



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 23, 2011

CONTACT: **Michelle Borie**
480.874.2326
mborie@isaz.org

BILINGUAL EDUCATION EXPERT SPEAKS ABOUT RESEARCH MYTHS

Scottsdale, AZ - November 23, 2011 - The International School of Arizona (ISA) and Scottsdale Community College (SCC) cohosted a presentation on Bilingual Education given by Dr. Fred Genesee from McGill University last Saturday.

City of Scottsdale Vice Mayor Linda Milhaven welcomed attendees by saying that the city was "pleased to have the International School of Arizona here. They are helping to change the educational landscape through language immersion and teaching students to be global citizens." Event participants included school leaders and parents from schools around the Phoenix metropolitan valley, as well as SCC students enrolled in early childhood education courses.

Dr. Genesee, a McGill University Professor of Psychology, researcher and author of dozens of articles and books on the topic of bilingualism, provided cumulative research findings attesting to the neurocognitive power of long-term exposure to a second language. "Time is the currency of education," said Genesee. The most recent research (Thordardóttir) points to the need to have at least 40% exposure to a language in school for the child to fully benefit from the experience.

Addressing the issue of how well language-immersion-taught students do in English, Genesee reported that research shows that students who attended an "enriched" (i.e., full) immersion school through at least 5th or 6th grade actually scored *better* than students in monolingual programs. "We want our children to have all the advantages of globalization....and the real advantages are seen after 5-6 years of an (immersion) program," he continued, reiterating his earlier comment that full immersion education is "...a sociocultural resource that lets students move between cultures."

International School of Arizona offered the event to the community, free of charge, in partnership with SCC's Early Childhood Education Program Director, Dr. Roseanne Dlugosz and the Westin Kierland Resort & Spa in Scottsdale.

About Dr. Genesee

Fred Genesee is a Professor in the Department of Psychology at McGill University, Montreal, where he has worked since 1978. He has carried out research on some of the first immersion programs implemented in Canada and has helped educators around the world develop their own immersion programs. His work has sought to debunk persistent myths surrounding bilingualism and second language acquisition in early childhood.

Dr. Genesee is the author of numerous professional and scientific research reports and books. He has served as a consultant on second/foreign language and bilingual education in countries including Japan, Spain, Germany, Estonia, Hong Kong, Latvia, Switzerland, Russia, and Italy.

About International School of Arizona

The International School of Arizona is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) Elementary and Preschool offering French and Spanish immersion tracks. ISA was founded in 1997 to fill an unmet need in the Phoenix Metropolitan Area for children to obtain early foreign language learning in a multicultural setting.

ISA's educational programs offer students the opportunity to learn another language and culture in a full immersion environment. Students gain a global perspective and obtain skills that enable them to communicate with a wide range of people, appreciate other cultures, become flexible thinkers and enrich their lives. Each year new language class options and cultural activities are added to the school's offerings for the community at large. ISA continues to evolve into a valley-wide resource and community asset.

For more information, please visit www.isaz.org.