Citation for ALEA Life Membership
Jo Padgham
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Jo is an outstanding educational leader with a deep theoretical knowledge and practical understanding of best practice in literacy. Her understanding of the national agenda and ability to operationalise priorities at a national and local level have resulted in future focused approaches that benefit whole systems, educators, students and families. Jo has been an active member of ALEA for 30 years. In this time she has worked in a range of roles including State Director (2002 to 2009) and National Vice-President. Her sustained commitment and dedication has resulted in positive changes to pre-service teacher education, early career teacher programs, developing principals as literacy leaders and professional learning agendas.

Jo has worked tirelessly on state and national committees and events that have served literacy educators both in Australia and abroad. She represents ALEA National Council on the board of the Australian Alliance of Associations in Education, co-ordinates ALEA’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early educator mentoring project and played a key role in developing and promoting the Standards for Teachers of English Language and Literacy in Australia (STELLA).

Jo models to all educators the importance of research and sharing findings with the profession. She has published journal articles in the area of literacy portfolios, student reflection, writing and reading. Jo’s most recent focus has been on developing school leaders as leaders of literacy as a facilitator for the PALLs ACT. The tailoring of this program to the ACT context has most public schools in Canberra engaging with it, fostering leadership initiatives reflective of the collaborative relationship among colleagues in the program. Jo has brought the work of ALEA to the fore and embedded professional learning, such as the 2015 National Conference, into the program.

In 2014 Jo established the ALEA School Leader Network linking leaders from around Australia and New Zealand which aims to challenge and support them in their journey. Jo provides resources and stimulates discussion amongst the network. The initiative encourages leaders to engage with ALEA and to promote the benefits of ALEA membership to educators.

The ACT Local Council and AATE/ALEA National Conferences have benefitted over many years from Jo’s insight and in-depth knowledge. As a systems thinker and to aid in succession planning, Jo ensures that information is documented and shared.

Jo has made significant contributions for ALEA in the international arena. She has created worthwhile and long standing connections with the International Literacy Association (ILA) presidents and board members to secure closer partnerships between ILA and ALEA. She was instrumental in re-establishing ILA presidents attending the ALEA national conferences. Jo has been a passionate advocate for ALEA and literacy education at several international events including ILA, NZLA, World Congress and ILA IDOC (International Development in Oceania Committee) Leadership Workshops. At many of these, she has co-presented on literacy leadership.

Maureen Goodwin, when serving as IDOC chair, spoke highly of Jo’s warmth and ongoing connection at the annual ILA conferences. Jo’s work with Timor Leste was an example of strong dialogic partnerships between ALEA members and the people of Timor Leste. She visited Timor Leste on behalf of ALEA to assist with the launch of Mem Fox’s ‘Whoever you are’ published in the Tetum language, travelling to a number of schools and helping Mem to distribute copies of the book and 300 ‘read to me’ t-shirts (also in Tetum) which were donated by ALEA and AATE.

It is with great pleasure that ALEA recognises Jo Padgham’s tireless and passionate work for the organisation over several decades with Life Membership of the Association.