ATHENAEUM
OHIO UNIVERSITY’S EDUCATION ANNUAL
2008

performance, progress, prominence
Features

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College Renewal

By Renée A. Middleton, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Education

What is “College Renewal”?  
Last year’s edition of Athenaeum focused on “Living our Legacy” and looking to our past for guidance. This academic year’s theme conveys an important message about who we are and who we want to become. By taking “College Renewal” as our theme, we are making a promise to you to commit ourselves fully to upholding our standards of excellence, sustaining our progress and achieving greater prominence.

Education professionals often join together in a universal desire to make the world around them a better place. OHIO’s College of Education is no exception; we call it “College Renewal.” As educators and practitioners, we share a collective responsibility to advance the interests of those we serve and we take that responsibility seriously. As such, we have committed ourselves to the re-growth, renewal, and revitalization of your College of Education. I feel invigorated by the work of our faculty, students, staff and alumni in achieving a rejuvenated commitment to education.

This issue of Athenaeum celebrates the renewal of our College as we honor the legacy of our past and look towards the future with a renewed optimism, hope, and sense of purpose. From tackling education issues such as low funding and poor attendance to starting an Education Awards Program, our alumni take on the collective responsibility of making our world a better place (for more on these stories, see pages 24-25).

As a College, we have developed a Conceptual Core, or set of principles, to guide us in the preparation of Talented, Responsible, Ethical Educators. The Conceptual Core informs the process by which we develop and articulate our goals, and helps to ensure that administrators, faculty, P-12 partners and candidates are working toward a common framework. I hope that you too will live out the values inherent in our Conceptual Core (please see below).

Conceptual Core

As a College, we prepare candidates to embrace the following principles:

**Leader-Educators and Practitioners:** The Unit prepares expert, ethical and reflective leader-educators and practitioners who are committed to holistic learning and engage in collaborative and professional service to society.

**Lifelong Learning:** The Unit prepares leader-educators and practitioners who engage in self-reflection and professional development for continuous personal growth, and who inspire similar practices in those whom they serve.

**Change Agents:** The Unit prepares leader-educators and practitioners who address changing human and social needs through inquiry, research, assessment, critical thinking, problem-solving, and proactive use of technology.

**Diversity:** The Unit prepares leader-educators and practitioners who appreciate the variety in human cultural expression, employ multiple approaches to inquiry, use knowledge and practice for the benefit of a diverse society, and promote social equity and justice for effective civic engagement.

(To read more about our Conceptual Core, please see page 19).

**Performance, Progress, Prominence**

The changing landscape of education locally, regionally and internationally presents us with many opportunities and challenges. Your College is positioned to take a leadership role in promoting meaningful and socially responsible change.

Our proud 122-year history brings a collective responsibility to continue the College’s heritage of academic excellence in teaching, research and service-oriented outreach and to preserve the legacy you have helped build as alumni of this great institution.

Today, our programs seek to distinguish themselves by offering increasing academic rigor, preparation in using assessments and data to drive change, and authentic professional internship experiences in low-resourced settings.

This year, we welcomed our first Cutler scholar and the inaugural class of Connavino Honors Track students, a program spearheaded by College of Education senior Michelle Connavino and named in her honor (please see page 12).

Our continued and growing focus on assessment prepares students to understand and utilize data to impact clients, communities, schools and students. Authentic experiences in diverse, low-resourced settings, such as those offered through the Rural/Urban Collaborative are designed to prepare future leaders, educators and practitioners for the changing landscape of clinical practice and teaching. We began a pilot program to train our future teacher-leaders in both rural and urban teaching environments. We hosted the first annual Rural/Urban Collaborative Institute, sending our students to Columbus City Schools for urban field experiences (please see page 13).

As a College, we have engaged the education community as a whole. This past summer, parents, students, teachers, school administrators and community members came together to approach education reform from a united standpoint and provide valuable feedback to answer Governor Strickland’s call for a Conversation on Education (please see pages 12-13).

As dean, I pledge to continue to empower our students. They can achieve greatness, and together we can position our College to better serve our public purposes. We sincerely appreciate your generous gifts of time, leadership, guidance and resources.

Our promise: Performance, Progress, Prominence.
7th Annual Literacy Center Kickoff
Verizon’s Great Lakes Regional President Gale Given and Director of Government Relations Scott Elsner were on hand to present a $50,000 check to Appalachia READS Director Carolyn Ervin and OHIO Provost Kathy Krendl. The donation brought Verizon’s total support of the regional literacy program to $200,000.

Fall McCracken Education Lecture Series
Colonel Michael “Scoop” Jackson, BSEd ’68, presented the first in the new McCracken Education Lecture Series, “Beyond the Teaching Classroom: Benefits of an Education Degree,” on October 11, when he also accepted a Medal of Merit from the Ohio University Alumni Association. The Medal of Merit, which honors outstanding alumni achievement, recognized Jackson’s honorable work with war veterans.

200-Block Research Exposition
The College of Education celebrated its tenth year of 200-Block research expositions. The event takes its name from the College of Education’s “200 block” - a quarterly sequence of three sophomore-level courses that explore the psychology of learning, human development and special education, while also taking undergraduates into the field to conduct original research.

Silent Art Auction
The College of Education welcomed University President Roderick J. McDavis, Dr. Kent Smith, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Dr. Carl Martin, Superintendent of Athens Local Schools, for the College’s first silent art auction. Every art piece received a bid during the auction, which raised thousands of dollars for the artists and their local art programs.

Dr. Peggy McIntosh Visits the College of Education
Diversity author, educator and scholar Dr. Peggy McIntosh welcomed more than 60 students who filled Bentley Hall to listen to her lecture as guest speaker in Professor Jaylynne Hutchison’s Diversity and Gender class. The class had been discussing Dr. McIntosh’s article “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” for days in advance and were anxious to hear lessons straight from the author.

Spring McCracken Education Lecture Series
Detroit Public Schools Superintendent Connie Calloway visited Ohio University’s Athens campus, meeting with students, faculty and staff in the College of Education and the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs. Calloway delivered the lecture series’ keynote address, spoke in an introduction to teacher education class and met with College of Education faculty, staff and students.

Hicks Executive-in-Residence Named
Dr. Kern Alexander, Professor of Excellence in educational and organizational administration at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a former president of Western Kentucky University and Murray State University, accepted the College’s 2008 Samuel I. Hicks Executive-in-Residence award at the monthly Coalition of Rural and Appalachian Schools (CORAS) meeting. He also delivered the keynote address at the CORAS meeting and spoke to students, faculty and staff in the College during a separate one-hour lecture.
College Notes
A sampling of notable faculty, staff and student achievements in 2007-08

College of Education Faculty presented research on a range of educational issues—from rural culture to international partnerships—at the American Educational Research Association’s 2008 annual conference.

College of Education students, Krista McCallum Beatty, Marissa Blewitt, Misty Bowden, Jennifer Case, Christine Madjar and Adam Seigel, received nationally competitive awards during the 2008-09 school year.

College of Education students and members of Ohio University’s Council for Teachers of Mathematics (OUCTM) attended the 2008 National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Annual Meeting and Exposition. The conference, which was held in Salt Lake City, addressed the theme, “Becoming Certain about Uncertainty.”

Rachel Ackerman, graduate of Willoughby South High School, was awarded the 2008-09 Beatrice Gibby-Mannaseh Cutler Scholars Award, a four-year undergraduate scholarship to attend Ohio University’s College of Education. The award provides full tuition and room and board plus stipends to cover structured summer internships and study or work abroad. This summer, Ackerman travelled to Alaska to participate in leadership activities as part of her summer internship.


Marissa Blewitt, a junior math education major and the president of the Ohio University Council of Teachers of Mathematics (OUCTM), was awarded the Prospective Secondary Teacher Course Work Scholarship. She is one of only three recipients nationally to receive the $10K grant, which is awarded by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and funded by the Texas Instruments Demana-Waits Fund.

Catherine Cutcher, a doctoral student in Ohio University’s College of Education, received the 2008-09 American Association of University Women Dissertation Fellowship. Cutcher is one of only 65 recipients to receive the award this year, which granted her $20,000 to use while completing her dissertation.

Danielle Dani, assistant professor of Teacher Education, Dianne Gut, associate professor of Teacher Education and Bob Klein, assistant professor of Math Education, received two grants to fund the Mathematics and Science Coordination Teams project, or MaScOT.


Carolyn Ervin, projects director for The Literacy Center, Tim McKeny, assistant professor of Teacher Education, Susan Nolan, instructor for the College of Education, Sharon Reynolds, interim director of The Literacy Center and Linda Rice, associate dean of outreach and undergraduate studies, secured four grants to fund the Better Mathematics through Literacy project.

Gregory Foley, the new Robert L. Morton Professor of Mathematics Education, presented a paper entitled “The Multi-Semiotic Nature of Mathematical Language and Its Secondary School Classroom Implications” at the 11th International Congress on Mathematical Education in Monterrey, Mexico. He also received a grant to fund the Quantifying Uncertainty and Analyzing Numerical Trends (QUANT) project.

Katelyn Getz, Jarrett Kealey and Carrie Martin, 1st year College Student Personnel graduate students, were elected to positions in the American College Personnel Association (ACPA). These student representatives will sit on the Directorate for the Standing Committee for Graduate Students and New Professionals.


Aimee Howley, associate dean for research and graduate studies, and Craig Howley, adjunct associate professor of Educational Studies, co-authored the book Thinking About Schools: New Theories and Innovative Practices (Lawrence Erlbaum). Jerry Johnson, a recently employed assistant professor of Educational Studies, contributed several chapters to the book.


Peter Mather, assistant professor in Higher Education, received the American College Personnel Association’s (ACPA) national award for “Outstanding Graduate Student Mentor” in 2008.

David Moore, associate professor of Educational Studies, published “Concept Acquisition and Confidence Using a Spatial Probability Measure Instrument” in the Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia.

Adah Ward Randolph, associate professor in Educational Studies and newly appointed editor for the American Educational Research Association’s Division K Newsletter, recently completed work on the Spencer Foundation Grant and published “The Loving School and the African American Struggle from Education in Columbus, Ohio” in The Sage Handbook of African American Literature.


Samuel Ricks, a sophomore integrated social studies major and political action chair and parliamentarian for Ohio University’s chapter of the NAACP, received the 2007-08 Urban Scholar scholarship. Ricks graduated from Northland High School in Columbus, Ohio.

Blake Regan, a doctoral student in Ohio University’s College of Education, earned a Graduate Fellowship Scholarship, which enables him to work towards his doctorate in Math Education.

Michael Shepherd, a middle childhood education major attending Ohio University’s Zanesville campus, published his first novel, After the Rose and Grace, published by Publish America.


EDITOR’S NOTE: For more on grants received by the College of Education faculty and staff, please see our “New Grants” section on page 37.
COE offers class that explores different forms of diversity

By Natalie LaConte

Jaylynne Hutchinson, College of Education professor, knows that fear is a powerful emotion that “cuts across race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability and other important issues.” Yet every quarter she sees students who want to tear down that fear, examine their own beliefs and enrich their understanding of the issues surrounding cultural diversity.

Hutchinson coordinates the Cultural Studies in Education program in OHIO’s College of Education, which offers Education and Cultural Diversity 301 specifically for teacher preparation students. During each class, they discuss how these issues relate to education and the classroom.

This past year, for example, students responded to racial incidents such as the Jena Six and so-called “Martin Luther King Jr. parties.” Held on college campuses across the country, the parties advertised fried chicken and watermelon. According to the course’s instructors, a quarter never goes by without significant diversity issues providing “real life” dilemmas for discussion.

“I have such great admiration for students in our teacher preparation program who are willing to step up to this challenge,” Hutchinson said.

Teachers especially face a profound ethical responsibility in learning about and overcoming fears. The children in their classrooms are like sponges, constantly learning how to interpret the world around them by watching the people around them—including their teachers. “Educators hold a unique role in our society. They are the ones who see our children on a daily basis for 12 years,” Hutchinson said.

The course’s syllabus warns students that they might have to “step outside of their comfort zone.” For some discussions, the professor assigns each student a topic and stance to defend during debates. Junior Lauren Sauer said the debates in her class never grew too intense, but that the “back and forth disagreements were uncomfortable to say the least.”

Every assignment, every debate, requires students to analyze their personal ideas and values. By the course’s end, they complete a 10-hour, community-based diversity project.

For his final project, junior Ryan Jensen decided to focus on religion. He compared his faith, Christianity, to a religion with which he was unfamiliar. “I chose to do this because I think it would be ignorant to think I’ll never run into someone with a different religion in the classroom,” he said.

He visited the Islamic House on OHIO’s campus, and talked with people there about their faith as well as his own. Back in class, Jensen and his peers debated the merits of religious expression during his final presentation.

Sauer, along with senior Carolyn Klein and junior Benjamin Burwinkel, wanted to teach the Athens community more about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. They set up a workshop that “breaks down discrimination, fear and homophobia by discussing the issues that surround sexuality,” Sauer said.

Klein called the workshop “a great environment to learn about the LGBT community. Any and all questions are welcome, and all attendees know what is said will not leave the room.”

For many people, facing homophobia, racism, sexism and classism remains difficult, but students in the EDCS 301 course have taken a large step in defeating fears. “I have learned to think and evaluate situations of diversity in a different way,” said Klein. “I feel more capable of accommodating all my students.”

With every class, the course’s faculty remind the students that “becoming an anti-bias educator is a life-long journey. No one ever ‘arrives.’” However, by facing these issues together, “we come closer and closer to the promises of democracy.”

Who better to do this than teachers?

EDITOR’S NOTE: Natalie LaConte is a 2008-09 public affairs assistant for the College of Education and a senior in E.W. Scripps Schools of Journalism.
When Ginger Weade, Ph.D., interim chair of teacher education, became involved in education, the classroom was “a chalkboard, chalk dust and an overhead projector,” she said. Today, “technology is infused in the classrooms.”

Classrooms now mix time-tested teaching tradition and 21st-century technology. One such piece of technology, the SMART board, is rapidly changing the classroom landscape. A SMART board is essentially a digital video projector paired to a computer and specialized for the classroom. It’s a single tool that replaces many other teaching aids.

“I have seen data that suggests that 80 percent of classrooms in Ohio have SMART boards,” said Weade, citing grants as the financial source.

Scott Robison, director of distance learning and online resources, specializes in assisting students and professors with technology and teaching new ways to use it. He called the SMART board “pretty neat.” The boards can serve as a map, an overhead projector, a whiteboard, a VCR or DVD player and a computer. “They’re pretty much an all-in-one classroom,” he said.

According to Robison, another popular tool is distance learning using Adobe Connect software. “With Connect, a student, professor or anyone can log in from anywhere as long as they have an Internet connection.” The program allows people to videoconference using very minimal equipment, requiring only a web cam, a computer and Internet access.

In the past, video conferencing required expensive specialized equipment. “Now it is all integrated into a standard desktop computer. It is so easy,” Robison said, adding that even today’s tech savvy students are surprised by all of the uses that technology can have in the classroom.

What may have been complex in the past is now simple. Only a few years ago, education students struggled to get in contact with their student teaching supervisors.

“The process was so cumbersome,” said Weade. Students had to visit their professor’s office one-by-one, call the school and try to speak with the teacher. “Now, students just sit in class and call the teacher’s cell phone from their cell phone. What was once a process that took weeks, now takes just a few minutes. It is really fantastic.”

Experience breeds confidence. That is why when senior education major Marie Zingaroo arrived to her first day as a student teacher last spring, she had no problem jumping right into the classroom. “Everything they had in the classroom I had already seen or used during my education classes,” Zingaroo said.

“You don’t realize it, but it really helps you later if you see your professors teaching you using all of this technology,” said Zingaroo. “It is almost subconscious. You just know what you are doing.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: Chris D’Amico is a senior in E.W. Scripps School of Journalism.
The “gem” of Africa

Cultural competence for a new generation of crusaders

By Kelly Vormelker

Called the “gem” of Africa, Botswana has emerged as one of the continents’ most economically and socially advanced nations. The government has stabilized, and the people have found wealth in diamond and meat industries. Yet, deep troubles boil just below the surface: The gem of Africa has one of the highest rates of HIV/AIDS.

That stark juxtaposition was of special interest to College of Education Professor Yegan Pillay, a South African native who heads a study abroad program focused on HIV/AIDS research. Each summer, he leads a group of students to Botswana for one month where they work directly with organizations helping to fight HIV/AIDS.

“The primary emphasis is on experiential learning through cultural immersion,” said Pillay. In addition to facilitating the educational experience of students, Pillay is also engaged in a qualitative research study that explores how perceptions, biases and prejudices are influenced by virtue of being immersed in a culture that is distinctly different from one’s own culture of origin. These constructs are assessed in the participants prior to and during their stay in Botswana as well as upon their return to the United States. Preliminary findings suggest that as participants become more aware of self and what it is like to experience being in the minority, they tend to have a better understanding of marginalized groups in the United States.

DeOnna Whitfield, a second-year graduate student in the College of Education, was part of the program. Early on, a researcher taught her the ABCs of AIDS prevention: Abstain, Be safe and Condomize. “I really liked that because it is very real and simple, but it makes you think, why aren’t people getting it, adhering to it? Whose responsibility is it to fix the problem?” Whitfield said.

She brings an outsider’s view to a complex issue, and confessed that before arriving in Botswana, she was subject to the stereotypical images of Africa shown on television, in newspapers and magazines. However, Whitfield’s preconceptions changed immediately upon entering the country.

“I was able to see that [the citizens] don’t wear traditional garb; they are very influenced by western fashion. I was surprised to see that there were young African women around my age that didn’t look that different from me,” Whitfield said. Her observations and daily interactions contribute to what Pillay refers to in part as her “cultural fluency.”

“There is substantial research showing that people hold biases and pre-conceived notions of other places and people. For students, immersion in different cultural environments leads to attitudinal changes,” Pillay said. The students gain an understanding of a new culture and develop a way of relating to that culture that they can transfer to others as well.

Jessica Steck, a senior majoring in psychology with minors in French and social work, was one of the 14 on the 2008 Botswana trip. She spent time at a hospice vastly different from those in the United States. None of the severely ill patients were older than 35. “[We saw] what people are ignoring. All the people in the hospice were from the slums of the city. They didn’t go to school or speak English,” Steck said. “We were seeing Africa and then seeing what was pushed under the rug.”

Whitfield worked in a much different realm, at an orphanage called the SOS Children’s Village. Many of the children had either lost parents to HIV/AIDS or were HIV positive themselves.

To Whitfield’s surprise, the largest contradiction she found between American children and the children in the orphanage was in the Botswanan children’s optimism. They were characteristically happier than American children, she said, a youthful ignorance that will likely be lost.

“I feel like everyday I was faced with something that challenged what I believe, or how I felt about myself, how I felt about other people or even just my notions of peace and happiness,” Whitfield said.

On her last day, a two-year-old girl whom she had seen everyday arrived late. Whitfield was teasing her when the young girl’s mother told her that the girl was late because she was getting antiretroviral treatments. Until that moment, Whitfield had no idea the little girl was HIV positive. “It really made me value my life a little bit more. I’m 24-years-old and I don’t face what a two-year-old girl has to face. I wonder, if she makes it to the age of 24, how she is going to redefine her life,” Whitfield said.

Pillay’s program is double-sided in its benefits. It gives students the opportunity to gain a sophisticated understanding of a complicated issue, and it exposes the Batswana to groups of compassionate students who have traveled across the world to help them. Each year that the program continues new hopeful students return enlightened, having lent vital support to an ever-increasing effort.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Kelly Vormelker is a senior in E.W. Scripps School of Journalism
Retirement at risk?

The “graying of faculty” in higher education

By Tonya Milligan and Heather Anerino

In the face of a recession, rising health care costs, scarce resources and an increasing number of retirees, it is not surprising that many academics, both young and old, are wondering whether their retirement funds are sustainable.

Dr. Valerie Martin Conley, director of OHIO’s Center for Higher Education, says that she is unsure, as 65 is no longer the magic number for retirement. “People make retirement decisions over a period of time and factors such as age, health and wealth all play a role in that decision,” she said. “As more full-time faculty postpone retirement or retire to part-time positions, the number of young faculty talent in colleges and universities continues to decrease, which is something that Higher Education needs to pay close attention to.”

An associate professor of higher education and director of the Center for Higher Education at OHIO, Dr. Conley specializes in quantitative applications for educational policy and research, drawing upon her experience as a consultant for the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Her research interests include academic careers in higher education, how decisions related to faculty issues impact institutional effectiveness, and issues related to faculty retirement.

According to Dr. Conley, early retirement incentives have altered the retirement process fundamentally because the decision to retire is no longer simply about age. “Retirement is negotiated between the individual and the institution,” she said.

Dr. Conley’s research on faculty retirement policies was published in 2006 by the American Association of University Professors in a report that has sparked discussions among faculty members and administrators.

Most people do not make the decision to retire quickly or take the decision lightly – and many academics are deferring retirement in light of the recent economic slump, hoping for a market recovery. There were a number of professors who delayed retirement when the market took a downturn in 2000, and in 2008, that number may be on the rise again. Coupled with the progressive growth of the elderly and the growing number of baby boomers on the brink of retirement, “the graying of faculty” has become an increasing concern for colleges and universities, said Dr. Conley.

Because research suggests that a growing number of retirees may continue to work solely for health benefits, some institutions have added to or improved retiree health insurance, though some evidence suggests that colleges and universities are reducing retiree health benefits too.

One study found 34 surveyed private institutions that offered pre-65 retiree health benefits coverage to current retirees, but only 27 offered this benefit to new hires. Thirty private institutions offered post-65 retiree health care coverage to current retirees, but only 21 offered this benefit to new hires. “Large numbers of faculty who may not have been postponing retirement indefinitely now, but have witnessed changes in their retiree health coverage—especially the cost borne by faculty—may increase the number—particularly if they have not been able to plan adequately for it,” said Dr. Conley.

For young academics in particular, the issue of retirement is a looming concern. “The current trends suggest that responsibility is shifting from a societal and an organizational responsibility to an individual responsibility.” But are individuals prepared to take on that responsibility – building their savings to last through retirement and planning for independent healthcare? Conley said she’s uncertain. “We don’t know if, from an investment point of view, individuals are going to necessarily be able to do this in such a way that will enable them to retire and maintain the same quality of life they enjoyed while working.”

So what can be done? Dr. Conley says that early planning is the first step. “Individuals need to be much more aware of their prospects for a comfortable life in retirement. Earlier attention to saving and details regarding retirement planning decisions may make all the difference.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: Tonya Milligan is a Ph.D. candidate in Educational Administration at Ohio University’s College of Education
Performance, Progress, Prominence

Key elements of a powerful education program

By Heather Anerino

PERFORMANCE

Every year, College of Education faculty and staff notice certain students who stand out from their peers. In some cases, it’s a student’s drive or passion. In other cases, it’s creativity or sheer intelligence. “And that is where the honors track comes in,” said COE Dean Renée A. Middleton. “These students are more likely to study abroad, complete research projects and present with faculty at professional conferences. The honors track is designed to support those high achieving students.”

Having been one of those students herself, Student Senator Michelle Connavino, a senior majoring in middle-childhood education, proposed the COE start its own honors track. “I believe the best way to start improving our education system is to recruit smart, driven and qualified teachers for the classroom” she said. “Creating an honors track and providing extended research opportunities will help attract the type of students needed to affect change in our schools.”

Connavino developed the proposal for the honors track as a project for Student Senate last fall. She submitted a proposal to Dean Middleton for review, and was “extremely pleased when she accepted it without hesitation.”

However, Connavino said she was even more excited that the program began this year. “I was able to meet and speak to the first class of honors track students during the 2009 College of Education Freshmen Convocation, which was an incredible honor.”

The 16 students accepted into the inaugural Connavino Honors Track complete rigorous inquiry-based courses, which augment standard requirements. Honors students also participate in a collaborative research project that addresses a significant pedagogical issue. They will also produce conference papers and manuscripts by collaborating with faculty and other honors track students.

Freshman and honors track student Jennifer Ference said she has experienced many assets of the honors track already in her first year. “I’ve already begun a research project for the program,” she said. “I also get along great with my classmates in the learning community. We study together, which really helps me out. I have made a lot of friends, and I look forward to future activities that will help build an even stronger relationship.”

PROGRESS

“Revamp testing!”

When Ohio’s Governor Strickland called for a Conversation on Education, one group’s simple response reflected what most participants seemed to have on their minds. But testing was not the only issue discussed at the Watch Party held on August 18th, 2008 in Ohio University’s Baker University Center Ballroom.

The Watch Party was one of 12 discussions Strickland conducted throughout the state. His goal: to vet proposed ideas for creating an innovative, personalized education system. Watch Party attendees watched a live broadcast of the governor’s discussion in Washington County and participated in a facilitated
The event’s organizers called upon everyone involved in a single child’s education—parents, students, teachers, school administrators, community leaders and others—to attend.

Once the governor finished speaking, Watch Party participants took part in small-group discussions to develop suggestions for education reform. Popular, sound proposals were submitted to the governor’s office immediately following the event.

“With the help of Athens County school districts and Hocking College, our region is approaching education reform from a unified standpoint,” Dean Middleton said. “This was our chance as residents of Ohio to work together and help in the development of a plan to make Ohio a leader in the global job market.”

Hosted by the College of Education, Athens County school districts, the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs and Hocking College, the Watch Party conjured a number of suggestions for educational change. Recommendations for testing became more elaborate as one group explained that student assessment should be individualized to monitor student learning as specified by the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Another popular request was that schools teach year-round. Participants recommended full-day kindergarten and a research-based restructuring of the school calendar to shorten breaks, possibly increasing students’ information retention.

Many groups also touched on ideas to influence community and parental involvement within schools. One group suggested bi-weekly meetings, complete with take-home textbooks for family use.

“The Watch Party was a wonderful opportunity for our University and Athens County communities to come together and collaborate on ways to improve our state’s education system,” said Ohio University President Roderick J. McDavis. “It is important that we participate in this much-needed conversation about education in Ohio because today’s students are tomorrow’s leaders.”

COE Associate Dean Linda J. Rice said she was excited about the collaborative. “It provides future teacher-leaders with an experience that stretches across cultures, and will help prepare students for their roles as teachers in an ever-changing world. As the landscape of teaching shifts, we too need to shift and ensure that our students are ready to enter any environment with confidence and competence.”

The collaborative began as an idea to bring rural and urban communities together in order to prepare pre-service educators to teach anywhere. As a result of the collaborative, students at OHIO and The Ohio State University were provided with the opportunity for both urban and rural field experiences.

Kristen Cooper, a junior middle childhood education major at OHIO, said, “I wanted a different classroom perspective and that’s what I got.” Cooper grew up in a suburban district and observed rural schools in Athens, but had yet to observe and participate in a true urban classroom setting. “The Institute made me realize that there are a lot of similarities between rural and urban school districts, even though I had initially thought they were vastly different.”

Latia Taylor, a sophomore special education major at OHIO explained the importance of learning to teach in different environments. “Rural and urban schools need teachers the most and are among the least funded, so teachers need to be creative and use their imaginations during lesson planning. Some students don’t receive the education they deserve because teachers are not properly prepared,” Taylor said, adding that the collaboration helped her realize that she needs to be ready to teach in every environment.

The collaborative will also help students foster a deeper awareness of how to examine, understand and assess a variety of cultural experiences and issues, whether those experiences involve gender, race, class or locality.

For some OHIO students, the effect was immediate. “I have learned that teaching in an urban school is a possibility for me,” said Shannon Henry, a senior majoring in teacher education. “Before taking part in the Rural/Urban Collaborative, teaching in an urban school was not even on my radar. I wanted to teach in a suburban district much like the one I grew up in because that is where I felt comfortable.” Now, after stepping out of her comfort zone, Henry said she feels that she has grown as a person and has a new direction in her life.
UPWARD BOUND
then and now

Two directors share the ins and outs of Upward Bound’s success over 41 years

By Natalie LaConte

Upward Bound Director Ayanna Jordan stood at College Gate during the summer of 2008, surrounded by approximately 60 high school students and assorted counselors and faculty. As the crowd goofed around, posing for pictures and making faces at the photographer, Jordan acted as the ringleader among what seemed to be madness.

“There’s never a dull moment,” she said.
She gathered the students together for their group shot, and the close relationships among all of the Upward Bound members were apparent. Students stood arm in arm as counselors bounced from group to group.

After a few shots of straight lines and smiles, Jordan told everyone to take some funny pictures. The members posed with each other, a modern example of how easily Upward Bound has stood the test of time through 41 years at Ohio University.

History in the making
Upward Bound is one of eight federally funded programs designed to foster equality among high school students seeking higher education. Each program is designed to help attendees overcome class, social and cultural hurdles.

The students come to the OHIO campus during summer break to get a feel for college life. They live in dormitories with roommates, eat at OHIO’s dining halls and even do their own laundry.

“The classes are a lot different than what they take in high school,” said Jordan. “They’re like typical college classes.”
Students study the basics: math, English, geometry, modern languages and algebra, but they also take more “thought provoking” classes, like multicultural issues and current events, different types of fine arts and an introduction to computers. They learn the importance of planning through a time management and study skills class, which Jordan said is “important because many of them don’t have those time management skills that are needed.”

Ray Skinner, Ph.D., started the Upward Bound program during his first year at OHIO in 1966. The federal government launched the program in 1965 with a budget of $250 million to distribute among programs across the country. Along with Bob Boyd, department of secondary education chairman, Skinner wrote OHIO’s first proposal, requesting $126 thousand.

A native of Dumontville, Ohio, Skinner could identify with the high school students at whom the program was aimed. He spent his first year out of high school in the Army Air Corps as a cadet, but without the GI Bill, he wouldn’t have been able to afford a university education. “I made good grades in high school with the hope of going to college, but my father worked in a factory and would not have been able to finance it,” he said.
The GI Bill enabled him to enter Ohio State University as an undergraduate in 1946, where he majored in Health and Physical Education.

After graduating, Skinner began his teaching career in northern Ohio coaching basketball and teaching science and mathematics until 1963 when he began teaching at Kent State University High School while simultaneously working toward his master’s degree.

The fall after his graduation, Skinner came to OHIO and learned about the government’s new program. “Upward Bound sounded like a program in which we could identify the students who had the ability to go to college, but not the financial backing to attend,” said Skinner.

With funding approved, he helped select 125 students and hired faculty to work for the six-week program. Skinner found a teacher from Zanesville to teach an environmental education course, and professors to teach mathematics, French, and a history course about Canada. He reserved a dormitory on campus, purchased all the course materials and scheduled inspirational speakers to talk to the students about the importance of going to college.

A long, successful process
Years later, many components of Upward Bound have stayed the same. Students are expected to have an interest in attending college, which Jordan believes is evident through the students’ initiative in filling out an application.

“It’s a long process,” says Jordan. “I always say any student who fills out that application and submits it really wants to be in the program.”
The application is only one portion of a dishwasher list of requirements, though. It includes an extensive essay section, which asks the students to outline their career goals. They need excellent recommendations from their guidance counselor and teachers, and must be potential first generation college students whose families fall below a certain income level. They also have to prove they’re on a college preparation track in their high school classes. However, students can begin working toward that track through help from Upward Bound recruiters.

Once in the program, Upward Bound offers guidance to students to help them graduate high school on time and gain acceptance to a university.

“We’re watching them the entire time and supporting them to make sure that they stay on track, stay focused and remember what they’re here for,” said Jordan.
At the program’s end each summer, those students who receive a B or better in their classes partake in an out-of-state college tour, which “goes back to expanding their ideas of what they can do,” said Jordan.

Upward Bound has had an overwhelming effect in sending students to college, and many of those who start at OHIO choose to return, according to Jordan and Skinner.

“The Upward Bound program is a wonderful success,” said Skinner. “The kids work hard and the instructors are very creative in motivating the kids.”

As Jordan waited, camera in hand, for this year’s group of students to organize themselves for a photograph, she confessed that after more than eight years in Upward Bound, she remains sure about the government’s new program. “Upward Bound sounded like a program in which we could identify the students who had the ability to go to college, but not the financial backing to attend,” said Skinner.

With funding approved, he helped select 125 students and hired faculty to work for the six-week program. Skinner found a teacher from Zanesville to teach an environmental education course, and professors to teach mathematics, French, and a history course about Canada. He reserved a dormitory on campus, purchased all the course materials and scheduled inspirational speakers to talk to the students about the importance of going to college.

As Jordan waited, camera in hand, for this year’s group of students to organize themselves for a photograph, she confessed that after more than eight years in Upward Bound, she remains sure this is the track she was supposed to end up on. “It’s a lot of fun. It’s hard work, but it’s definitely rewarding.”
What **legacy** do you want to leave

**Albert Akyeampong**

Ph.D., OHIO College of Education; Instructor, Instructional Technology

“I hope to teach students, especially those who have technophobia, not just to love technology but to surprise themselves and to integrate technology in their teaching and classrooms in ways that they may have never been thought of. I hope students will graduate knowing that there is so much they can do with technology to enhance their pedagogy and help diversify instruction.”

**Parker Fernandez**

Senior, Integrated Mathematics Education

“I want to help others see that there are many ways to excel at Ohio University. The College of Education gave me the chance to learn to lead; I took advantage of that opportunity and future students can too. The legacy I leave will be for other people to decide. I hope that anyone said to be following in my footsteps would take advantage of all of the many opportunities they are given.”
Brittany Buxton

M.Ed., OHIO College of Education, College Student Personnel

“I want students in the College of Education to know that they are not limited in any way. I want to encourage other students to seek out experiences that will help them grow personally and professionally. The College of Education gave me the chance to work with top-notch faculty and, as part of the practicum requirements, to use my education in a variety of practical experiences both on and off campus.”

Adrienne Ott

Senior, Middle Childhood Education

“I hope to leave a legacy of being an active, involved student-leader. My goal is to make an impact on the College, whether it is helping fellow education majors succeed at Ohio University, playing a major role in improving McCracken Hall, or serving students in local schools as part of my involvement with student organizations. I want to make a positive impact on students’ lives and help them succeed in every aspect of their lives.”
The Edward Stevens Center for the Study and Development of Literacy and Language takes its name from its founder, Edward Stevens, Jr., Ph.D. A distinguished professor of history and philosophy at Ohio University, Stevens sought to improve literacy in Southeastern Ohio through research, professional development and outreach.

As the Literacy Center begins to stretch its reach beyond Appalachia and onto the state and national stage through online and in-person efforts, the dedicated people behind the center continue to reflect on the founder’s mission as well as the goals and priorities of the College of Education.

“This year will be a year of planning for the future growth of the Center, but it will also be a time for looking back,” said Interim Director Sharon Reynolds. Doing so, she added, involves enhancing and expanding professional development, resources, partnerships, research and services. It will also take meaningful communication with Literacy Center stakeholders.

The Literacy Center has an active Advisory Board consisting of faculty, educators, community members and other literacy professionals. The Board plays a significant role in advising the Center team on projects, and helps the Center stay true to its mission, as well as connected and relevant in the community.

The center has made some simple changes, such as offering the annual literacy symposium during the summer of 2009 instead of the traditional fall timetable, to facilitate participation by P-12 educators. This year’s symposium will feature Dr. Richard LaVoie, a nationally renowned expert on students with learning disabilities. For one of the more significant changes, Reynolds has poured effort into her revitalization of the Literacy Center’s tutoring program, part of the newly renovated Helen M. Robinson Center for Reading, which provides free reading assistance to children and adults in the rural communities surrounding Ohio University’s Athens campus. In the first quarter alone, more than 25 student volunteers have undergone tutor training and are providing tutoring services free of charge to struggling learners in the community. The Helen M. Robinson Center for Reading is also available as a resource for College of Education reading faculty to conduct their clinical reading courses.

Though the tutoring program hub is located in McCracken Hall, a Verizon Foundation Thinkfinity grant has made literacy training possible at all branch campuses via videoconferencing. As a result, tutoring once limited to the Athens community is now available throughout the region.

The Center also has begun offering literacy classes at Tri-County Mental Health & Counseling Services, Inc. Serving Athens, Hocking and Vinton counties, Tri-County’s clients represent some of the most economically disadvantaged areas in the state. Based on the premise that low literacy levels contribute markedly to stress, the program aims to increase clients’ overall mental health and wellness by improving their literacy skills. Researchers from the Literacy Center are awaiting Institution Research Board approval to conduct on-site research, examining the intersection of literacy and mental health.

Updated programming, new research and innovative strategies have extended the center’s reach and impact from Athens to teachers and students across Ohio. Reynolds is quick to point out that the progress thus far is due to a concerted effort on the part of each individual associated with the center. However, she reiterates that there is still much more work to be done.

Visit the center’s website for additional information on these programs as well as registration forms at www.ouliteracycenter.org. Newly updated, the website features a library, lesson plans, directory and tutorials.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Jimmie Beall is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Educational Administration at Ohio University’s College of Education.
A question-and-answer session with Superintendent T. Richard Murray, Ed.D.

What is your relationship with Ohio University’s College of Education?

Because I have been a member of the Coalition of Rural and Appalachian Schools (CORAS) and Immediate Past President, I’ve been involved in conversations and projects with the Ohio University’s College of Education for the last 12 years.

CORAS is an organization comprised of 133 school districts and other educational institutions in the 29-county region of Ohio designated as Appalachia. The mission of CORAS is to advocate for and support the public schools of Appalachian Ohio in the continuous improvement of educational opportunities available to all the region’s children, so CORAS and the College of Education share similar goals.

What do you see as the central role of colleges of education and what should their relationship be with P-12 schools?

The skill sets needed for the 21st-century require critical thinking, problem-solving skills and applied knowledge for practical results. In addition, students will be required to gain mastery of rigorous academic content, exhibit innovative and creative thinking, develop advanced communication skills and learn to build relationships to foster team learning and teamwork. This will all need to take place in an environment of global awareness. If the classrooms of southeast Ohio’s public schools are going to yield these results, the partnership between public school classrooms and colleges of education needs to be strong, open and responsive. Thanks to the leadership of Dr. Renée Middleton, the relationship between CORAS and the College of Education is productive, sincere and agile.

I understand that you played a role in the development of the College’s new conceptual framework. Can you tell me a bit about that role?

I played a leadership role with the implication wheel (I-Wheel) process. Simply stated, the I-Wheel process was a tool that was used by the College of Education and CORAS to examine one key question: “What are the possible implications of creating an aligned, agile, regional system of professional learning that meets the unique needs of learners and the broader demands of a global society?”

The data revealed that if 21st-century skills were going to be required of the nation’s public school students, 21st-century teacher training would need to be different than the current model. Beyond that we identified changes that would have to take place on the part of principals, superintendents, school teachers, students in our public schools as well as college students. So I have been working with the College to develop a 21st-century conceptual framework.

How does the College’s new conceptual framework address the “unique needs of children and the broader demands of a global society?”

It has been said that “people tolerate other people’s convictions but they act on their own.” The I-Wheel process, the willingness of the College of Education to ask reflective questions, and the partnership between the College of Education and CORAS member school districts have all created the opportunity for an open and candid dialogue that gets to the heart of people’s convictions.

The process of working with the College to develop a living, renewed, 21st-century conceptual framework has revealed little doubt that the College of Education and the CORAS public school districts have the growth and successful development of young people as their primary focus. This single purpose—the desire to help young people grow and become successful—will be a benchmark that will serve to successfully guide groups in future planning, deliberations and strategic deployments.
Even though he’s some 8,000 miles from Africa, nestled in the Appalachian foothills at Ohio University, Yegan Pillay, PhD, doesn’t want to let go of his home halfway across the world. An assistant professor in Counselor Education in the College of Education, he hosts a summer program for OU students to work with HIV and AIDS organizations in Africa.

“I think it’s important. I am South African, so I have an interest in the African continent,” Pillay said. “I’m interested in broadening student perspectives and merging cultures.”

He’s not alone. The COE has a long history of faculty working in Africa. Beginning some 50 years ago, the federal government initiated projects, calling on OHIO for assistance. However today, it’s Pillay, his colleagues, and students who build those relationships. Past and present faculty have assembled whole schools, initiated teacher-training programs, worked with social groups, and helped to implement primary education for an entire nation of children.

“Ohio University has a great record in Africa, and the College of Education has been front and center on that,” said Milt Ploghoft, director of international programs during the ‘60s.
In the beginning
In the '50s, Great Britain began loosening its grip on the African continent, leaving their former colonies to govern themselves. And from halfway across the world, the United States government considered this an opportune time to invest in these newly independent nations—especially those rich in natural resources—by helping the countries develop systems integral to their success.

Nigeria was one of those countries. Located on Africa’s west coast, Nigeria’s population suffered from alarmingly low literacy rates. In northern Nigeria they dipped below 20 percent. So in '58, the U.S. government asked OHIO to help. They needed a team to establish a college for primary education teachers in Kano, an almost entirely Muslim city in the north.

Ploghoft said that because of the people’s Islamic views, only men were formally educated. However, the school that COE faculty built would change that, expressing the importance of education for males and females alike. And today, women account for roughly 30 percent of the college’s faculty.

For three years Ploghoft lived in Kano, ensuring that the new school functioned successfully. His wife and children joined him, and lived in a house about five miles outside of town. The area was safe then, untouched by the oil troubles that make it unstable now. People had to fill out applications for guns, and could only check them out, not keep them at home. “My kids would hop on bikes and ride to the movies at 7 p.m. They couldn’t do that now,” Ploghoft said.

Also during the years from '58 to 2006, faculty from the COE developed similar programs in Swaziland and Lethoso (a landlocked dot of a nation whose main export is water). Ploghoft visited Swaziland on an annual basis for in-service development. The country’s king had been crowned at 18, after returning from study abroad in England. To prove he was worthy of his title, the young king had to go on a lion hunt, Ploghoft said, and though his people didn’t know it, he was chasing down an elderly lion donated from South Africa.

These projects kept Ploghoft motivated. In a book he wrote in 2006 documenting the COE’s international efforts, Ploghoft said these projects, “contributed so much to my understanding and appreciation of the efforts of the people in developing nations to provide educational benefits for their children and youth.”

Success breeds success
Following the success in Kano, the U.S. government in '80 asked OHIO faculty to help the country of Botswana implement a new national policy: universal primary education. At the time, Botswana shared one single university with two other countries: Swaziland and Lesotho. Hundreds of miles separated the countries, and the collective university struggled.

However, with the arrival of COE faculty such as Max Evans, the struggle lessened. Evans and his wife, along with COE faculty member Luther Haseley and his wife, lived in Botswana for six years. Evans called the experience "tremendous. Our objectives were fully met."

Called PEIP (Primary Education Improvement Project), the team members developed objectives. They provided primary school teachers with bachelor’s level education and prepared students to take over their roles in the university. The program took a decade to implement completely, and OHIO sent a steady stream of faculty to the landlocked nation through the ‘80s.
The collaboration that Evans and his peers established with the University of Botswana and the country's Ministry of Education had far-reaching affects. Not only did they build a teacher training program within the university, they also arranged for students to travel to the United States in order to further develop their professional skills. When those students returned to the university or to the Ministry of Education, they replaced OHIO employees who had filled the positions. Evans said that developing that process was key to the host country's independence, their ability to not rely on foreigners.

“When we left, the Batswana carried on, and I don’t think they even missed us,” Evans said. “They were able to move right ahead with programs we’d developed. It was just very satisfying.”

OHIO’s then-president, Charles Ping, PhD, said he was “so proud” of the program and its “continuing value with the University of Botswana.” During one of his trips to the country, he watched out his hotel window as men installed the first traffic light in the city of Gaborone. “They’re a functioning democracy now. I think we were part of that,” he said.

The Republic of Botswana was so grateful that officials declared OHIO the official North American depository for all government documents. University leaders also invited Ping to speak at the convocation when they proclaimed the University of Botswana’s independence.

But the Africans weren’t the only ones who benefited from the partnership. “Faculty came back and taught with a richer understanding,” Ping said.

**Changing hands**

Now that most of the COE faculty who worked on the initial Africa projects have retired, new faculty members are filling the void. And they’re not waiting for the government to come calling with program ideas. Students and faculty alike understand the need for international work. Now, they’re taking the initiative and organizing trips themselves.

Like Evans, Hasely, and Ploghoft before him, Yegan Pillay’s work in Africa also involves Botswana, but in a different way. Every summer, he leads a group of students (typically limited to 12, though this year interest surpassed that and 14 qualified students went), on a four-week journey to the country. The students come from across university disciplines, including some from Yegan’s counseling classes.

For the past three years, the groups have spent two weeks working with organizations on HIV/AIDS prevention and two weeks exploring the country’s culture and talking to experts. Pillay works constantly to match students with organizations that fit their individual skills. He might place a communication student at an organization that wants to create a radio program, or a counseling student at one with a psychological distress helpline.

Often, the students gain a new perspective on their personal privileges, even learning what it means to treasure running water. “They recognize and are reminded of what they have,” Pillay said. “They recognize how people are able to live life quite happily with very limited resources.”

In Botswana, many of those same students also become a minority for the first time in their lives. “It’s a very powerful catalyst to help them think more about themselves,” Pillay said.

Pillay is also a faculty representative for the African Educational Research Network, a non-profit group of universities from Africa and the United States that formed in 2001. According to the official statement, their mission is “to broaden the scope of sociopolitical, educational and economic understanding about the continent of Africa.” In 2007, AERN held its annual meeting at
They’re very good students, and very involved because this is not an opportunity they normally have.”

— David Moore, associate professor in the COE

Ohio, where members discussed work and research in Africa. The group also produces a journal bi-annually, African Symposium.

Learning and teaching

Sandra Turner, Ph.D., an Educational Studies professor, has devoted years to research in Africa. After earning a Fulbright Scholarship, Turner spent two years at the University of Education in Winneba, Ghana. There, she taught educational technology courses. She also researched the use of computers in Ghanaian secondary schools and teacher preparation programs.

Inspired by her time in Ghana, Turner set up a master’s degree program between the COE and the University of Education—Winneba. Instructional Technology associate professors David Moore and Teresa Franklin were excited to participate.

Throughout this past academic year, Moore taught a class of 25 students in Ghana from his computer in Athens. “They’re very good students, and very involved because this is not an opportunity they normally have,” he said.

In July, he traveled to Africa for the first time, and documented his trip in photographs, which have since gone up on his website. “In Ghana there’s a lot of progress being made, but it’s still a developing country,” Moore said. “If you want something here, you go get it. There, you have to do a little more planning and organizing. It takes more time.” In Ghana, Moore finally met his students and taught them face-to-face, four hours a day.

The students took to Moore immediately. They ate lunch together, and showed him around the country on weekend excursions, wanting him to learn as much as they were learning.

The students in Ghana didn’t mind staying late. Unlike his students in America who sometimes pack up their bags before class ends, the students in Ghana didn’t object when class extended for hours. “It shows a level of motivation that was really nice.”

Moore noticed other differences, too. All of his students in Ghana had cell phones and didn’t hesitate to call his. On the average day, Moore spoke four or five times to students over the phone; however, when he gives his number out to students at OHIO, an entire quarter will pass with only a few calls.

“It’s an interesting dynamic in where they are in development,” he said of the Ghana students, adding that he wishes he’d gone to Ghana before teaching the students online.

Spending time in the country gave Moore a chance to see what they were up against—power outages, internet connectivity problems, and busy schedules. “It was hard for me to put myself in their shoes without going through their daily lives. In general, anytime you see a culture without familiar resources, you really realize how much you take for granted.”

Now back in Athens, Moore said the COE is fortunate to have PhD students from Ghana. He feels comfortable drawing on their experiences for other students. And he still thinks about his students in Ghana, would go back in an instant if given another opportunity.

They think about him, too, and send emails to check in. The communication keeps Moore and his former students connected, despite the thousands of miles between Athens and Africa. And those bonds are something that College of Education faculty have known for decades.
Arthur Stellar: tackling education issues

By Katelyn Burkhart and Heather Anerino

When Arthur Stellar, Ph.D., says that he has played almost every role a school system offers, he is telling the truth. Now superintendent of Taunton Public Schools in Massachusetts, Stellar started his career in education as a bus driver, taught a variety of subjects and coached sports before moving into administration.

“I went into administration because you can have more influence,” Stellar said. “You can work directly with teachers to develop connections. You can develop more cross-school relationships.”

The road hasn’t been easy, primarily because Stellar chooses to work in high-needs schools, partnering with communities to build success. He credits his experience at Ohio University as a foundation for his work. After receiving his bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees from the College of Education, Stellar stayed in the area to start his teaching career at Athens City Schools.

“It is unusual to attend the same university for numerous degrees, but for me it was a way to continue to grow with the same faculty that I had built relationships with,” he said. “Even when I was an undergraduate, the College of Education faculty was very clued in to the needs of the students.”

As superintendent of Oklahoma City Public Schools, Stellar led the district from 32 at-risk schools to only three in a matter of seven years. Now he is applying that experience at Taunton Public—a district last in its county for funding with more than 40 percent of its students coming from low-income families.

Those disparities only motivated Stellar to take the position at Taunton and help turn the institution around. Schools, he said, have to have priorities. “Money is not the answer to good education. Of course, it helps because it provides more resources, but it is not the answer that will automatically improve education.”

Stellar’s priority is the students. He strives to create a clear focus and direction, involving a “critical mass” of teachers, custodians, librarians, social workers, and others. “I know that ultimately to be successful we all need to work together—community, parents and staff,” he said.

Statistics show that his vision is working. As of the 2007-2008 school year, Taunton Public had raised its attendance to more than 96 percent, and lowered the dropout rate from 7 percent the year before to 4.6 percent.

Stellar’s efforts haven’t gone unnoticed. He has received awards from the Horace Mann League, the National Dropout Prevention Center and his alma mater, OHIO. Most recently, he earned a Fulbright Teachers Exchange grant from the United States Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

The grant makes Stellar one of approximately 450 U.S. citizens who will travel abroad during the 2008-2009 academic year. He will spend three weeks in Mexico during June and July, while in previous years, Stellar has used the Fulbright to study in Japan and Argentina.

Despite his accolades as an administrator, Stellar sees another role as his most important: mentor. “One of the things I am most proud of is being a coach, being a mentor to help other professionals develop. We work together to help students achieve, and that is the most essential job we can do.”
Caroline Stuart: lifelong counselor and volunteer

By Natalie LaConte

Caroline Stuart realizes the value of an education. While growing up with her Quaker family in Shore Hills, New Jersey, she inherited her parent’s love of learning. “Education was always a top priority,” she said. “Your education comes into play in so many ways in your life.” Stuart’s educational background includes Columbia, Stanford and Harvard. Her college-level learning, however, began at Ohio University.

“I felt I got a good education,” said Stuart. “We had really close and good relationships with the professors; you were always able to get help.” Today Stuart lives in Meadow Lakes, a retirement community in New Jersey. Despite her ongoing involvement in the community, Stuart took on a new project in 2002. She realized the need for educational guidance among the young employees of Meadow Lakes and took action. Many of the employees were local high school juniors and seniors who were unlikely to pursue higher education upon graduation, so Stuart stepped in.

Through the Meadow Lakes Education Award Program, Stuart utilized her guidance counseling skills to help students complete college applications and make big decisions about their future. Along with counseling, students admitted into the program also received a scholarship.

“But the residents are so generous, we’ve been able to sponsor the whole thing,” said Stuart.

The Education Award Program has grown from seven participants in the first year to 35, and Stuart estimates that 80-100 students have been affected by the program. She was excited to report that the first group of students have graduated from college, with one member continuing on to graduate school.

In 2007, Stuart was presented with the Sylvia Weiss Senior Citizen Award for Outstanding Service as a Volunteer by East Windsor Mayor Janice Mironov. Mayor Mironov noted that, “Caroline Stuart’s involvement demonstrates a passion and deep dedication to encouraging and assisting people, providing care and comfort to Meadow Lakes residents and assisting our local students in preparing for future educational and professional opportunities. We are proud to have Mrs. Caroline Stuart as a part of our community.”

The Sylvia Weiss Senior Citizen Award is to recognize a senior citizen who has exhibited outstanding service through volunteerism to the community by way of the schools, religious institutions or service organizations.

Stuart's lifelong dedication to her own learning and that of those around her has truly defined her favorite saying: “there are two things you never lose. One is travel, and the other is education.”

“I do feel very indebted for the education I received at Ohio University,” she said.
“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

By Morgan Lyles

Raymond J. Asik, LTC USAF (Ret.), B.S.Ed. ’63, grew up in the same town as Sandra Kovanes, even shared the same homeroom in high school, but their paths didn’t cross until they both took summer jobs at the same business post-graduation.

“I happened to notice this beautiful girl walking away from me. Back then girls wore the pedal pushers that went down to their knees. Well, I noticed her legs and immediately wanted to meet her. Her legs were beautiful,” Ray said. “I just saw the back of her and that was it for me. I guess I was and still am a leg man.”

His passion ignited, Ray introduced himself and the two discovered that they were attending the same college. Their 44 years together began with the movie, The Guns of Navarone. Born in 1941 in a northern Ohio town along Lake Erie called Lorain, Ray graduated from the local high school 18 years later. He set out to pursue a career in engineering, and applied solely to Ohio University.

However, during his freshmen year at OHIO, Ray decided to switch his major from engineering to math and to minor in health and physical education. Teaching, he decided, was what he wanted to do with his life.

When school let out for summer, Ray made the four-hour trek back home to Lorain. He took a part-time job at Lorain Products Corporation (LPC), whose owner “went out of his way to give summer and winter jobs to college students.”

As fate would have it, LPC turned into far more than a summer job. It was there that Ray met Sandy. Sandy had graduated from Lorain High School two years after Ray, in 1961. Before leaving for college, she took a summer job in the LPC office, where Ray was working the assembly line. For two years they dated at OHIO. Ray recalled countless stories of their time together on campus: J-Prom, Voight Christmas formals, basketball games, fraternity parties, many walks on campus holding hands, study dates with “not too much studying,” sharing 3.2 beer and going dancing. After a springtime date on a Friday night, Ray returned to his fraternity house with the intention of following tradition and painting the school’s “Kissing Circle” with his fraternity’s letters as a way of expressing his love for Sandy. However, none of Ray’s fraternity brothers were interested in taking part in the tradition. So Ray grabbed some paint and a brush and began his mission alone. When he reached the circle, he had a change of heart.

“Since none of the Pikes wanted to help me, why should I paint it for the Pikes when I could paint it for my loved one, Sandy?” Ray said.

He painted the circle white, waited for it to dry, and then wrote, “To Sandy, Love Ray,” in blue. After his late-night mission, Ray returned to the Pike house to sleep and await the moment when he could show Sandy his work. The next morning, he called her to arrange a typical meeting at Baker Center for coffee.

“We shared too many sweet rolls and coffee at Baker, more than I can remember or count,” Ray said.

He showered, dressing up in his Pike blazer and tie. When he arrived at Voight Hall to pick Sandy up, she knew something was going on. Ray then walked her to the Kissing Circle to see his painting. She was overwhelmed, and his heart filled with immense pride. Though he didn’t know it at the time, he had begun a new, more personalized Kissing Circle tradition.

Ray went on to graduate from Ohio University in ’63, and joined the United States Air Force, spending almost three years in Germany and Thailand. While away, he wrote letters to Sandy, but thousands of miles separated them, and the couple found it difficult to maintain correspondence after a few months.

Ray returned to the United States to serve one final year, this one at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois. Immediately, he called
Sandy, and they started dating once again. On days off, Ray made 900-mile roundtrip drives from the base to Lorain so the two could spend time together. They were engaged in May of '67 and married a year later.

Sandy, B.S.Ed '65, taught kindergarten and first grade in Lorain City Schools for 30 years before retiring in 2000. She earned her master's degree in education from Bowling Green University.

Ray realized his wife's passion for growth in not only her teaching experience, but in her avid interest in gardening, which inspired her to earn a Master Gardener certification from The Ohio State University.

They had been married 37 years when Sandy passed away suddenly in October 2005. Their children, Annmarie, 36, and Matthew, 34, now live in Florida and Colorado respectively. Like his parents, Matthew pursued a career in education, and is a high school teacher and coach at Thunder Ridge High School in Highlands Ranch. Annmarie is an Assistant Airport Administrator for the Pensacola Airport in Florida, and has two children of her own—Alex, 5 and Connor, 4.

With the same dedication and passion he had when he painted the Kissing Circle, Ray endowed the Sandra Asik Memorial Scholarship, awarded to a junior or senior Early Childhood Education major.

“Sandy believed the future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams,” Ray said. He wants to keep her beliefs and her love for Ohio University alive. “I think she loved OU more than me,” he joked.

Sandy and Ray shared many special memories, from passing notes on campus to standing on the cold porch in front of Voight Hall, kissing, hugging and trying to stay warm in the winter before the girls’ curfew. When snow covered the ground, Ray wrote notes in it with his feet that Sandy could see from her dorm room window.

The couple went on to enjoy dancing, spending time with their families, attending and working Cleveland Indians games, and treasuring each others’ company. Their love for OHIO is evident in their endless memories.

And just as they have fondly remembered Ohio University, students will remember Ray’s generosity and Sandy’s spirit because of their scholarship. It’s proof of Ray’s compassion and creativity, just like the Kissing Circle.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Morgan Lyles is a 2008-09 public affairs intern with the College of Education and a junior in E.W. Scripps School of Journalism
Dear readers,

As I sit here writing to you, I find it hard to believe that more than a year has passed since I joined the College of Education. The saying “time flies when you’re having fun” is truly applicable in this sense. Throughout my travels, I have had the great pleasure of spending time with many proud alumni and friends. Thank you for making me feel so welcome and for treating me as a fellow Bobcat. I look forward to meeting even more of you in the upcoming year!

I am equally grateful to all of our alumni and friends who support the College. It is because of you that we are able to embark on new initiatives that emphasize performance, progress and prominence, such as the Connavino Honors Track, the Rural/Urban Collaborative and the renovation of McCracken Hall. While the latter project is in very early planning stages, we are hopeful to have the continued support of our alumni, friends, faculty and staff in this endeavor.

It is our goal to have the College’s home reflect the quality of education we provide, as well as that of our dedicated students and esteemed faculty. It is also important to us that you, as graduates and advocates of our institution, are proud of the College of Education and the impact you have had on its history.

Thank you, again, for all that you do on behalf of the College of Education.

Best,

Kaylin Kopcho
Director of Development
(740) 593-4465
kopcho@ohio.edu

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NEW SCHOLARSHIPS

The College of Education is pleased to acknowledge the following scholarships that were established in the time since our last publication.

The Charles L. and Marlain R. Evans Scholarship

Charles L. and Marlain R. Evans have always valued education. Members of the Class of 1950, Charles achieved a B.F.A. in Photography while Marlain graduated with an A.B. in Social Work from the College of Arts and Sciences. After receiving a M.Ed. from New England College, she worked as a Reading Specialist with Pittsford Central Schools in New York.

Upon Charles' passing in December 2007, Mrs. Evans established this scholarship which benefits College of Education undergraduates in the Department of Teacher Education. Eligible students must be academically talented and demonstrate financial need. Candidates must have primary residence in Cuyahoga County (Ohio), Taylor County (West Virginia), Monroe County (New York) or Jefferson Country (New York). Preference is given to students seeking a reading endorsement or pursuing a program of study focused on literacy.

The River Bend Heritage Arts and Sciences Scholarship Award

H. William Taylor, B.S.Ed. 1956, M.Ed. 1963, established this award to benefit incoming freshman who are graduates of Independence High School in Independence, Ohio or Meigs High School in Meigs County, Ohio. Candidates will have been accepted to Ohio University and the College of Arts and Sciences or the College of Education to pursue an undergraduate degree with emphasis on the biological sciences. The intent of this scholarship is to reward students that are academically gifted and in need of financial aid.

Mr. Taylor spent 44 years working at Independence High School. 36 of those years were spent in the classroom, initially teaching both English and science courses. As the school expanded, he chose to focus on biological sciences and served as the Chair of the Science Department.

The Sharon L. Spencer Scholarship

Established by the late Sharon L. Spencer, B.S.Ed. 1963, this award will benefit full-time College of Education students majoring in Early Childhood Education. Candidates must be in good academic standing and not qualify for any other form of scholarship aid.

Ms. Spencer was a lifelong elementary school teacher and felt strongly about preparing talented, responsible, ethical educators. It was her goal to lessen the financial burden of promising undergraduate students who follow in her footsteps.

Dr. Charles F. Wiedenmann is a three-time College of Education alumnus - B.S.Ed. '70, M.Ed. '73, Ph.D. '78. He is pictured with Tonya M. Milligan, a doctoral student in Education Administration and recipient of the Donald M. Knox Endowed Scholarship.

London M. Glass, recipient of the Dr. Irene G. Bandy-Hedden Scholarship and middle childhood education - language arts and science major, is congratulated by Irene Bandy-Hedden, B.S.Ed. '62.

in pictures: OHIO COE STUDENTS AT WORK
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<tr>
<th>Principal Investigator</th>
<th>Title</th>
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TOTAL: $2,221,622.82
In Her Own Words

Juggling life as a new mother, wife, doctoral student and teacher

By Jennifer Tesar, M.Ed. ’05 and Ph.D. candidate in curriculum and instruction at OHIO’s College of Education

As an educator, my biggest challenges are proving to my students how important education is in their lives and how important they are as individuals. But I have to balance those challenges with others I face as a wife, a new mother and a doctoral student.

I completed my master’s degree three years ago at Ohio University with licensure to teach grades 7 through 12 in integrated social studies. However, after graduation I was torn. OHIO’s College of Education had accepted me into a Ph.D. program, and simultaneously Meigs Middle School near Athens had offered me a position teaching 7th grade social studies. I had to choose between furthering my own education and finally getting to do what I love—teach.

Initially, I considered putting off my Ph.D. to concentrate on my first year as an educator. I didn’t think teaching, passing my Praxis III, working toward a Ph.D. and learning to be a mother was possible all at once. But, through a lot of encouragement and advice from my advisor, mentor and friend, Dr. Frans Doppen, I decided to start my doctoral program and accept the position at Meigs.

At first I thought he was crazy to think I could make it all work, but I was in the routine of taking classes and was afraid that if I took time off, I would never finish my Ph.D. So I told myself, “Let’s just give this a try, and worst case scenario, I stop taking classes.” I also didn’t set any expectations for finishing my program.

My schedule would be nothing new to my husband Tom, who told me that if this was something I wanted to do, I should do it. His mother had completed her Ph.D. while working fulltime as a teacher and then as a principal, simultaneously raising Tom and his sister.

Both rewarding and challenging, I’ve struggled to make it all work. To give 100 percent in one area without lacking in another, I find virtually impossible. When I’m planning lessons or grading papers, thoughts of other assignments and research fill the back of my mind. When I’m working on my own studies, my mind wanders to the test I still need to create, the group project my students will be working on, and the parents I still have to call.

On Sundays, preparation for my school week begins. I get all my clothes ready, ironed and hung in my closet in the order of the days I am going to wear them. That way, all I have to do is wake up in the mornings and get dressed. I waste no time thinking about what to wear or worrying that I don’t have anything to wear.

As soon as I get home from work on Monday, I start planning for the next day. I unload my son Andrew’s diaper bag and get it ready for the next morning. Then, I unload my school bag and get it organized for the next day. Finally, for the best part of my day, I get to spend a few hours with Andrew. Fortunately, I get home early enough to have time just for him. We go for walks or to the park, or just play with his toys at home.

It’s a busy life, but OHIO’s education program has prepared me. Our location in Appalachia makes me especially attuned to issues that people here face—poverty and lack of access to food, jobs and healthcare. In the COE, I work with faculty who allow me to really explore my area of interest, gain hands-on experience, prepare me to teach students in urban and rural areas and develop myself as a person.

I have had many successes, only to be followed by many failures. I have presented at several conferences on social studies and have published two papers with Dr. Doppen. But I’ve also received my fair share of rejections journal articles and presentation proposals.

Through the good and bad, my professors, administrators and family have blessed me with their support in my endeavor to finish my Ph.D. Professors who know what it is like to be in the classroom have provided extensions so I can complete my work and have mentored me in independent study classes that accommodate my work schedule.

I know I have a long road ahead of me in completing my Ph.D., but as I have learned throughout my professional and educational experience, teaching is an ongoing set of opportunities to learn.
“It’s possible to work in public education and get rich!” Dr. Robert Stabile told an excited crowd at the College of Education’s Annual Society of Alumni and Friends (SAF) Spring Conference.

Dr. Stabile, author of Teach Your Way to Wealth was the keynote speaker, discussing finances and budgeting with the dozens of students, faculty and alumni who crowded into McCracken Hall for the lecture.

After 30 years in the Ohio public school system, as both a teacher and superintendent, Dr. Stabile is an expert in the area. His secrets to success include participating in extracurricular activities, being flexible about teaching different subjects and making friends with fellow educators. Dr. Stabile even shared current salary charts for public schools in Ohio and graphs that highlighted the benefits that may not show up in a paycheck, like good insurance and summers off.

Early childhood education major Courtney Nemeth is only a junior, but found the information about saving money and retirement an essential lesson.

“I think a lot of times people assume that there is no business element to an education major. In reality, there really are important things to learn other than the basics of early childhood or what a third grader needs to know,” Nemeth said. “There is an adult aspect, and things we’ve learned today really show that.”

A variety of options were available for professional development following the keynote. Alumni presented information and led discussions on topics ranging from taking the Praxis III to classroom management.

College of Education alums Chris Hayward (SAF President), Paul Kulik (SAF immediate past president) and Jan Williams all have successful careers in education and they know that the key to landing that first job is a great interview. Students who participated in the mock interview were from all sectors of the College of Education and were looking for jobs in cities across the country. One thing they all had in common were worries about job interviews.

Rachel Ulliman, a senior education major, enjoyed all aspects of the day. “The conference put on by the Society of Alumni and Friends was amazing! Between the mock interviews, the key note speaker Dr. Robert Stabile, and the session on resume building, I feel so much more prepared for the future!”

The Society of Alumni and Friends is a part of the Ohio University Alumni Association. Its purpose in short: to promote the mission of the College of Education and facilitate the active involvement of College alumni and friends. For information on how to become more involved with SAF and/or serve on the society’s board, please contact: Chris Hayward at hayward_c@shaker-heights.k12.oh.us.
IN FOCUS

OHIO College of Education student Jennifer Williams teaches during her professional internship at Alexander Middle School.