

Statements from the National Executive Committee 2011- 2012

Ruth Saxton – Chair

I attended my first conference last year. As a Primary teacher, I have no formal drama training and was worried that I would be regarded as a bit of an imposter and feel out of my depth. However, I was welcomed with open arms and made to feel very much part of the Association. Because of this, along with my passion and belief in promoting the teaching of drama, I joined the NEC.

Since then I have drawn on the warmth and support of a wonderful group of practitioners to improve my own practice and spread the word throughout my own Authority, as well as network nationally.

Now more than ever, I have sought this advice and drawn on the strength of our Committee. This term my school had an expected visit from Ofsted and times are now difficult in work. Luckily, I had a wonderful experience with an Inspector who was thrilled by my drama-heavy literacy lesson and gushed about how it was just what our children needed. Although I never doubted the power of our subject area, it has given me the official nod of approval I needed in my own setting and the hope that there are some sensible decision makers out there.

I am incredibly honoured to be the new Chair and I hope to do you proud and help drive the Association forward, alongside a fantastically committed team of professionals.

Pavla Beier – Vice Chair

I have been on the NEC for two years, going into my third. This year, alongside the title of Conference Officer, I have also been voted in as Vice Chair. I was happy to make this move as I wanted to become more involved in the organisation throughout the year, not simply around all things conference.

As Assistant Artistic Director at the Theatre Company Blah Blah Blah in Leeds as my full-time job, I feel the need to be integrally involved with NATD. Conference each year is an excellent space to share ideas and discussion with people in the TIE field and those in teaching itself, but being a member of the committee keeps the motivation and exploration alive for me.

Gemma Grubb – Secretary

This is my fourth year on the NEC as Secretary and each year has brought new faces, new challenges and ultimately, new delights. I had been attending NATD Conferences for a few years and each time I was welcomed warmly by the NEC and it was that warmth that encouraged me to be a part of the committee myself. I wanted to be a part of something that truly understood what education was about; that saw the child as the future and the hope - rather than the enemy - as the media would have us believe. I have broadened my experiences and my mind as part of being on the NEC, and mostly done whilst tapping away furiously on my laptop! I look forward to another productive year with faces old and new.

Liam Harris – Treasurer

Since first joining the organisation last year, I have not only recognised the importance of the work of NATD to me as an individual but also the importance of the organisation within the current educational climate. While I am still a student at the Central School of Speech and Drama I feel that the educational benefits I receive from the work of the Association are equal, if not exceeding, the educational benefits I receive from my place of study. I am optimistic that with a refreshed NEC and an enthusiasm for activity, the Association will once again thrive to promote dramatic pedagogy.

As Treasurer of the Association I hope to iron out some of the administrative issues that may have held back certain ventures of previous committees. While a certain stigma exists around the role of the Treasurer, I recognise the need to roll up our sleeves and get stuck in to those jobs that appear less exciting to ensure that this organisation remains not only alive, but thriving. Now more than ever we need to pull together and work hard to ensure that our voices are heard advocating the practice of an organisation I am proud and privileged to be a part of.

Paul Bateson – Publicity Officer

I am a Secondary Drama teacher in the North of England. After attending an NATD Conference in 2009 I was so inspired and fired up by the people I met and the things I learnt that I couldn't not join the Committee. I wanted to join to share ideas and resources and promote creative and child-centred teaching and learning in schools. I want to make sure the exciting ideas I keep learning from NATD and trying out in my classroom get through to as many colleagues as possible.

Adrian Bailey – International Officer

I joined the NEC initially because I saw how passionate my former work colleagues were about NATD, and it was at an NATD Conference in Manchester some years ago that I was first inspired to become a drama teacher. As my relationship with NATD has grown, so have I grown.

As International Officer, my aim is to connect with drama practitioners and pedagogues from around the world, as we work to develop opportunities for us all to create progressive, valuable and outstanding work. NATD has a rich body of work, the value of which must not be underplayed. If my work can be deemed a worthwhile contribution to this, then I will be very happy indeed.

Hywel Roberts – Membership officer

I am Membership Officer as I feel it's important during these uncertain times to maintain the profile of Drama in Education. I'm a freelance educational consultant.

Matthew Readman – Member

I am a Secondary teacher located centrally in Birmingham and therefore often host NEC meetings. I have been a member of the Committee for a few years now and undertaken different roles. This experience, as well as a network of valued contacts, not only helps when planning Conference but also in key discussions.

Ryan Nolan – Member

I am passionate about Drama and Theatre in education and that I'm headed towards teaching as a future career. I hope to support NATD in any way I can in my first year.

Laura Acton – Member

I am a second year mature student of Drama, Applied Theatre and Education at Central School of Speech and Drama. Prior to returning to full time education I worked for Really Useful Theatres as well as in TV Production freelance and for BBC Drama. My decision to study Applied Theatre was shaped by the voluntary work that I did in Peru, a desire to work with young people and a firm belief in the value and power of Drama in Education. I attended the conference for the first time this year and the passion, creativity and commitment that the Keynote speakers, workshop leaders and other delegates had was an inspiration to me. I am very proud to be a new member of the Committee.