



Bridging the Generation Gap

RSDSS presenter helps educators of all ages work together

From freshly minted teachers to seasoned administrators, the educators who gathered to hear [Jennifer Abrams](#) speak at the Curriculum Breakfast at the SJC OE on Jan. 13 were there to learn how to better work together with colleagues and parents of all ages.

"We're going to talk about being generationally savvy," said Abrams during a presentation based on her book: *"The Multigenerational Workplace: Communicate, Collaborate and Create Community"*.

She wove humor and activities into the presentation, encouraging the audience at times to engage in discussion to explore the points she made. They were in small groups at tables, so discussion was easy. One of the activities determined age ranges at each table. At one table, the range between the youngest and oldest spanned 55 years. Attendees discussed how different traits associated with different generations affects the work place. It raised questions that did not have easy answers:

What does working with a generation raised by "helicopter parents" mean for how an organization mentors and supervises its employees?

How does an organization plan for succession, during a wave of retirements, when a younger generation is more inclined to change employers and careers than their predecessors?

How do people from one generation communicate and collaborate

differently from another?

How does everybody learn how to work together?

"There is no right generation," Abrams said. "Your age is a filter of perception, and it is just one of your filters...Know yourself, and know who you work with."

The breakfast was organized by the [SJC OE Regional System of District and School Support \(RSDSS\)](#), which also held an Instructional Leadership Network roundtable discussion with Abrams later that day.

"The Curriculum Breakfasts are opportunities for leaders across the region to learn together around current topics. We are pleased to have brought in speakers who are not only experts in their field, but who also share their knowledge in ways that inspire and engage," interim RSDSS Director Sally Glusing said.

Randy Malandro, coordinator of assessment, research and evaluation at Lodi Unified School District, agreed.

"I come to these because the topics are always relevant and the speakers are at the top of their fields," he said. "It's not just a theoretical presentation. It is information you can take back and use."