

SPOTLIGHT Session



Idit Harel Caperton
President
World Wide Workshop
Foundation

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2008
9:00 – 9:45 A.M.
ROANOKE BALLROOM

Internet Safety in the Age of Social Networks: Can Our Students and Educators Use Social Media Technologies for Productive Learning in the Context of School?

New digital technologies, especially social media, are changing how today's generation socializes, learns, plays, exchanges information, exercises judgment, and engages in civic life. Dr. Idit Harel Caperton, one of the most innovative leaders in digital media and learning, demonstrates projects for cultivating new modes of transparent and participatory learning. She argues that schools and educators must incorporate these social technology programs not only to engage students but to connect them and their learning with the rest of the world and with the relevant knowledge and skills essential for citizenship and leadership in the global knowledge economy.

Dr. Idit Harel Caperton is a pioneer and leader in new-media technology for educational innovation, participatory learning, and global collaboration based on constructionist learning theory. She founded the World Wide Workshop Foundation (www.WorldWideWorkshop.org) in 2004 leveraging her unique blend of award-winning research, business acumen, and leadership in new-media learning projects around the world. In 2006, her team developed the Globaloria Networks, a set of Web 2.0 learning communities that offer young students opportunities to engage in social and collaborative Web-game construction geared to educational issues in science, mathematics, health, and global climate.

Harel Caperton's breakthrough research at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the MIT Media Lab in the 1980s and 1990s led to the book *Constructionism* and numerous articles coauthored with learning technology guru Seymour Papert. Her subsequent book *Children Designers* received the 1992 Outstanding Book Award from the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

In 1995, Harel Caperton founded MaMaMedia and launched the first kid's Internet media brand on MaMaMedia.com; she also designed and created ConnectedFamily.com and Papert.org. MaMaMedia established global distribution and advertising partnerships and won numerous honors, including the *Computerworld*-Smithsonian Award (1999), the Internet industry's coveted Global Information Infrastructure Award (1999), Yahoo! Top of the Net (2000), and the 21st-Century Achievement Award from the *Computerworld* Honors Program (2002).

In 2002, Harel Caperton was honored by the Network of Educators in Science and Technology and by MIT "for devotion, innovation, and imagination in science and technology on behalf of children and youth around the world." That same year, she founded the MaMaMedia Consulting Group (MCG) to provide strategic consulting for educational organizations, ministries of education, universities, museums, and Internet media companies. MCG also develops Web sites, educational simulations, and games for selected partners (including Schlumberger-SEED and BurdaStyle.com).

Since 2004, Harel Caperton has helped Nicholas Negroponte on the One Laptop Per Child (OLPC), especially its China strategy. In 2007, she led the development of a set of MaMaMedia activities (in Python) to run properly on OLPC's Sugar operating system.