

WASC Members' Showcase

We recently polled some of our most experienced WASC members and asked them to share with us why they would recommend serving on WASC committees, as well as offer advice to new members and to tell us their most memorable WASC experiences. Thank you to all of you who responded. Enjoy!



Serving on a Visiting Committee has been my strongest professional growth experience in 30-plus years of education – new ideas, new friends, new skills, new insights! Each visit strengthens my personal philosophy of education and the value of each and every child in our schools.

Go with an open mind and an open heart! Both will be rewarded.

LOUISE ROBERTSON — WASC member since 1981 — Served on over 48 VC teams

Yes, I would recommend serving on a WASC committee. It has been one of the most beneficial and rewarding avenues for professional growth I have experienced. It keeps bringing me back to the core purposes of what we do. It has also been my best venue to discover new ideas that I can bring back and apply to improve my own school.

Expanding my network of great professionals. I have benefited greatly from working on a common, but focused and meaningful, educational task with a variety of highly motivated and professional colleagues. I value those relationships.

Do your homework. Maintain honesty, integrity, and open communication. Look for the positive in your team members and balance hard work with fun.

GLEN COLLARD — WASC member since 1993 — Served on over 16 VC teams



Serving on a visiting committee is a rich and rewarding activity. I have been fortunate to see schools and how they work that would never have been possible without participating in accreditation. I learn more than I leave.

My most memorable experience is my visitation to American Samoa. The visitation opened doors that would not have been open to someone vacationing. There is so much to do, with so little resources and a family culture to work within. Quite an experience. I used to complain about the meager financing available for California public education. California educators do not have a clue about lack of resources.

“Visit and visit as often as you can. The more you visit, the more you learn. The more you visit the more you add to improving educational opportunities for kids. Enjoy your visit and do not take yourself too seriously. You are a visitor with suggestions for improvement not an auditor.

RICHARD FRIBERG — WASC member since 1989 — Served on over 28 VC teams

Through out the 20+ years that I have been doing WASC visits, I have always brought back to my school new ideas and methods. It has kept me fresh and excited about the profession in which I work.

Seeing schools advance and improve through doing their Self Studies and being able to improve what I can provide for my students.

Please go to the training sessions! There is so much valuable information to be had. Also encourage the schools to participate in the trainings prior to doing their Self Studies, so many think that they can work from the manual and this just makes it more difficult for the chairman.

VICTOR WHITAKER — WASC member since 1992 — Served on over 22 VC teams

I feel that we have a professional responsibility to participate as WASC Visiting Committee members. Each of our schools host Visiting Committees as part of our accreditation process and these committees are comprised of fellow professionals assisting our schools with the self-study process. In turn we have the responsibility to assist other schools with their self-study process.

The valuable experiences that one gains by spending time in other schools assisting them with the school improvement process, can be brought back to assist in improving one's own home school.

I have had several memorable experiences serving on WASC Visiting Committees. The most memorable was visiting a school that was truly fostering an excellent education process for their students and the community the school served. My most valuable experience has been the camaraderie of being part of a Visiting Committee team and the professional networking that comes from that experience.

“I believe that all WASC Visiting Committee members must remember that our professional responsibility is to the school that we are visiting and to give them our best effort in assisting and encouraging them in the school improvement process as we validate their self-study.



BOB MAEZ — WASC member since 1988 — Served on over 25 VC teams



Serving on a Visiting Committee is the best professional development experience I can recommend. Professional dialogue with fellow VC members and with the staff of the school being visited about improving student achievement.

Serving as a VC chair at a school in Los Angeles, the students told us, and wanted us to tell the staff, to raise expectations and accountability so that the students could get the quality of education they needed to pursue a better life.

Learn the WASC criteria as thoroughly as you can. Then, read and listen with an open mind as the staff explains how they meet the criteria.

DALE MITCHELL — WASC member since 1988 — Served on over 28 VC teams

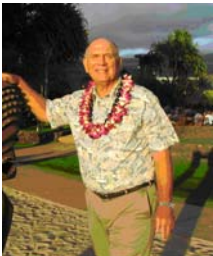
It is a wonderful opportunity to visit other schools and learn how they deal with various educational situations. It is a delight to meet other educators – you end up knowing people all over southern California – of course when you see each other later, it takes several moments to figure out HOW you know each other!

My most memorable experience was on a visit where the principal kept calling me June Carter, not Linda Carter. He must have been a country-western fan! After a while I quit correcting him and went with the new name – it was so much easier! 😊

My most valuable experience was on a particularly difficult visit. I hadn't encountered many of the situations at the school before and I felt unsure of what exactly to do. The people at the WASC office in Burlingame were so very helpful and supportive. I felt genuinely calm in the face of many difficulties because of their support and advice – even as we had to call an emergency school board meeting to discuss the situation at the school.

*Go with an open mind! The school you are visiting will undoubtedly do things differently than you are used to but as you talk with them and observe their operations, you will learn and grow as an educator. Carefully and thoroughly read the school's self study before you ever visit the school and **make yourself** write out your responses and questions to what you read. It is so much easier to edit what you've written later than to start from scratch.*

LINDA CARTER — WASC member since 1990 — Served on over 25 VC teams



Serving on a Visiting Committee is the most valuable in-service education that a professional educator can engage in. You not only help improve education for all students, you learn a great deal about quality teaching and learning, and are able to apply that to your school.

While I have had more than 60 WASC experiences, each one had been memorable and valuable. However; I think my most memorable visits are the ones in which the school has done a good job of following the process in writing the Self-Study, and understands that the Visiting Committee is there to help them improve learning for all students. In other words, the school understands that WASC is a continuous change process, not the three-day flu of the visit.

Do your homework and prewriting prior to the visit; rest up and get plenty of sleep; listen, observe, and ask questions without preconceived ideas; be a good team member and leave your ego at home. Share the important experiences of the visit with your school colleagues in order to improve learning for students at your school.

ROLLIN GRIDER — WASC member since 1980 — Served on over 60 VC teams

Being on a Visiting Committee is a terrific professional learning experience. It is like giving community service to local community — instead you are giving professional community service to the educational community. It is a terrific way to network with fellow educators. Great way to see how others are dealing with the same issues that you are facing everyday. You get to collaborate and network with some terrific educators on your Visiting Committee.

Do your homework — meet your deadlines — and forget the phrase "...at my school we." Have and keep a positive outlook. Remember, just because something (program, strategies, curriculum, etc.) did not work at your school — does not mean that it cannot be a treasure of educational value at another school — keep an open mind. Although they are important — leave your family and school to their own resources while you are on a review.

NICK McNICHOLAS — WASC member since 1988 — Served on over 22 VC teams



As a member of a Visiting Committee one gets practical in-service training and good ideas that one can use.

The most valuable experience was dealing with a very challenging situation. The most memorable was serving overseas in Singapore.

Listen and learn from the experienced team members but don't hesitate to contribute your ideas and efforts as a team member.

ANNE HENKE — WASC member since 1983 — Served on over 34 VC teams

Each time a new member serves on a team that I chair, they always share on the last day that the experience was the "best professional development opportunity they have ever had" and they wish that every teacher could serve. You grow exponentially in the areas of understanding Standards Based Education, working effectively with groups, developing effective questioning strategies and writing content specific responses.

My most memorable experience was when, at the exit report, after a challenging visit that really required each team member to ask the difficult questions and help create positive dialogue that ultimately resulted in a 3 year term, the staff gave my team a standing ovation and shouted bravo and thank you. It brought tears to all of our eyes because we really wanted to serve that school and make a difference and we did.

Do your homework. Read, re-read and re-read the report again, so you know the school inside and out before arriving at the school. Make sure that your pre-writing accurately reflects what you have read, is specific and is concise.

SUE BUETTELL — WASC member since 1987 — Served on over 25 VC teams

Serving on a visiting committee is the very best form of staff development for educators. I always feel like "I get more than I give." I can not tell how many great ideas I have taken back to my campus.

My most memorable visit was when I chaired a review in Bangkok, Thailand. The school was sponsored by the Latter day Saints and the mission of the school was to teach an American-based curriculum to 1000 Buddhist students. It was a cultural clash that somehow resulted in an excellent educational opportunity for all involved ... including the visiting team.

Do not compare the school you are reviewing to your school!

CARL DE GRANDE — WASC member since 1987 — Served on over 25 VC teams

Having served on Visiting Committees for over 20 years, I long ago concluded that interacting with schools and other team members is one of the most effective and enjoyable professional development activities available to educators. Observation and dialogue through visitations, grounded in the values and principles of accreditation, are learning experiences that are not easily attained through other means.

The most memorable and valuable experiences I have had working with the Commission are those that have been the most foreign, geographically and programmatically. Visiting schools in other countries is always interesting and valuable, as is visiting schools and programs in California that are unique or rare, e.g., programs for incarcerated students.

One piece of advice that comes to mind is to leave your personal and professional biases at home.

JOHN NIXON — WASC member since 1986 — Served on over 19 VC teams



I feel this is the best staff development that I can receive. I have brought back ideas for my own school from every visit I have done. I also openly encourage members of my staff to do visits as well. Each of them has also brought back invaluable ideas for our school!

The friends I have made on the various Visiting Committees that I've served on. I also have had the opportunity to see some wonderful schools, both in California and overseas. Visiting schools helps me remember that we are in a wonderful, hardworking profession that is successful!

Come in prepared, do your homework, and stay on task. Ask questions of your chairs (before and during the visit) and team members if you need to. Remember that others may have more experience, but no one is a complete expert! It is also a lot of fun!

PAT LICKISS — WASC member since 1988 — Served on over 20 VC teams

Serving WASC helped me grow, learn, keep current and helped us do a better job for students at the schools I administered. Now being retired — it is a great way to feel valuable and help (hopefully) others.

It has always been a rewarding experience.....from eating a potluck dinner on the Island of Tinian in the South Pacific with the school staff and island governor.....to going through a strip search at a state prison. The goal is constant: make learning better for students because we were there and the school participated in the WASC program.

Jump in, listen, take the lead of the experienced people and don't come with a PERSONAL agenda. Be a good team member.

JAN BUTTON — WASC member since 1986 — Served on over 35 VC teams

Being on a Visiting Committee has been an annual, intense professional development experience where I was able to interact with caring, compassionate, competent professionals in education while contributing to the improvement of education. Each fall I look forward to receiving a new invitation.

The most memorable WASC experience was the surprise of having Dr. Marilyn George speak at my retirement dinner. Another memorable WASC experience was attending my first meeting as a commissioner. I was humbled and awed by the quality of the personal interactions of the commissioners.

DOROTHY DOUTHIT — WASC member since 1980 — Served on over 28 VC teams





Being on a WASC committee not only serves as a commitment to the education community we are all a part of but it can bring wonderful insight to the committee member that can be brought back to their own setting. As a former principal and current school board member, I always learn something that is new and beneficial to my district. I always hope that I have left the school with an idea or a possible process that will help them fulfill their plans to improve their student's success.

The most memorable experience I have had was returning to a school on the six year mid term revisit to see the how the staff's commitment to their action plan paid off. Students' scores increased and the culture was ripe with ESLR attainment.

New members to the WASC process should bring with them their enthusiasm for engendering student success into the school they visit by applying their training but at the same time striving to understand the culture of the school being visited so they can blend the school's self study findings and their team's observations to help promote an appropriate action plan to move the school forward.

BARB NUNES — WASC member since 1986 — Served on over 32 VC teams

Participation provides an opportunity to see new programs plus reinforces the direction your schools and district are taking. Networking with others was also a personal and professional benefit.

Team members stand out as several remain long time friends. Chairing in Japan was both a cultural experience in learning about expatriots and an educational one as the common denominator was English in all three schools visited.

I always told my teams I wanted the school to say we were prepared with good questions, had done our home work ahead of time and didn't come in with an agenda. We worked hard and enjoyed ourselves too.

(It was always a pleasure!)

MARTHA EVANS — WASC member since 1980 — Served on over 23 VC teams



I would strongly recommend that teachers and administrators (both school and district level administrators) serve on a WASC committee at least once during their career. Serving on a WASC committee is truly a learning experience!

As a committee chair, I had two rookie teachers on my committee who had been "forced" to be on the committee. After four days working as a team, they were sold on the WASC process and have since served on other committees.

Do not try to place your value system on the school you are visiting-keep an open mind and try to be an objective professional

BILL JAMES — WASC member since 1980 — Served on over 38 VC teams

WASC is a wonderful way to see another school from the inside out. You quickly validate some of your thoughts, see things from a new perspective, and always bring new ideas home. You also meet very professional and dedicated educators who are willing to share three and a half days as a team in an exciting service project.

My most memorable WASC experience was visiting an international school in Kyoto, Japan. While things may not always be perfect, smaller schools learn to adapt and have shown great flexibility. Success comes in different shapes and forms, and does not necessarily have to look like your own school.

Do your homework ahead of time, contribute, be flexible, enjoy the visit, and take a new idea home.

MICHAEL CRILLY — WASC member since 1984 — Served on over 29 VC teams



Being a member of a WASC Visiting Committee (VC) is the best staff development there is. Seeing what other schools are doing and comparing that with what you are doing stimulates new ideas, hones your observational and critical skills, and points out better ways to do what you are already doing. It really helps refine your own instructional practices.

All California State Prisons have major educational programs, and I have had the good fortune to chair VCs to most of those in Northern California. It is gratifying to realize that there are some excellent educational programs that serve students whom most of society has written off. There are educational efforts in state prisons to reach students that would make most public schools envious. Having had the opportunity to see this was a great experience.

First, join a WASC VC, get out of your comfort zone and see what's going on "out there." Second, volunteer to visit schools that are different than your own (e.g., continuation, prison, county, vocational, private, adult schools). Education is education, and you will see many things that relate to what you are doing and that you could use, regardless of the setting. Third, devote your time and effort to make your WASC experience worthwhile. It's a lot of work, but being on a WASC VC can be the most effective learning experience you will have.

NEAL CAVANAUGH — WASC member since 1984 — Served on over 51 VC teams

I have never failed to leave a WASC visit having learned something that I can immediately use in my own district.

Participation on a WASC visiting team is the best staff development possible for an educator. It is not only a professional courtesy, but a tremendous growth experience.

BARRY BETTGER — WASC member since 1993 — Served on over 22 VC teams

Serving on a WASC team is without a doubt the best way to keep in touch with what is actually taking place in both our public and private schools. Over the years I have been able to observe a variety of excellent programs that we were able to implement in my school and district. I also saw a number of advertised programs that were failing. Avoiding these saved us a great deal of time, money and grief.

Perhaps the most memorable experience was my visit to The Seoul Foreign School in Korea and The American School in Japan. During the visit I was also able to visit public schools in both countries and learn that the perception most Americans have of foreign education is far from accurate.

Be flexible and refrain from comparing the school you are visiting with your own. Do not suggest that the school you are visiting adopt your school's programs or procedures. There is no single "right" way to accomplish a given task. Be a good listener.

BRAN YAICH — WASC member since 1980 — Served on over 40 VC teams



Serving on a WASC VC has provided enormous personal and professional growth opportunities, the benefits of which have been infused into the professional learning community of which I am a part. I believe that as a direct result of my WASC experience, that I have heightened my knowledge of educational research, trends and school improvement processes which have in turn enabled me to be a more active participant in my learning community.

The experiences that WASC VC members undergo as they visit and validate diverse learning communities constitute a memorable educational journey towards schoolwide improvement. The ability to professionally collaborate in the Focus on Learning process with team members and school stakeholders has been a tremendously inspiring aspect of education.

Participating on a WASC visiting committee is a valuable service and at the same time responsibility to every educational community. The ability of a VC member to remain open to educational innovation and flexible to school needs while still focusing on the nature of learning occurring in the visited institution is paramount to accomplishing the vision of WASC.

SHEILA FOLAN — WASC member since 1992— Served on over 22 VC teams

Serving on visiting committees has provided me with new ideas for programs and management, many new friends and contacts in education, and an impetus to always be current on legislation, research, publications, and practices.

There have been many memorable experiences, but I will never forget sitting in the formal parlor of the headmaster's home (the very room where General Eisenhower met with his son's headmaster) having tea with the Bishop, Headmaster, and Board President and discussing the Strategic Plan and WASC Report for Brent International School in Baguio, Philippines. My WASC assignments have given me experience with the differences and similarities of education statewide, nationally, and internationally.

Keep in touch with your chair, meet the deadlines for pre-writes, know that as a professional you have the skills to do the job, realize that you will learn from the experience, and then relax and enjoy the visit.

VALENE STALEY — WASC member since 1987 — Served on over 27 VC teams



Serving on Visiting Committees has been the best profession and personal inservice that I have had in my 30 years in education. The experience is educationally dynamic, ever changing, and utilizes knowledge based on the latest trends in education.

My most memorable WASC experience was dancing at Faga'itua High School in American Samoa.

Demonstrate a sincere and open approach to assist the school with their ongoing improvement process.

DOUG BAUMGART — WASC member since 1988 — Served on over 29 VC teams

As a professor in a school of education, service on a visiting committee propels one from the college campus into the real world of schooling. Seeing how teachers are able to implement their planned instruction considering actual students' achievement data, targeted state standards and local conditions provide examples to explain or modify theory.

Serving with capable, experienced chairs, people like Dale Mitchell and Hal Butler, has provided me with models of organization, group dynamics skills, delegation and consensus building. I use these specific examples in classes studying educational leadership

After participating in WASC training and absorbing the accreditation manual and the school's self-study, the first time WASC visiting committee member should share his/her pre-writing and possible questions for focus groups with the chair at least two weeks before the visit. Call the chair and discuss the appropriateness of your preparation.

TOD ANTON — WASC member since 1975 — Served on over 48 VC teams





The WASC process for both the school and the Visiting Committee is very valuable for all members due to the understanding of educational programs is developed or shared.

A highlight of any visit is the commitment and input of parents in the guidance and process at the school.

Understand the various WASC components and how the school community responds and how WASC celebrates the successes and observances of the school.

JEANETTE GEHRKE — WASC member since 1991 — Served on over 25 VC teams

Over the 30+ years that I have been a part of WASC, I have made new friends and acquaintances that have enriched my life. Professionally, it made me aware of additional educational methods to better help my staff in my districts.

At each WASC visit, I encourage the staff at the particular school to become a WASC participant because of the rich rewards. It allows for growth and additional experiences plus learning to appreciate your own district.

I have had so many wonderful experiences over the years that selecting one would be extremely difficult. A few of the more memorable experiences were going to do a visit in Dubai (the Emirates) shortly after September 11, my trips to Southeastern Asia — Guam, Manila, Saipan, Tinian, Malaysia — meeting the wonderful people and seeing how they cope with life in their countries.

Be fair and do not go to the visit with preconceived notions about the school and respect the efforts made by the staff of your visiting school. Also remember the major role that WASC plays in the assessment gauge for the quality of education provided by that district.



RICHARD FRAGLE — WASC member since 1981 — Served on over 28 VC teams



Thirty-six of my 40 years in education have been in the same district. Being on a VC has afforded me the opportunity to visit many other districts and view a great variety of practices all of which were valuable to me.

Most memorable — visiting international schools in Thailand and Singapore. Most valuable — the many great continuation high schools

My advice would be to listen 90% of the time.

JAMES SMITH — WASC member since 1982 — Served on over 23 VC teams

The FOL process and training is some of the best staff development available. Through the collaborative process, a WASC Visiting Committee can contribute significantly to a school's improvement efforts while members gain personally from having participated in a highly effective activity that makes a profound difference in the quality of the school's program for students.

My most memorable WASC experiences have centered around the impact of effective leadership. When schools genuinely embrace the process and make it part of regular professional practice, amazing transformations take place. It is such a thrill to visit a school after three years to find higher levels of student achievement and shared leadership.

My advice would be to prepare to provide an outside perspective, not conduct an inquisition. Our role is to support student learning and school efforts for improvement.



LEAH LAULE — WASC member since 1981 — Served on over 32 VC teams

Serving on a Visiting Committee is one of the best professional development opportunities that our business offers. You are not only fulfilling a critical need for a school, but also picking up wonderful ideas for your own site.

Returning to a school for their 're-visit' and seeing the growth that has occurred based on their own self-study and the recommendations of the Visiting Committee is energizing and helps confirm the value of the process.

Go prepared with your assigned draft sections and then have an open mind. Listen, ask clarifying questions and try not to share 'your way'... this is about them.

BARBARA FALCONER — WASC member since 1993 — Served on over 18 VC teams



Every time I visit a school I have the opportunity to work with a team of committed professionals who have the same goal that I do – assisting a school to provide the best learning experience for students. Being a part of this endeavor is a professional growth experience. You learn that you can't "know it all," only by working together can the visiting committee achieve their goal of working with a school community in creating a school Action Plan that will guide a school into the future.

When I returned to one school for a mid-term visit I was greeted with great enthusiasm. They wanted me to see how much they had grown and how they had successfully implemented their Action Plan. It is such an honor to be a part of a school that takes pride in their success and are open to making necessary changes in order to increase student learning.

Do your pre-visit work ahead of time. Arrive prepared for the visit with a draft report and a list of questions that must be resolved to finish the report. At the first team meeting describe for the team what your expectations are for the tasks that must be accomplished daily to stay on a timeline. Avoid "word-smithing" in the larger group. If someone is assigned a job let them do it (and check to make sure they are on track). The chair can always edit later for clarity, grammar or syntax. Do as much work as possible before dinner then assign homework that can be done alone in the team members' rooms. Let the team dialogue about concerns and if clarity is needed collect more data and continue the dialogue until consensus is achieved. Keep on top of opinionated members and assist them in working as a contributing team member. The chair, like any successful leader, keeps the process moving forward with as little dissension as possible. The visiting committee goals are not to make the school perfect, just better! Working with the school in identifying those actions the school can take to grow in their ability to meet student needs is the key to a visit's success. After all is said and done the chair is a master teacher who works to develop the school's capacity to continue to work after the team has gone.

JANET TORNCHELLO — WASC member since 1994 — Served on over 16 VC teams

Being a WASC Chair has improved my writing skills, taught me much about how to use data, and introduced me to many interesting, bright people.

The experience has brought home to me the glaring differences between a really good school and a really bad school. To the uninitiated, on the surface, things look smooth, but the underpinnings of a poorly run school can be devastating.

Be open to new ideas; be friendly, courteous, and helpful. Keep in touch with all parties involved: the principal, the person who is writing the report, and with the members of your committee.

JOAN DELZANGLE — WASC member since 1980 — Served on over 24 VC teams



Over the past twenty years I have had the honor of serving and chairing WASC Visiting Committees both locally and overseas. This has been one of the most memorable and rewarding experiences in my professional career as well as my personal life. I have made numerous lifelong friends, developed a network of colleagues, and been able to support and work with schools that are on a continuum of self-improvement through self-assessment. I strongly encourage and recommend each of you to consider serving on a Visiting Committee as you will gain so much from this fantastic experience.

As I reflect over the past years working with WASC, one of the most memorable and valuable experiences has been to work with a variety of schools and educators — private, religious-based, alternative schools, independent study, charter schools, elementary, middle, and high schools. I found the common strand that weaves through each of these programs is the desire to provide educational excellence through self-analysis that enables improvements and modifications to best serve students.

I believe the most important piece of advice for a new WASC Visiting Committee member is to be open-minded. Listen, observe, cooperate, question, compliment, praise, and respect the hard work that went into the writing of the school's Self-Study report. Be thankful that you have been able to share in the growth of another school program. It really is appreciated.

BOB MICHELS — WASC member since 1992 — Served on over 22 VC teams

WASC Visiting teams and schools visited are the best in-service for a teacher that I ever experienced.

Each team I have worked with has been exceptional. We meet as strangers on Sunday and are good friends and colleagues when we part on Wednesday.

My advice would be to ask for any and all help you feel you need. No question is stupid. You are just as important as the experienced team members.

JOANNE BOBELE — WASC member since 1986 — Served on over 29 VC teams

Serving on a Visiting Committee provides you the opportunity to give back to the educational community by allowing you to share your professional ideas and insights, while helping the school you are visiting reach higher levels of excellence. By visiting other schools, it also helps provide insight into what areas you might be able to improve at your own school and what areas you didn't realize you were excelling in at your site.

My most memorable and valuable experience as a WASC Visiting Committee Member and Chair is actually an ongoing experience. I always feel a great sense of personal accomplishment when I can provide worthwhile and valuable assistance to a school that is attempting to reach a higher level of excellence.

Visiting Members must always keep in mind that every school has its own way of doing things and if it works for them, we must not judge them on how we do things at our own sites. Another piece of advice that I always give to team members and attempt to carry this idea sincerely throughout the visit is that we are there to help the school as much as possible, not to just find fault with their programs.

BILL CHRISTELMAN — WASC member since 1979 — Served on over 41 VC teams





Personally, as a member of a Visiting Committee, one benefits from meeting other members of the team with whom there are many opportunities to share.

There have been so many memorable experiences which make it almost impossible to single out one. However, traveling to schools in Hawaii, Seoul, Korea and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia stand out. My most satisfying experience was finally sharing a committee at a school which received a 6 clear term of accreditation.

My advice to new WASC Visiting Committee members: The school you are visiting is different from your school — different people, different culture. What works for your school may be a disaster for this school.

ALPHONSO CAMPBELL — WASC member since 1979 — Served on over 44 VC teams

Being on visiting committee is the best in-service one could get. As a former high school principal there were lots of ideas that I gained from the visit and then implemented. As a University administrator I have been able to get to potential teachers and administrator candidates to become involved in this process.

A visit to China to a school with 22 students on the 8th floor of a hotel. They offered a complete program that allowed for a full accreditation. The night after I returned is when the Russians shot down the Korean Airline on the same flight I took the day before.

My advice is to do it and keep doing it!

DONALD DUNCAN — WASC member since 1980 — Served on over 61 VC teams

Education at its best is a partnership between the parents, the community, the students and the educational staff; to complete that partnership requires self evaluation and subsequently improvement of our educational program. We need to be part of that process if we are to be called professionals.

Doing a revisit to a two-teacher school where the staff and the parents had made a commitment to the WASC process and demonstrated quality education for the students through that process.

My advice would be to get involved, ask questions, be prepared and enjoy the experience.

CHUCK LEE — WASC member since 1981 — Served on over 40 VC teams



The best form of staff development available to educators. I learned that there is more to the educational process than what is in the classroom. It takes everyone working together – teachers, administrators, board, community, parents, and students – to have a success program that will challenge all students to reach their academic potentials.

The network of professionals that I can call on when needed and I still, after working with WASC since 1979, find at least one new idea to take home with me after a visit.

As for a memorable experience – the year that our chair quit on the second day of the visit, told us that everything was on a disk he left (it was blank), and we had to begin new at the end of day two. The school was every unorganized and we still had the same stale cookies on a plate on Wednesday that were there on Sunday. We left the school on Wednesday, drove about a hundred miles and re-grouped at a restaurant until we had a decent rough draft at 9:00 that night. Three of us from that team are now chairs and when we see each other at training we laugh about our “accreditation from hell” as we privately called it.

Be prepared, call your chair if you have any questions prior to the visit, do not take preconceived ideas with you, follow the lead of veteran members as to appropriate questions, and dress professionally.

KAREN ANDERSON — WASC member since 1992 — Served on over 34 VC teams