



Teaching and learning using 21st century methods

American Community Schools (ACS) Athens is hosting the 6th Annual Conference on Learning Differences on May 13 and 14, and registration is open to people involved in teaching who want to learn more about the latest developments in the education sciences.

Titled "Building Resilience in Student Learning," the international conference this year will focus on new strategies and methodologies in teaching and learning for all students with learning challenges.

Speaking on attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), Andrie Steen-Rulifson and Alex Voss will explain how to create a cooperative learning environment through applicable changes to the classroom ecology. There will also be a workshop dedicated to Asperger syndrome (AS), a developmental disorder found on the autism spectrum, and its characteristics.

Dr Theodora Papadopoulou will present her research into dyslexia and how a learning disability influences the psychological development of an individual from early childhood and into adulthood.

Lea Ybarra, PhD, and Charles Rowins, D.Min., will hold a workshop showcasing the work being done by the Center for Talented Youth (CTY) at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, as one of the world's leading organizations in the identification and nurturing of exceptionally bright children.

The complex process of introducing change to schools is the subject of Dr Anastassios Matsopoulos, who will explain how the process can often be undermined by conservative ideas and bureaucratic conditions. The psychological factor is also present in a lecture on "Promoting Resilience in Children and Adolescents: Strengthening the Human Spirit," which deals with coping mecha-

nisms in the face of adversity.

Dr Eleni Tzelepi-Giannatou will discuss how resilience is a biopsychosocial process that takes into account a range of biological, psychological and social factors, each with multidirectional influences.

From the scientific arena, Mariale M. Hardiman will present a workshop on how new findings from the neuro- and cognitive sciences have the potential to inform classroom instruction and influence educational practices for children at all developmental levels.

Margaret Blaiotta Gilhooley, supervisor of Arlington Public Schools Gifted Services Office in Virginia, USA, will discuss the need to instill analytic thinking in students, while Kim Paulse will provide participants with strategies for differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students and Jeff Craddock will discuss the benefits of using structured, formal debate within the classroom.

Using math manipulatives for students across grades 3-6 is the subject of another workshop series which will also include the role of interactive teaching and methods to improve intercommunication between students, teachers and parents as a means of coping with stress, anxiety and other difficulties students can face.

Aimed at older students, Susan Pratt will deliver a presentation on the elements of a successful college search and the transition process for students with disabilities, while Anna Rose Sugarman will host a workshop on how to create a conducive learning environment and Dr William Nicoll will lecture on "Resilience-Based Social-Emotional Learning: Toward a Social Vaccine."

To learn more about the event and registration, go to www.acs.gr.