Entering the new millennium with the discussion of diversity and technology are signs of educators addressing two important factors that provide the sparks that can improve the future. The papers in this section are few but impressive. They suggest ideas and concepts that can be used as an initial beginning or an extension of existing programs. These ideas bring people together because by bridge the gap between cultures through the use of technology.

The papers are all unique in that they stress the importance of helping all young people reach their maximum potential through the use of technology, their gateway to the future. The papers are grouped based on the theme, “bridging the gap through diversity and technology.” For example, the first paper by Foster and Snider at Texas Woman’s University discuss the importance of bridging the gap between the students who have full access to the latest technology and those who do not. They focus on three essentials that would keep what they call the “digital divide” from getting wider. The inadequate quality of technology use, teacher preparation and exposure to technologically proficient role models in the home present problems that can be solved through a commitment of training and support by administrators and teachers.

The papers by Snow from Northern Arizona University, and Bennett project director for the Navajo Education Technology Consortium, support each other by a focusing on a project that involves 13 school districts in three states, two universities, two community colleges, two departments of education, and the National Indian Telecommunication Institute. Snow’s paper focuses on the project design through goals and objectives, training sessions, and first year accomplishments. Bennett’s paper describes the project from the director’s point of view. He discusses staff development, cultural inclusion and the infrastructure improvements that are being used to usher the Navajo culture into the electronic age.

Continuing in this same vein is the paper by Chisholm from Arizona State University West. He focuses on preparing the young by starting with preservice teacher preparation. The author provides students with an authentic experience that develops diversity awareness and multicultural teaching skills with a secondary purpose of modeling technology integration and expanding student computer competency. Preservice teachers participate in many activities that do not mirror a conventional university course. Aided by technology, the author discusses the limitations and the benefits of working with preservice teachers in this fashion.

The paper by Suarez from the University of Alabama provides another experience grounding teachers in cultural pluralistic concepts that help them move beyond print media, by developing and implementing activities designed for all students. This technological multicultural course provides students with a unique way of developing a meaningful way of sharing aspects of their culture and community.

In another paper, gender representation on school web pages is an important issue investigated by Maboudian from the University of Houston. The study uses semiotic methods to examine web site visuals for evidence of differences in gender presentation. Because pictures send such an important message to the public and to students who view the sites, the author discusses the cybiotic design of visuals on a web page that may suggest either stereotyping or equity. This paper gives guidelines to creators of web pages.

The second set of papers bridge the gap of cultures through an international flavor. The paper by Carey from the University of British Columbia, Canada focuses on investigating and comparing how 12 students (5 ESL and 7 native speakers of English) negotiate meaning in an on-line bulletin board or face to face mode of communication environment. The author studied the interaction of how students from diverse backgrounds were influenced by and negotiated meaning of inadequate academic content schema. The use of the virtual seminar and how it facilitated the second language acquisition process led to a gradual increase of participation in course seminars. The final paper by Biazus from the Universidade de Caxias do Sul of Brazil focuses on using art education in a digital environment. The main purpose of the study was to verify how and whether the digital environment can provide a practice that is effective for students. This process invites a challenge that is clearly a new way of entering the millennium. Bridging the gap through electronics promotes a quality education for all.