

## **F. Richard "Rick" Olenchak, Ph.D., P.C.**

### **2009 Biographical Sketch**

Dr. F. Richard "Rick" Olenchak currently serves as Professor, Psychologist, and Co-Director of the Urban Talent Research Institute at the University of Houston. Joining the faculty at U of H in 1998, he was previously Chair of Special Education as well as Director of Teacher Education at the University of Alabama for eleven years. Originally from Virginia, he graduated from the University for Michigan, later earning advanced degrees in Educational Leadership from Eastern Michigan University and in Psychology from Arizona State University. His Ph.D. in Educational Psychology, emphasizing Giftedness and Talent Development, was completed at the University of Connecticut. He later completed a post-doctoral internship in Psychology through the University of Alabama at a secure medical facility for adolescents.

Having taught grades 2 through 11, including teaching at a specialized school for gifted students, Dr. Olenchak has served as a K-12 Director of Gifted Education in two school districts, as well as director of two Federal grants in gifted education. In addition, he has been principal at both elementary and middle school levels, a training specialist for a corporation interested in developing executive talent, a research associate at a state department of education, and has operated a private psychological consulting practice focusing on the developmental needs of gifted and talented children.

Having recently served as President of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), Rick has also served as NAGC Research Editor, in various leadership roles in NAGC Divisions, as President of the International Future Problem Solving Program (FPSP), as President for the Association for the Education of Gifted Underachieving Students (AEGUS), and as Chair of the Research and Development Division of the Texas Association for Gifted and Talented (TAGT). In addition, Rick currently is a member emeritus of the Board of Directors of SENG (Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted), a foundation that donates funds for stimulating research and services likely to improve psycho-social development among gifted individuals. Having served in numerous roles for the nation's leading university accreditation program for educator preparation, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), he was appointed in late 2007 to NCATE's Executive Board. In addition, Rick is Executive Vice-President of Voile Enterprises, a management consulting firm.

Publications which he has either authored or co-authored number approximately 100. Among them are the 2009 book *Social-Emotional Curriculum with Gifted* that has already received accolades from the Association for Curriculum and Supervision Development, and the 2005 book *Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnoses of Gifted Children and Adults*, named as a "Must Read" by the American Psychological Association in 2006 and *ForeWord* magazine's Psychology Book of the Year in 2005. He is currently at work on a number of chapters and articles about the social and emotional aspects of giftedness and talent development, including a significant examination of the construct of "hope" and its implications on the holistic development of each student.

Honors associated with gifted education include receiving the John Gowan Doctoral Student Award from NAGC, the Governor's Citation Award from the Rhode Island Department of Education, the Award of Honor from Mexico -- Educacion Especial de Mexico, the Lily Endowment Teaching Fellow Award, and the Leadership Award for Students with Talents and Disabilities from the University of Houston.