

Meet the Staff

LORI THOMAS

Research Associate

As research associate for the Center on Innovations (CIL) in Learning, Lori Thomas manages and contributes to the center's Learning Resources Database. She also assists in editing CIL publications, including the *Handbook on Innovations in Learning*, research syntheses, and practice guides.

Lori has been the managing editor of the *School Community Journal* for CIL's partner organization, the **Academic Development Institute** (ADI), since 1999. The *School Community Journal* is a refereed journal committed to promoting the development of schools as thriving communities of students, their family members, teachers, staff, administrators, and community members; in 2007, the journal switched to an on-line-only, open access format.

For ADI, Lori has also edited the *Families and Schools Newsletter* and managed the Parent and School Resources databases for the **School Community Network** and Illinois Parents websites. In addition, she has edited numerous publications for ADI. Lori authored a vignette for the *Handbook on Family and Community Engagement*, published in 2009 and available for free download. She also helped to edit two monographs for the Family-School-Community Partnership Special Interest Group (SIG) of the American Educational Research Association, of which she is an active member.

Lori's background is in the early childhood field, having served as a teacher and curriculum coordinator in early care settings after graduating from Lincoln Christian University. Her work at ADI connecting families and schools has been informed by her own experiences in parenting two lovely daughters, one who qualified for gifted programs and honors courses as she progressed through school, and the other who has significant cognitive delays accompanying Prader-Willi Syndrome, and who delights her friends and family with an extensive vocabulary and great comedic timing. Lori and her husband Tracy have also worked with many community youth and their families over the years of his ministries in four central and southern Illinois locations, as well as on biannual trips to the Dominican Republic. When Lori manages to find a few spare minutes, she will probably have her nose in a book, unless her older daughter has distracted her with a new series of Dr. Who or Sherlock.



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