



New England  
Learning Association  
fostering education through technology



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## **NELA COMMITTEE BIOS**

### **Board of Directors**

Allan J. Cole  
Phyllis Diaz Cerys

### **Operating Committee**

NELA is a not-for-profit, professional association run entirely by volunteers. NELA's operating committee is responsible for planning and day-to-day management.

Allan J. Cole	Founder and Executive Director
Phyllis Diaz Cerys	Founder and Chair, Educational Technology (K-12) Special Interest Group (SIG)
Jim Flanagan	Founder and Co-Chair of Educational Technology (K-12) SIG
Ed Arnold	Chair, Events Committee
Elizabeth "Sunny" Steadman	Co-Chair, Higher Education Events
Pam Burton	Co-Chair, Marketing Committee
David Green	Chair, Research Committee
Diane Peters	Chair, Volunteer Committee
Douglas Dell	Chair, Healthcare SIG

**Allan J. Cole****Founder, Executive Director**

[allan@nelearning.org](mailto:allan@nelearning.org)

As executive director of the New England Learning Association, Mr. Cole is responsible for overseeing the operations, membership development and strategic planning of the organization and for ensuring that the organization's activities further its mission of supporting constituents in corporate, K-12 and higher education learning markets. Mr. Cole brings more than 20 years of business experience to this leadership role.

Mr. Cole is the founder and president of Preferred Products; a Massachusetts-based strategic marketing and channel strategy firm that specializes in helping technology companies launch new, innovative products and services into the Internet, telecommunications, human resources and software markets. Previously, Mr. Cole served as a senior product marketing manager for a digital rights publishing company where he managed major strategic content partner relationships and helped launch products for such companies as Dun and Bradstreet and Standard & Poor's. Mr. Cole also served as vice president of a strategic marketing and development for a telecommunications information services company.

Mr. Cole earned a bachelor's degree in marketing from Northeastern University and is a member of the American Marketing Association.

**Phyllis Diaz Cerys****Founder, Chair of Educational Technology (K-12) SIG**

[phyllis@nelearning.org](mailto:phyllis@nelearning.org)

Ms. Cerys has devoted her 20-year career to e-learning, educational technology and publishing. She co-founded the association in 2001 to provide a professional organization for companies, universities and individuals to share best practices in technology-based and blended learning. Since the advent of the association, Ms. Cerys has successfully attracted support from leading universities and vendor learning organizations in Massachusetts. In addition to her leadership role at

NELA, Ms. Cerys is actively involved in initiating special events and educational and networking programs aimed at the K-12 learning market.

Ms. Cerys is the founder and principal of Cerys Consulting Consortium, a Massachusetts-based marketing firm that assists educational technology and publishing companies with market development, product development, and sales and marketing strategies to support revenue growth and profitability. Her clients have included such organizations as Riverdeep, Tom Snyder Productions, Worth Publishers, Bedford/St. Martin's, Kurzweil Educational Systems, and the New England School Development Council. Prior to her consulting successes, Ms. Cerys spent more than a decade in the publishing industry in a wide variety of sales and marketing positions. In this realm, she created strategies for new product introduction and created new markets for such major publishers as Addison-Wesley and Houghton Mifflin.

Ms. Cerys holds a bachelor's degree with honors in sociology from Stanford University and a master's degree in educational psychology from UCLA. In addition to NELA, she serves on the board of directors for LAUNCH, an education foundation that supports the public schools in Melrose, Massachusetts.

**Jim Flanagan****Founder, Co-Chair of Educational Technology (K-12) SIG**

[jim@nelearning.org](mailto:jim@nelearning.org)

Mr. Flanagan has demonstrated a long-standing commitment for advancing the educational process through new teaching methods and tools. He co-founded and launched the association in 2001, and continues to be active as co-chair of the Educational Technology (K-12) special interest group.

As a former member of the Chicago Board of Education, and a provider of products and consulting services to schools, Mr. Flanagan has observed education organizations over the last 15 years. Currently, he is working with several economically and ethnically diverse public school

districts to help them develop and implement academic and administrative improvements. Mr. Flanagan's corporate experience includes industrial sales, commercial banking and management consulting at Ernst & Young and Price Waterhouse.

Mr. Flanagan holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Michigan and a master's in management degree in finance and marketing from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University.

**Ed Arnold**  
**Chair, Events Committee**  
[ed@nelearning.org](mailto:ed@nelearning.org)

With more than 20 years of successful consulting experience within the organizational effectiveness and learning strategy markets, Mr. Arnold is well qualified to champion the planning and development efforts for corporate events for the New England Learning Association. Mr. Arnold spearheads all event-planning initiatives, and through educational forums and networking programs, facilitates the exchange of ideas and "best practices" among the myriad of constituencies in the ever-expanding learning market.

Mr. Arnold is currently the founder and principal of Organization Solutions, a Massachusetts-based consulting practice focused on organizational effectiveness through learning strategy and blended learning solutions. Previously, Mr. Arnold served as a senior principal at DiamondCluster International, a leading e-commerce consultancy, and as a principal at the OmniTech Consulting Group. Formerly, he worked as a research associate with Dove Associates, a strategy consulting organization.

Mr. Arnold holds a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in political science from Boston University. He also holds a master's degree in business administration from New York University. Mr. Arnold is frequently published in *Mass High Tech* on the topic of organizational effectiveness, and has been published in such notable publications as *eLearning Developers'*

*Journal*, *eLearn Magazine* and *Call Center Solutions Magazine*. Mr. Arnold is a member of the eLearning Guild and a Judge for Brandon Hall's Excellence in E-Learning Awards.

**Elizabeth "Sunny" Steadman**  
**Co-Chair, Higher Education Events**  
[sunny@nelearning.org](mailto:sunny@nelearning.org)

Ms. Steadman's career reflects a successful blending of business and learning, which she brings to her role as Operating Committee member as well as being involved with NELA's Higher Education Events. In this capacity, Ms. Steadman works on creating special events and programs that meet the education and networking needs of the higher education market.

Currently, Ms. Steadman serves as a recruiter for the New England Search Group. Simultaneously, she provides consulting services to small businesses seeking advice on marketing and corporate learning issues. Previously, Ms. Steadman served as a specialist for Management Recruiters International, where she concentrated her efforts on searches for the publishing and e-learning industries, as well as serving as director of Continuing Education for the Harvard Alumni Association. Ms. Steadman drew upon her skills in higher education to successfully serve as a consultant to the Iranian-based Reza Shah Kabir University project before the Iranian revolution forced her to return to the United States.

Ms. Steadman earned a bachelor's degree cum laude in philosophy from Mount Holyoke College and a master's degree in education from Harvard University Graduate School of Education's Administration and Social Policy Program. She also holds a master's degree in business administration from Simmons School of Management.

**Pam Burton****Co-Chair, Marketing Committee**

[pam@nelearning.org](mailto:pam@nelearning.org)

Drawing on her 20-years of successful global marketing expertise, Ms. Burton is involved with the strategic and tactical execution of the organization's marketing initiatives including positioning and branding.

Currently, Ms. Burton is the president and founder of Global Buzz Marketing, a Massachusetts-based consulting firm that assists U.S.-based companies in expanding internationally, as well as aiding foreign-based organizations to expand into United States markets. She has directed global marketing for market-leading enterprise software, digital media and e-learning companies including NETg, Progress Software, PictureTel, and McCormack & Dodge. At NETg, she was responsible for naming, packaging and launching XtremeLearning and NLO's (NETg Learning Objects). Previously, Ms. Burton was senior vice president of Protégé, a London-based technology business accelerator, which launched more than 30 firms into Europe including AvantGo, Vignette and Placeware. Global Buzz Marketing's clients have included WebCT, Skillsoft (Smartforce), Endicott College and a privately funded elearning project at Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Ms. Burton holds a bachelor's degree in French from Colby College, a master's degree in French Language and Civilization from New York University and a Diplome Supérieur from the University of Caen, France.

**David Green****Chair, Research Committee**

[david@nelearning.org](mailto:david@nelearning.org)

Mr. Green leads the research initiatives of the New England Learning Association, which includes identifying notable industry studies, publishing original research and sharing the best practices from the professional community. He has 25 years of experience in the training field, designing and delivering instructor-led, video, CD-ROM and web-based courses. Products delivered in the

digital world have ranged from consumer orientated (*The Complete National Geographic: The War Years, Living with HIV*) to corporate training (Microsoft, EquiServe, Marriott).

Currently, Mr. Green is a senior business consultant at Click2learn and specializes in working with customers to develop blended learning strategies and to help them realize the benefits of web-based content development and knowledge management. He has assisted many organizations to successfully deploy learning content management systems and implement best practices for internal content development. His clients have included AT&T, Symantec, Thomson Publishing, Schwan's, MedStar and Albertsons.

Prior to his current role, David was Click2learn's senior instructional designer where he provided strategic and instructional design consultation during the initial phases of product development, and served as the coordinator for the development of reusable design standards and procedures.

Mr. Green holds a master's degree in education interactive instructional design from the Harvard School of Education.

**Diane Peters****Chair, Volunteer Committee**

[diane@nelearning.org](mailto:diane@nelearning.org)

Ms. Peters is charged with organizing the many volunteers who make possible the smooth operation of NELA committees and events. Being a seasoned volunteer herself in various community and other organizations has fully prepared her for recruiting and mobilizing individuals that generously contribute their time and efforts.

Also an accomplished instructional designer, Ms. Peters enjoys assisting content experts with designing and implementing classroom and e-learning programs and materials. Her recent experience advising college faculty on best practices with WebCT coupled with a background in medical laboratory science and nursing education have enabled her to develop motivating, dynamic courses with interactive, problem-solving approaches to real-world situations.

Ms. Peters earned a bachelor's degree in medical laboratory science from Northeastern University and a master's degree in training and development from Lesley University. She is active in the Massachusetts chapters of the International Society for Performance Improvement and the American Society for Training & Development.

**Douglas Dell**

**Chair of Healthcare SIG**

[douglas@nelearning.org](mailto:douglas@nelearning.org)

Mr. Dell relied on his business development and industry experience to start-up the New England Learning Association's first Special Interest Group, focused on the healthcare industry. He is actively involved in initiating special events and other programs aimed at serving the large, growing and dynamic healthcare industry. He has nearly 20 years of marketing and business development experience and has held positions in both start-up and Fortune 25 organizations.

Currently, Mr. Dell is the global learning program manager for Philips Medical Systems, a \$6B subsidiary of Philips Electronics. Doug has expanded revenue growth in vertical markets and led organizations through strategic partnership and development programs. Prior to joining Philips, he was executive vice president of marketing and business development for ePALS Classroom Exchange, a provider of educational collaboration platforms. He also held leadership positions at Bell Atlantic including the executive director of business development, where he was directly responsible for negotiating key distribution and technology outsourcing agreements totaling over \$50MM.

Mr. Dell is a faculty member of the University of Phoenix Online and holds a master's in business administration degree with honors from Pace University's Lubin School of Business.