simple format, other staff members are eager to put them together. They enjoy showcasing their knowledge on a specific topic, and being part of the process that drafts training for fellow staff members -- a double win. A new training tool, and engagement in training, made simple and easy.

Finding a training method that works, is just as important as the content. It is so important for groups like ours to exist - to encourage those networking opportunities so we never stop learning and examining our training methods, reducing the struggle just a bit. .

# Seattle Bites and Sites

Colleen Hooks, Editor



Seattle at Sunset

Photograph by Jon via <https://flic.kr/p/8vu9X6>

## Seattle Bites

### **Canon: Whiskey and Bitters Emporium**

This multi-award winning bar features America's largest spirit collection, (4,000+) with something for everyone, and a few small snack options to accompany your cocktails.  
*928 12th Ave, 98122*

### **Georgetown Liquor Company**

Dive bar style vegan and vegetarian restaurant, with cheap drinks, retro video game consoles for entertainment, and fun/funky art decor.  
*5501 Airport Way S, 98108*

### **The Nest**

At this rooftop bar located in the Thompson Seattle hotel, you'll get amazing views of the city and the surrounding landscape, while enjoying some hand crafted cocktails, wine, and seasonal snacks.  
*110 Stewart St, 98101*

### **Salty's Waterfront Seafood Grills**

If the award-winning cuisine weren't enough, Salty's gorgeous views of the bay and Seattle skyline, are visible from just about every seat in the place.  
*1936 Harbor Ave SW, 98126*

### **Wayward Vegan Café**

Classic diner style faire that also happens to be vegan. Great options for breakfast, or if you are craving some comfort food, check out the bacon mac and cheese burger.  
*801 NE 65th St, 98115*

## Seattle Sites

### **Pike Place Market**

Seattle's famous public market, around since 1907, is filled with art, shopping, and food. It's a fun place to walk around and explore, and it has something for everyone. Venture out early if you want to beat the crowds. I recommend paying a visit to the Piroshky Piroshky bakery to sample their variety of sweet and savory hand pies.  
*1908 Pike Place, 98101*

### **Seattle Center**

With so much to see in the area, it's easy to point visitors to the Seattle Center. The Seattle Center was the site of the 1962 World's Fair and hosts the famous Space Needle, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Discovery Center, the Museum of Pop Culture, the Seattle Children's Museum, and a variety of art, fountains, museums, theaters and more. It's also home of Chihuly Garden and Glass, showcasing the glass work of artist Dale Chihuly.  
*305 Harrison St, 98109*

### **The Views!**

Maybe it's just me, but I love the Seattle skyline - where the bustle of the city is met with mountain and water views. If you are looking for a place to take it all in, while enjoying a drink or a bite to eat, you've got a few options!

- Columbia Center's Sky View Observatory
- Smith Tower Observatory
- Space Needle Observation Deck

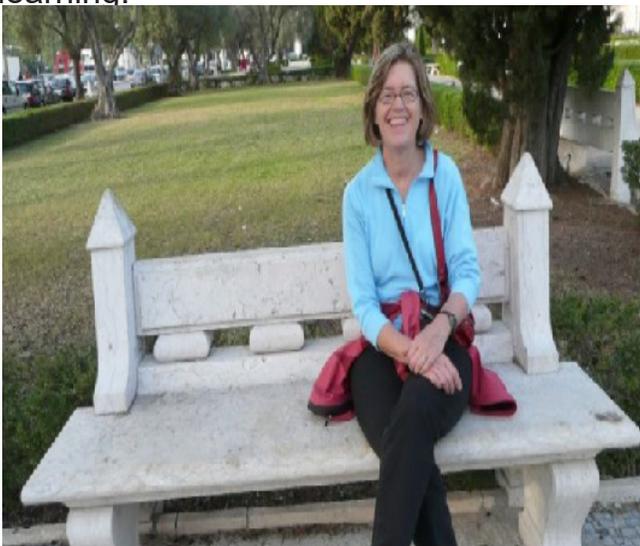
# Pat Carterette

## Professional Development Grant

The ALA Learning Round Table will award up to \$1,000 to an individual to attend a professional development event between September 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020. The award recipient will be required to share their new learning with other Round Table members in some way (newsletter article, blog, listserv, etc.). Applicants do not have to be ALA members to apply.

**Applicants must respond to the Survey Monkey questionnaire located at [this link](#) by February 15, 2019, at 11:59 pm CST.**

This grant, named after our much admired past-president, the late Pat Carterette, is designed to honor her passion for professional development in the field of library and information sciences. A former staff development and continuing education coordinator, Pat believed in quality library service, leadership development, and continual learning.



*Pat Carterette in Portugal (nd)*

**Please note:** The maximum grant amount is \$1,000 (with receipts). Any costs above this will be the responsibility of the recipient. In addition to the financial award, the recipient will be provided with access to a member of LearnRT, who will serve as a “Professional Development Mentor” throughout the award year. If the recipient is already an ALA member, they will also receive a free one-year membership in LearnRT. The award recipient will be notified in May 2019.

### **In the words of previous recipients:**

“The Pat Carterette Professional Development Grant is enabling me to attend possibly the only conference out there specifically tailored to library leadership in youth services. Because of this grant, I will have the opportunity to develop my skills in a variety of areas crucial to my fairly new position: strategic long-range planning of youth programs, maximizing the potential and effectiveness of the Youth Services meetings I lead, creating professional development programs for librarians providing story times, and change management in Youth Services. This conference is not only going to lay a foundation for my own professional growth; it will help me grow the reach of my library’s Youth Services department.”

Sara White  
Youth Services Senior Librarian  
Seminole County Public Library