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“Living our Legacy”. Our alumni symbolize the roots of the College of Education, supporting current students amid the branches. From bottom left: Connie Calloway, Chris Hayward, Elaine Jacobow, Rodney McDevitt, Brenda Haas and Lt. Col. Mike Jackson.

Illustration by Emily Marcus, photographs of students and alumni by COE contributors and photographers, background image from istockphoto.com

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2007 GRADUATION

2007 GRADUATION
Preparing Talented, Responsible, Ethical Educators

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

Although little more than a year has passed since I took the helm as dean, the College of Education has really come to feel like home. I feel regenerated by the College’s deep-rooted history and the tireless dedication of our faculty, students, staff and alumni, whose work extends throughout South- east Ohio and around the world. As Ohio’s first state-supported teacher preparation program in 1886, our College was founded on the spirit of recognizing—and answering—vital community needs. We daily build on this tradition by preparing educators to meet the changing needs of our students, faculty, administrators, staff, and communities, from innovations in math education (see pages 18-19) to combating cyberbullying (page 10).

This issue of the Athenaeum celebrates how the College of Education continues to live our legacy. Our graduates—the hallmark of excellence for the College—play a vital role. We honor the pioneering spirit of our alumni as a tribute to our enduring past. Whether co-founding women’s universities in the Middle East, starting a nation-wide movement to belatedly welcome home Vietnam veterans, or taking the superintendent’s seat in one of the most challenging school districts in the nation—our alumni consistently live up to our historical standard of excellence (for more on these stories, see pages 12-15).

Living Our Legacy

Legacy, as I see it, is not some ivy-covered monument frozen in the past. It’s a dynamic enterprise and a responsibility. And just as our alumni strive to constantly revitalize their work, the College of Education is entering a period of renewal. I believe that every college should periodically look inward to evaluate strengths, identify challenges and assess or redefine its identity. To do so, we—the College of Education family of faculty, administrators, staff, students and alumni—are doing some soul-searching. The central questions are:
- What sets us apart from other colleges of education?
- How do we align our professional learning system to meet the diverse educational needs of children and adults and the broader demands of a global society?
- Nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Ohio University serves a distinctive region, characterized by rural communities, each with its individual history and education needs. This setting allows our College to assume a leading role in rural education, while maintaining our commitment to teacher preparation for any and all types of districts.

Strengthening communities: near and far

Our College boasts a strong network of education partnerships—from the John Stevens Center of Literacy to the Coalition of Rural and Appalachian Schools (CORAS). We constantly enhance these partnerships while finding new ways to engage Southeast Ohio school children and our own students, faculty and staff throughout the state and around the world.

Last fall, more than 100 young artists from six schools entered our inaugural Local K-12 Art Contest. The winning pieces have been displayed this year in McCracken Hall. Earlier this month, we hosted a silent auction for these works, splitting the proceeds between student winners and their schools’ art programs. A new exhibition of winning artwork comes to McCracken this spring (see page 20).

On campus, our students find new ways to enrich the internal learning community. Last year Cherish Odum, B.S.Ed. ’07, spearheaded our Peer Mentor Program, which pairs knowledgeable upperclassmen with incoming students. The program, now an integral mesh in the fabric of student affairs, is officially called the “C. Odum Peer Mentor Program,” honoring this student’s contribution to the College legacy. Luckily, Cherish is pursuing a master’s in reading education and assisting with our Student Ambassador Program, of which she is also a member (see page 22).

To expand our horizons, we continue to build international partnerships. In this issue, you can read about our new service-learning program in Honduras (page 11) and our distance-learning instructional technology program for students in Ghana (page 8). Such experiences inspire our students to pursue global education projects, such as Ph.D. candidate Cat Oulch- er’s U.S. Fulbright-sponsored research into popular education in rural Kenya (page 38).

In the College of Education, we daily strive to safeguard the legacy you have helped to build. We’re constantly branching out and planting new seeds, which is why our new College symbol is the tree: we prepare Talented, Responsible, Ethical Educators.

Our family tree

In the College of Education, we daily strive to safeguard the college’s proud legacy. Our base—the three departments of Teacher Education, Educational Studies, and Counseling and Higher Education—extends through practical experience, scholarly research and interconnected partnerships. Finally, with each graduating class, we scatter the seeds of new growth. Our alumni, in turn, prepare future communities of learners and professionals—everywhere from Appalachian Ohio to Saudi Arabia to inner-city Detroit.

Each day, we help future educators to develop their talents and lead with integrity. To do so, we must continually strengthen our educational partnerships and our relationships with alumni. As you read about the accomplishments of your fellow Bobcats, I hope their stories inspire you to reach out to a current College of Education student, attend a Society of Alumni and Friends event or simply to share your story with us, too. We appreciate your generous donations of time, talent and resources—you continued support sustains and renews the legacy that is the College of Education. Thank you!
Greg Foley has devoted his career to promoting inquiry-based mathematics education, with an emphasis on interac- tive technology. Foley completed an M.A. and Ph.D. in Mathematics Education from the University of Texas at Austin. He has served in numerous capacities in the field of mathematics education, with an emphasis on interactive technology. He is currently a visiting professor at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Foley is a member of the Board of Directors of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and serves as the chair of the NCTM’s Technology in Mathematics Education (T) Leadership Award and in 1998, the American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges (AMATYC) Award for Mathematics Excellence. He earned his B.A. and M.A. in mathematics and Ph.D. in Mathematics Education from the University of Texas at Austin. Foley is currently researching mathematics language acquisition and developing a four-year curriculum in mathematics for the average student.

The Robert L. Morton Professorship of Mathematics Education is an endowed chair established by Dr. Morton, who graduated from the College of Education in 1913 and later returned to serve as an educational psychologist at the University of Jordan and the Alfaisal International Academy. The program, currently beginning its fourth semester, was modeled after the College of Education’s instructional technology graduate classes and finalized in Nov. 2006.

First Annual Welcome and Convocation
College of Education students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends gathered in Morton Hall to honor incoming freshmen. Speakers included our distinguished College alumni, University President Roderick J. McDavis; Provost Kathy Krendl; Mary Weems, a former visiting professor; and keynote speaker Dean Middleton.

SAP Conference: “Little Fish in a Big Pond”
On Oct. 13, 2006, the Society of Alumni and Friends (SAP) presented its fall conference, “Little fish enters BIG pond: How to get your first teaching job.” More than 50 student practitioners benefited from the expertise of SAP President Chris Hayward, Past President Hans Polsch and Immediate Past President Paul Kulik, who offered seminars on the importance of networking, first interviews and selling oneself to prospective employers.

Alum develops graduate program at University of Jordan
Basem Al Sair, who earned his Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction in 2005, returned to his native Jordan, where in 2006 he worked with Associate Professor Teresa Franklin to develop a successful graduate program for information and communication technology in education at the University of Jordan and the Alfaisal International Academy. The program, currently beginning its fourth semester, was modeled after the College of Education’s instructional technology graduate classes and finalized in Nov. 2006.

Robert P. Comer Spring Education Conference
On March 2, 2007, College of Education Dean Renée A. Middleton gave the keynote address in the new Baker University Center Ballroom. During subsequent seminar sessions, current students benefited from the expertise of College of Education alumni.

Sheila Tobin lecture: Overcoming Math Anxiety
On April 20, 2007, author and professor Sheila Tobin visited the College of Education to present a lecture based on her book, Overcoming Math Anxiety, which explores the psychology and solutions for coping with math anxiety.

Better Mathematics Through Literacy workshop
In July 2007, The Literacy Center teamed up with Assistant Professor Tim McKenney (math education), Assistant Professor Linda Rice (English) and Early Language and Literacy Specialist Lisa Baker from Ohio University-Eastern to collaborate on their Better Mathematics through Literacy program. This week-long workshop helped local educators of math and language arts find ways to enhance learning by fusing the two disciplines, too often seen as polar opposites.

SROCEMS Third Annual Conference
Southeast Ohio Center for Excellence in Mathematics and Science (SROCEMS) held its third annual summer conference on Aug. 6, 2007. Nine Appalachian Ohio Collaborative Study Investigation (CSI) teams came together to share their action research findings. The results were a testament to Appalachian ingenuity, combined in many cases with innovative technology.

YEAR
Selected newsworthy events from the College in 2006-07

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<td>2006-07</td>
<td>Introducing Gregory D. Foley, Ph.D., the new Robert L. Morton Professor of Mathematics Education</td>
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<td>SROCEMS Third Annual Conference</td>
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Comings & Goings
The College welcomes the following new faculty and staff to new positions:

- Maureen Coon, assistant dean, Student Affairs and Academic Advising
- Kelly Davidson, academic advisor, Student Affairs
- Tom Duncan, visiting assistant professor, Higher Education
- Carolyn Ervin, program coordinator, Appalachian Foundation
- Katherine Ferguson, specialist, program liaison, ABLE Resource Center
- Greg Foley, Robert L. Morton Professor of Mathematics Education
- Brian Gibson, interim assistant director, Student Affairs; assistant director, Upward Bound
- Almea Howley, dean, Research and Graduate Affairs
- Whip Kopsico, director, Development
- Emily Marcus, instructional de- signer, Curriculum and Technology Center
- Janet Merwin, administrative assistant, Student Affairs
- Marisa Mizer, program coordinator, AppaCorps
- Robert Reelick, instructor, Teacher Education
- Renee Smith, coordinator, Field Placement; Instructor, Teacher Education
- William Smith, interim dean, Overseas Student Teaching
- Tamy Solomon, coordinator, Alum Relations and Events
- Mary Barbara Tottem, curriculum and training specialist, ABLE Resource Center
- Jennifer Warner, academic advisor, Student Affairs
- Ginger Weade, interim chair, Teacher Education

Congratulations to our retirees:

- Dorothy Lee, professor, Teacher Education
- Mary Isayis, professor emeritus, Teacher Education
- Fred Drossler, professor emeritus, Counseling and Higher Education
- Ralph Martin, professor of Teacher Education, received five grants this year, which will support: SEDCEMS, the ORC Science Content Committee, the Program Models Project and the e-SIMs Project.

Megan Steen is a 2007-08 public affairs assistant for the College of Education and a senior in the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism.
Playing to learn

STEAM collaboration develops popular middle-school science games
By Mariel Jungkunz and Anita Martin

It’s a computer game any 13-year-old would love—with a twist. You’re all-time great slugger Babe Ruth. You hit a home run, the crowds cheer, and then, for 160 points and possible “All-Star” status, you calculate the baseball’s velocity. Velocity?

“Velocity Park” isn’t your typical ballpark. It’s one of 18 games created by eight engineering graduate fellows last year, in partnership with the College of Engineering and local teachers, to teach hard-to-grasp scientific concepts to middle-schoolers.

The games, ranging from “Furry Family” (genetics) to “Star Life” (astronomy), reflect a year’s work by the fellows, teachers and the College of Education. It’s all part of a three-year project funded by a $1.67 million National Science Foundation grant.

The collaboration, Science and Technology Enrichment for Ap- palachian Middle-Schoolers (STEAM), seeks to improve students’ science skills, offer resources to teachers, and train young engi- neers to develop games and teaching skills. STEAM also creates a network of local teachers and Ohio University faculty and students committed to improving education through technology.

“Developing a strong foundation in science, math and technol- ogy in middle school is extremely important for the continuation of such studies in high school, college and beyond,” said Teresa Peng, a Ph.D. candidate in instructional technology.

STEAM’s principal investigators.

Early research, according to Franklin’s graduate assistant Livese Peng, shows that students who played the games—with or without supporting curriculum—fared better on science tests than those who received instruction alone.

“Developing a strong foundation in science, math and technol- ogy in middle school is extremely important for the continuation of such studies in high school, college and beyond,” said Teresa Peng, a Ph.D. candidate in instructional technology.

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“The graduate fellows and teachers have formed a learning com- munity,” said Dean Renée Middleton. “They’ve challenged each other, critiqued each other, but most of all they’ve supported each other, developing a sense of shared purpose.”

The games—aligned with state and national academic science content standards—were distributed at last year’s eTech Ohio Conference, and teachers can access STEAM games online, along with lesson plans and pre- and post-tests.

STEAM’s long-term goal, according to Franklin, is to develop games into 3-D virtual programs for national distribution.

In the meantime, the original eight fellows continue to work with their assigned classrooms, a new fellow and a Belpre teacher have joined the roster this year as well.

And the newest game? Let’s just say it involves a talking monkey on a deserted island. (Kids, brush up on the physics of tides!)

EDITOR’S NOTE: Mariel Jungkunz is editor-assistant of Ohio Today. Anita Martin is editor of the Athenaum. A version of this story originally appeared in Outlook on July 5, 2007.

Instructional technology spans the globe

Educational studies

Worlds collided when three College of Education in- structional technology classes—one in Ghana and two in Athens—connected via video/audio conference on Aug. 3, 2007. Sandra Turner, professor of Educational Studies, led the class at the University of Education Winneba in Ghana, where 27 Ghanaian Ohio University students—who have never set foot in Ohio—are earning master’s degrees in computer education and technology via distance learning. Meanwhile, Albert Akyeampompong, a Ghana native and doctoral candidate in Ohio’s instruc- tional technology program, taught the courses in Athens.

“Little Cities” Reveal Big History

Education students discover the treasures and challenges of Athens, Perry and Hocking counties’ mining country
By Nicole Bonomini

As teachers incorporate games into lessons, they give feedback—which the fellows, who also assist with lesson planning and teaching, integrate immediately. With engineering faculty in high demand, the NSF hopes this project encourages them to someday

In Shawneee, students saw the town’s former granary, evidenced by opera houses Tuscumish Theater and Knights of Labor, and The Little Cities of Black Diamonds Council, now a resource for regional history and tourism.

In New Straitsville, students hiked up to Robinson’s Cave, once the secret meeting place for the United Mine Workers Union founders. In the Great Hocking Valley Coal Strike of 1884, miners reportedly met at the cave after setting underground mines ablaze in fires that burned to this day.

The tour returned to East Elementary by way of Payne’s Cross- ing, past the clay-brick homes of Haydenville and Nelsonville. Greenlee toured Ohio University’s and Hocking College’s collabo- ration to develop completion degrees, which encourage Hocking graduates to earn four-year degrees at Ohio. “Partnerships are important. None of us has enough resources to be wasting any of them as we regain what we lost in the decline of the coal mining industry,” Greenlee said.

For senior Ashley Wilke, the tour left a deep impression: “This makes you appreciate the time spent (on students), but gives you context for what their lives are like when they walk out those school doors,” she said.

Although Greenlee now serves as interim dean of Ohio Universi- ty-Eastern, he admitted that, as a child, he never dreamed he could even attend Ohio University. Today’s children shouldn’t fall victim to the same fatalism, he said: “Reach out to these children. Do not stereotype them; never put limits on what they can do.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: Nicole Bonomini is a 2007 graduate of the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism. She served as a 2006-07 writing intern for the College of Education.
A generation ago, “bully” was a term reserved for the bratty, tough, lunch money-stealing kid who shoved nerds into lockers and doled out black eyes on the playground. Now, however, bullying has gone digital.

Cyberbullying, says Christine Sunilt Bhat, assistant professor of counselor education, refers to the use of cell phones, instant messaging, social Web sites such as MySpace and Facebook, and e-mail by young people to harass, intimidate or embarrass their peers. Bhat, with the help of Ph.D. candidates Kelly Roberts and Heidi Lewellen, focuses her research on this growing phenomenon.

“This is a variation of schoolyard bullying, only it spreads exponentially—not just among schoolmates, but potentially to anyone with access to the World Wide Web. That sense of violation from bullying is magnified,” Bhat says.

In some cases, cyber-bullying has been linked to adolescent suicide—in its most recent form. A young woman who believed she was being cyber-bullied changed her life and true identity by creating a false MySpace profile, Bhat says. In 2007, a 13-year-old girl anonymously committed suicide. Following verbal attacks she received from the false MySpace profile, she believed she was being cyber-bullied.

Bhat wants to better understand the pervasiveness of the problem in adolescent social interactions and so is analyzing surveys completed by Ohio University freshmen about their experiences with cyberbullying. In her research, she asks about the types of technology used to bully, how young people deal with cyberbullying and the various roles played by young people to perpetuate the bullying.

Bhat’s preliminary work has already received extensive media coverage, in part because of a growing demand for information—and especially scholarly research—about cyberbullying. In late 2007, her research appeared in a Perspective magazine story originally appeared in the 2007 fall/winter issue of Perspectives magazine.

Search was picked up by NBC and the Associated Press and featured in more than 30 news outlets across the country.

Her research will likely be at the forefront of this new topic because it fills a gap in the field. The information that is out there, Bhat explains, focuses on prevalence and effects on victims, but does not specifically focus on preferred ways to cyberbully, as well as on the roles played by bullies, bystanders and those who may not initiate bullying actions but do “play along.”

The biggest challenge Bhat faces is convincing schools that cyberbullying is a serious enough issue to be addressed in the curriculum or school bullying policy. She hopes to obtain funding to develop training modules for school counselors and teachers.

Ultimately, she adds, schools need to concentrate on academics, but adolescent students won’t be able to focus on their studies “Whatever we can do to make this issue come alive will be more effective than standing up and preaching,” she says. “Local places like Athens used to be our community, but with the shrinking of the globe, other parts of the world have become part of our lives.”

Jana Fryman, another participant, agreed. “In a group discussion one night a classmate showed a map of the world from the perspective of someone who is HIV/AIDS, in addition to their lectures and visits to universities and schools. This trip is open to any Ohio University graduate student in good standing. To learn more about Service Learning in Honduras, visit: http://www.ohio.edu/educationabroad/programs/LatinAmerica/honduras.cfm.

For the 2008 Honduras trip (June 14–28), Mather and his students will work with an orphanage for children with HIV/AIDS, in addition to their lectures and visits to universities and schools. This trip is open to any Ohio University graduate student in good standing. To learn more about Service Learning in Honduras, visit: http://www.ohio.edu/educationabroad/programs/LatinAmerica/honduras.cfm.

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EDITOR’S NOTE: Bridget Whelan’s is a 2007 graduate of the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism and former writing intern for Research Communications. This story originally appeared in the 2007 fall/winter issue of Perspectives magazine.
Ohio’s first college-based teacher education program took root on Ohio University’s campus. Since then, our College has graduated thousands, scattering seeds across Southeast Ohio, the United States and the world. Read on for stories of three such alumni: Dr. Connie Calloway, Lt. Col. Mike Jackson and Dr. Elaine Jarchow. Whether tackling Detroit Public Schools, honoring American war veterans or bridging cultural divides, they are just three examples of how College of Education alumni daily live our legacy.

**The Pacesetter**

Connie Calloway was 13 when her parents assigned her the summer task of helping her 4-year-old sister learn to read. “It was fascinating to watch as her literacy skills developed, as she began decoding words,” she said.

Through she discovered her passion for education that summer, Calloway, Ph.D. ’86, never dreamed it would take her to the superintendent’s seat in one of the nation’s most challenging urban school districts, Detroit Public Schools. In July 2007 Calloway took the reigns of this 116,000-student district, plagued by poverty, crime and low test scores. It wasn’t an easy decision, but in the end, Calloway said, the job chose her.

“The search committee wrote to me asking that I apply…after a great deal of prayer and conversation…I felt it was a calling—that I was prepared for such a time and place as this.”

Calloway’s career has spanned more than 30 years—and the globe. In addition to her eight years as a superintendent, Calloway has served as school principal, executive director of curriculum, charter school administrator and university professor. She has taught across Ohio, and in both Ghana and Germany. Calloway earned her bachelor’s degree at Sarah Lawrence University and her master’s at Harvard University. Then, a decade into her career, Calloway’s former supervisor, Rondle Edwards, Ph.D. ’70, called her aside and asked if she would continue her education. As a single parent working three jobs, she wasn’t exactly planning on it.

“At the time, we had a lot of female valedictorians, who were all saying they wanted to be nurses or legal secretaries. Dr. Edwards wanted me to be a role model for them,” Calloway said. “He was very specific; he told me, ‘I would like to see you go to Ohio University.’”

Calloway enrolled in the College of Education’s doctoral program in educational administration, where she attended school board meetings, met regional superintendents and studied everything from curricular development and finance to human relations and public affairs.

In Detroit, Calloway employs this full range of skills. But for all her professional agility, Calloway’s every move is firmly rooted in data—“both quantitative and qualitative”—which can frustrate stakeholders in a district demanding urgent change. Still, she’s determined to make data-based decisions. “Long-term issues are those which require a sound problem-solving process, as opposed to always acting from a crisis mode,” she said.

For Calloway, Detroit Public Schools must measure their success through student achievement, using quality instruction as the key variable. Luckily, Detroit boasts 58 national-board certified teachers—more than all other Michigan cities. Calloway hopes to expand this level of achievement into a statewide approach.

“Dr. Calloway was always very good at refocusing people, reminding them who we are here for: what is the best for the future of the children,” said Nancy Hartman, a board member for the Normandy School District in Missouri, where under Calloway, who formerly served as their superintendent, test scores and attendance rose, while discipline and dropout rates decreased.

“If always say to people: it’s our job to work together—especially when it relates to young people,” Calloway said. “As adults—as educators, parents and community members—we control our environment, and if we can send consistent, clear messages to young people about what is accepted in terms of behavior and achievement, then we create an environment in which we’d choose to live and work.”
The Veteran Voice

“I often find myself stepping to the rhythm of a snare drum while everyone else marches to a more dignified bass beat,” wrote Lt. Col. Mike Jackson in his autobiography Naked in Da Nang.

Upon graduation, Jackson, B.S.Ed. ’68, followed that rhythm into the United States Air Force—despite having a job lined up teaching history and government in his hometown Tipp City, Ohio. “I thought to myself, 40 years from now, I don’t want to be in the same room teaching about things I’ve never seen,” he said.

Jackson married his College of Education sweetheart, Karen Shorts, B.S.Ed. ’69, and served as an Air Force pilot until 1991. During this time, he flew in 210 combat missions and received 21 American and foreign decorations, including a Purple Heart and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

In Vietnam, Jackson also developed the South Vietnamese Air Force training program. After the war, he became a U.S. Air Force instructor pilot and, eventually, a command flight examiner. “I ended up examining the guys who examined the guys who did the instruction,” he said.

But student interaction remained Jackson’s favorite part. “I could take students who were in danger of flunking out of pilot training, and find ways to teach them,” he said. “I used to say that I speak Education—which most pilots don’t.”

In 1992, Jackson shifted gears to become the executive director of the National Aviation Hall of Fame—an organization he revived from the verge of bankruptcy into a world-class, multi-million-dollar facility. Under Jackson, the annual induction ceremony attracted and impressed the likes of Neil Armstrong and Harrison Ford.

Tara Dixon-Engel, who worked at the Hall of Fame, recalled the “funny stories he would tell about Vietnam.” She asked Jackson if he’d ever considered writing a book. “The next day, he hands me a manila folder with just six pages.” Engel, a former journalist, offered to help.

Five years later, the popularity of their Naked in Da Nang inspired Jackson and Engel to leave the Hall of Fame and launch Operation Welcome Home, which organizes parade ceremonies in major cities to belatedly honor Vietnam Veterans.

“The book was never meant to be a hero’s story, just a tale of a guy from small-town Ohio who goes off, does his job and comes home to lead a meaningful life. That simple story had not yet been told about the Vietnam War,” said Jackson, now the president of the American Veterans Institute.

Jackson and Engel have since penned Wright Brothers: First in Flight (2007) and Armstrong: One Giant Leap for Mankind (2008). They’re currently working on an educational book series, “Embracing Freedom,” for kindergarten through third grade. Jackson plans to collaborate with the College of Education to develop supplemental lesson plans for the books, which tell stories of real-life American veterans.

The books are a part of Jackson’s wider public education plans. He and Engel are working with the World War II Victory Museum in Auburn, Indiana, to establish the American Veterans Hall of Fame and Research Library.

“The education experience—whether it’s in the classroom or whether it’s doing what I did—when it works, there’s no amount of money that can pay for that,” Jackson said. He was referring to his Air Force instructorship, but with his writing, lectures, presentations—and his charismatic personality—Jackson brings an “education experience” everywhere he goes.
Renée Middleton is hitting the road to gain firsthand knowledge of our region’s public education needs

By Amy Robison
Photos by Rick Fatica

What began as an attempt to learn more about our region’s public schools has become an epic sojourn. Over the next five years, Dean Middleton has pledged to visit every school district in Appalachian Ohio, making her the first College of Education dean to do so. “College deans can get so caught up with internal university politics that they risk losing relevance to the profession they are designed to serve,” Middleton said. “We are a professional school, the heart and soul of which is teacher preparation. And I believe we have a professional, academic and moral obligation not only to serve the state and the nation, but also to understand and address the needs of rural Appalachian education.”

With deans’ schedules as they are—and about 127 school districts to see—this will undoubtedly take some time. In fact, Middleton has set a five-year plan to accomplish her goal. After that point, she plans to continue follow-up visits, because the relationships built and the knowledge gained along the way pay dividends for Middleton and the College of Education.

“My understanding of the region has grown immensely, along with our College’s relationship with local school districts—which, I can tell you, hasn’t happened while I’m sitting at my desk,” Middleton said. “I don’t like to get my information secondhand. I need real connections with real people.”

One of Middleton’s primary goals during school visits is to reinforce the right of every child to pursue a higher degree. “What really tears me up is when college is not even seen as an option or a dream of a child. I want every child to see higher education as an option,” she said. “I want them to know that there’s a college of education and a dean committed to that mission.”

At the close of the 2006-07 academic year, Middleton had visited each Ohio University regional campus, every Athens City school, eight additional districts in Appalachian Ohio and two in Columbus for a total of 24 schools.

Read on for snapshots of some of last year’s visits.

Dec. 19, 2006: Zanesville City Schools

Times are tough, according to Zanesville City Schools Superintendent Terry Martin. They’re hard up for “top-notch calculus and physics teachers,” and the district, with its declining population, looks close to financial emergency status. But when the going gets tough, McIntire/Munson Elementary School gets going. They provide free and reduced lunches to 70 percent of students and successfully serve the 30 percent of students with learning disabilities. Their efforts recently met Adequate Yearly Progress requirements and garnered an “effective” rating from the state.

McIntire and Munson were two separate schools going into summer 2006, when they found out they would be consolidated and moved into what had been a middle school. Principal Halle Randles gave all the credit for the successful move to her teachers, who “come from passion and compassion.” Working together, they did most of the summer renovations themselves.

March 26, 2007: Ohio University-Lancaster

Most of our time in Lancaster was spent with Dean Mary Ann Janok and OU-Lancaster faculty. Education is the largest major on this regional campus, and the faculty stressed the importance of cohorts, as well as their students’ need for more flexibility than residential campus students require. We discussed the socio-economic reasons for the popularity of the early childhood major at Ohio University-Lancaster and ways we could persuade students to pursue degrees in more high-demand fields.

April 10, 2007: The Plains Elementary

Principal (and Ohio alumna) Vicks Chancey, B.S.Ed. ’96, and Plains Partnership liaison Janet Idleman shared a scrapbook outlining the history of our partnership together and spoke about the districtwide focus on the “responsive classroom,” based on teaching life skills and building a sense of community.

“We want the students to feel they are part of the governance of the classroom and the discipline of the classroom,” Chancey explained.

At this visit, we really had a chance to mix, mingle and kibbitz with our College of Education students as well as Plains Partnership fellow Melissa Johnson. It was clear how valuable the professional development school experience is for them and for the children.

“Kids don’t understand what college is, so it’s important that we continue to bring OU students in and bring our kids to campus,” Idleman said.

May 21, 2007: Morrison Elementary

Principal John Gordon as our guide, we were able to observe College of Education student teachers past and present. Sixth-grade teacher April Stewart’s student teacher, Jordan Langston, was helping students present their multigenre projects on South America.

Resource teacher Nan Cooley had the help of three Ohio graduates in her classroom. With all the extra support, she and Dean Middleton were able to take time out to golf a few rounds. We picked the staff’s brains over lunch, and Gordon had a recommendation for us: “It would be nice if middle childhood candidates could teach more than two subjects,” he said. Specifically, he would like to see everyone at this level certified to teach language arts.

Langston has since begun his first teaching job; he started at West Elementary this fall.

Travelogue Timeline

Oct. 16, 2006: Ohio University-Zanesville
Dec. 6, 2006: Athens West Elementary
Dec. 11, 2006: West Ironton/Whitwell Elementary School, Ohio University-Southern
Dec. 12, 2006: Chauncey Elementary
Dec. 19, 2006: Zanesville City Schools: McIntire/Munson Elementary, Grover Middle
Dec. 22, 2006: Morgan Local High
Jan. 9, 2007: Eastern Elementary (after-school program)
Feb. 20, 2007: St. Clairsville Elementary, Ohio University-Eastern
March 6, 2007: Athens East Elementary
March 26, 2007: Tallmadge Elementary School, Ohio University-Lancaster
March 27, 2007: Columbus Arts High, Columbus Teaching Academy
April 3, 2007: Athens Middle
April 10, 2007: The Plains Elementary
April 16, 2007: Meigs Middle
May 3, 2007: Southern Local Schools: Miller Middle, High
May 4, 2007: Athens High
May 21, 2007: Morrison Elementary
May 23, 2007: Meigs High

EDITOR’S NOTE: Amy Robison, former Director of Public Affairs for the College of Education, is a freelance writer and editor based in Athens, Ohio.
Teaching the Language of Mathematics

Professors develop new methods, collaborations to alleviate students’ math fears

By Katie Brandt

Google search for “math anxiety” yields 101,000 results—everything from case studies and New York Times articles to testimonials and cures. However, Tim McKeny, assistant professor of Teacher Education, doesn’t particularly like the term. To him, anxiety results from traditional methods in teaching mathematics: “through memorization and algorithms that contain no meaning for students.” He’s out to change tradition.

“Through research from the past 20 years, we’ve found that when students problem solve, reason, communicate, make connections and use multiple representations, they have a deeper and more flexible understanding of mathematics,” McKeny said.

Once teachers move beyond times tables and timed tests, he said, they will no longer have the old debate about math anxiety. McKeny isn’t alone. The workshop program he helped develop for kindergarten through third-grade teachers is one of many College efforts to overcome math jitters.

Counting fish

Along with Linda Rice from Ohio’s English department; Carolyn Ervin, director of the Appalachia Reads literacy program; and Lisa Baker from Ohio University-Eastern, McKeny has launched a workshop series, Better Mathematics Through Literacy. The program began with a weeklong summer workshop for Appalachian area teachers. For eight hours a day, they developed ways to connect math concepts to their students’ reading and writing lessons. The teachers wrote word problems based on the characters, scenes and themes from books their students would read in the upcoming year.

Some students, for example, will read the book Commotion in the Ocean. Then, instead of shifting to the next subject—math—to solve problems on paper, the students will use fish counters reminiscent of the sea life they read about. They might divide them into different schools or combine one school with another, but the bigger-picture connections they’ll make is what really counts, McKeny said. “This moves away from the worksheet to give context for the math.”

The teachers will follow up with four six-hour Saturday sessions this year. Forty educators now attend the sessions, each with the potential to ease 20 to 25 students’ math anxieties every year.

Math minus math

While Better Mathematics Through Literacy focuses on Appalachian schools, the MATRIX grant—Middle School Achievements Through Technology Rich Interventions—stretches across Ohio, Kansas, New Mexico and California. Associate Professor Teresa Franklin administers the five-year federal grant, now ending its second year. She analyzes after-school programs in Ohio to see how they can integrate math education.

“We’ve always known there was (math anxiety), but it is very, very difficult to get into schools, to do the research piece, to get the funding,” because, she said, there’s no guarantee that what researchers develop will yield immediate results.

Franklin first finds the “holes”—for example, Ohio students score low on ratio, proportion, probability, and data collection and analysis. She works with teachers to develop lesson plans that raise those scores by engaging students in games and real-world applications.

“We take so much time teaching kids about slopes and never tell them it’s used to design black diamonds!” she said. “Math has a story around it just like science.”

Last winter, with the help of MATRIX and a guest architect, Alexander Middle School students designed their ideal schools. They put aquariums in hallways and couches in classrooms, working in groups to figure out wall lengths, ratios and proportions. “The kids were thinking about this as a real-life problem and not as math,” Franklin said.

Franklin shares lessons and results with 356 people from MATRIX teams in other states. They hope to offer all modules in mobile form, so that teachers can download lesson plans to their iPads or BlackBerries.

“A lot of this has to do with helping (students) gain self-confidence,” Franklin said. “We’ve had kids who thought they couldn’t do anything come in and build wonderful projects.”

Continuous change

“A lot of comedians, when they talk about problems in school, they talk about math,” Al Coté said. “It becomes viewed as a subject for elite.”

To help demystify math, Coté runs SEOCEMS—the South- east Ohio Center for Excellence in Mathematics and Science. It’s one of six centers in Ohio funded by the state’s Board of Regents.

Now in its fourth year, SEOCEMS spans 29 Appalachian counties. It links universities (Ohio, Shawnee State, Rio Grande and Rio Grande Community College) with local school districts, the Ohio Resource Center and related organizations, providing a professional network and resources for math teachers.

Meanwhile, another project that trains and connects math teachers, ACCLAIM—the Appalachian Collaborative Center for Learning, Assessment and Instruction in Mathematics—links Ohio with the University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, University of Tennessee and West Virginia University.

Through ACCLAIM, university faculty travel to Appalachian schools to train math teachers seeking their master’s degrees. The project serves as a model for other isolated and poverty-stricken areas of the country.

Within the past two decades, researchers and teachers have begun to realize that students’ math anxieties aren’t intrinsic, and programs such as SEOCEMS and ACCLAIM combat students’ fears at one vital, if unlikely, source—the teachers.

“A lot of students develop anxiety, but I think they get this through an osmosis process from teachers,” Coté said, explaining that if educators struggle with an aversion to math, they will likely pass it on to their students.

Through these College of Education efforts, future students will unlock puzzles and open doors for themselves that they might otherwise have left locked.

Greg Foley, the new Robert L. Morton Professor of Mathematics Education believes innovative teaching and a can-do attitude can help. “In other cultures, mathematics competence is looked at like basic literacy. They think that everyone can do this, but it does take effort, just like learning to read.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: Katie Brandt is a freelance writer and editor based in Chicago, IL.
Last winter, McCracken Hall transformed into an art gallery, featuring drawings, paintings and prints from artistically inclined elementary-, middle- and high-school students across Southeast Ohio.

Campus and community visitors filled McCracken for a glimpse of the talent hailing from Athens High School; Meigs Middle School; and Chauncey, Chieflain, Hocking Hills and Morrison Elementary Schools. Of nearly 100 works submitted, 20 were selected by local artist and retired Athens High School Art Teacher Renee Olson.

"This is the first opportunity for our students to showcase their work locally, and what wonderful work it is," Judge Olson said. "These pieces are really individual and sophisticated—I'm not sure the students really know how good they are!"

One art enthusiast among the crowd was Dean Renee Middleton, who visited all the participating schools this past year, giving her the chance to meet both students and teachers. The trips inspired Middleton to arrange this first annual K-12 Art Contest and exhibition.

"Through my visits to the schools, I’ve realized we need ways to bring the community into the College of Education," Middleton said. "This was a way to complete that circle and bring together teachers, parents and the students around a positive and exciting event."

Morrison Elementary Art Teacher Lauren Hodson said the event instills confidence in the young artists. "When the students saw their artwork hanging in McCracken, they grinned from ear to ear. It really gave them a sense of importance."

One of Middleton’s favorite memories of the unveiling was the excited expression on 7-year-old Ishan Matta’s face when he saw his two creations hanging on the wall. "I thought the contest was great," said Ishan, who added that he made one painting of primary colors combining to make secondary colors, and a "shoe monster" painting. "They have four antennas, five eyes and two wings," he explained.

Middleton gave these proud artists one more reason to smile—on January 17, the College held its first annual Art Extravaganza Silent Auction to sell the winning pieces. Half of the proceeds went to the young artists and half to their art classes.

"There are so many ways to reach children—some have a love for science, others reading. Art is another learning tool, and this auction is a way to encourage and help support that learning tool," Middleton said.

Hodson believes that the art show itself has become a tool for learning. "A few of my students were chosen that might not have had high academic honors, and this gives them an arena in which to shine," she said. "Because of this contest, I have a few more budding artists who know that the community and I take them seriously."

A new selection of local K-12 art will be unveiled at McCracken Hall in April 2008.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Katelyn Burkhart is a 2007-08 public affairs assistant for the College of Education and a senior in the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism.
Emissaries of Excellence

The College’s new Student Ambassador Program provides advocacy, networking skills to exceptional education students

By Anita Martin

LeaderShip comes naturally—almost inevitably—to some students. Dynamic and hard-working, they’re hyper-involved and full of ideas. Last fall, the College of Education launched its Student Ambassador Program, designed to provide such young leaders with opportunities to represent the College to visitors, alumni, prospective students and the greater campus community. In so doing, students gain networking and professional prowess.

“The goal is to take some of our best and brightest and give them a chance to advocate for the College and gain a marketable skill set,” said Maureen Coon, assistant dean for student affairs and academic advising.

The brainchild of Dean Renée Middleton, this program was adopted by the Office of Student Affairs and fostered in collaboration with students themselves. In 2006-07, the program’s inaugural year, the College selected eight student ambassadors. This year, the ranks doubled to 16, all of whom exhibit academic excellence, compelling interpersonal skills and leadership qualities.

Take, for example, student ambassador Cherish Odom, B.S.Ed. ’07, a first-year master’s student in reading education and former student senator for the College of Education. As Coon’s favorite ambassador, Odom started the College of Education’s Peer Mentor Program and helped to develop the Student Ambassador Program. “This program provides opportunities to students of education who really stand out—to give back to those students who have given so much,” Odom said.

Student ambassadors staff recruiting sessions and College expos, meet with prospective students and their families, show visitors around and represent the College at education conferences and alumni reunions. Odom’s favorite ambassadorial experience: helping with the College of Education’s spring 2007 visit by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

“The NCATE visit was a great opportunity to show off the accomplishments of the College—and to get to meet education professionals from across the state and nation,” Odom said. “Those are valuable activities for building experience and professional networks.”

Celebrating Our Teacher-Scholars

The Jennings Scholars program offers professional development opportunities to local teachers

By Amy Robison

The 2006-07 academic year ushered in Ohio University’s 14th class of Jennings Scholars. Since 1963, the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation has honored exceptional K-12 teachers throughout Ohio with this rotating lecture series. The state is divided into six regions, each accepting a new crop of scholars every three years.

This year, Southeast Ohio superintendents nominated 125 of their best and brightest. To become Jennings Scholars, nominated teachers attend six Saturday lectures, each featuring a motivational speaker who brings charisma, lots of laughs and new ideas in pedagogy. The sessions also allow honorees to share their own innovative classroom practices.

“It affirms what we’re doing; we are important!” says Jennings Scholar Sharon Lawrence, an elementary teacher in the Walnut Township Local Schools.

Nenie Hoyet teaches English at Paint Valley High School. Like her fellow scholars, she appreciates the opportunity to get together with other teachers and network across districts—not always easy in rural Appalachian Ohio, where resources are spread thin. But Hoyet is doing her part and then some. She and her husband purchased computers for her classroom and are planning to buy a SMART Board.

Teacher Education Professor Emeritus Al Leep coordinates Ohio’s Jennings Scholar Program. For him, it is a labor of love. “Teachers have always been my favorite people, ever since I was in the first grade,” he says.

The culminating event in the lecture series is the Honors Luncheon. Scholars receive a commemorative silver dish and bound volume of lecture transcripts. At this year’s luncheon, Jennings Foundation Director Bill Hillier called on 19th century Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson for a description of Jennings Scholars: “That person is a success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent people and the love of children.”

How good communications can renovate a school

By Lori Snyder-Lowe

Communication is key to winning any campaign. Without it, voters get confused, and they exert their confusion by voting “no” in an election. That’s why I made communication the number one priority in our district’s campaign to pass our 2006 bond issue and tax levy and raise funds for much-needed renovations to Morgan High School.

First, we formed a campaign committee consisting of district staff and private citizens, who determined clear, concise communication strategies. The committee continually addressed concerns we heard from our citizens through phone calls, personalized letters and letters-to-the-editor in our local newspaper.

We communicated the issue’s necessity, as well as the costs and benefits its passage would bring, through the standard media: newsletters, brochures and press releases. But I believe the most effective aspect of our efforts was our focus on face-to-face communication. We hosted a booth at the Morgan County Fair last September, which we operated daily with knowledgeable, friendly staff and students. If booth workers could not answer a question, visitors voiced their questions and concerns through written notes for the committee, who always strived to answer within a one-day time frame.

But that was just the beginning. I personally attended more than 60 group meetings throughout our county, including our local Rotary club, Kiwanis club, Fire Department, Veterans Organization and the Morgan County Chamber of Commerce, to name a few. There I distributed information, answered questions and often dispelled rumors about the bond issue and tax levy.

I found that taking the time to meet people “on their own turf” shows them—that you really care about their input. Besides, the freedom to ask questions and get quick, honest answers builds confidence in an issue and credibility in me as superintendent.

I am happy to say that our efforts paid off: the Morgan High School Renovation Project Bond Issue and Tax Levy passed last November! This confirms my belief that, given enough information, voters will make the right choice. Now our staff, students and citizens look forward to a $24 million renovation project that will provide our children the best possible learning environment in which to pursue their goals.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Lori Snyder-Lowe, B.S.Ed. ’92, M.Ed. ’99, is the superintendent of Morgan Local School District.

Improvements will bring the facility up to fire code, improve ventilation for areas used for painting and welding and ensure the building can be “locked down” in an emergency.

Reinforced infrastructure overall

The majority of the building’s infrastructure is original. Lighting, heating and cooling are substandard, and many new technologies cannot be supported by the current design.

Sports and extracurricular facilities

Athletic field lighting and new bleachers for the gymnasium and the athletic field will improve safety at home and away athletic events and extracurricular activities—both an important source of pride, motivation and teambuilding for students and community members.
Compiled by Megan Stemen

Brenda Haas, B.Ed. '73, M.Ed. '95, of St. Charles, Ill., has retired after 32 years in Ohio schools.

Patricia Brennamen: Ohio Superintendent of 2007

By Katelyn Burkhart

Brenneman deeply values the school-community connection, which she traces back to her College of Education: "It is an honor to be at Ohio University. My experience at OU taught me the importance of getting in touch with a community. I had professors who guided me to a deeper understanding of teaching, not just of philosophy and theory, but of human behavior."

As superintendent, Brenneman arranges community discussions whenever critical issues arise. "We have grandparents sitting beside teachers beside state senators. We don't just make a decision and tell people into the process."

Pass Brenneman, front row, second from the left, with school staff.

Patti Brenneman, front row, second from the left, with school staff.

Be sure to complete and return the enclosed postcard for inclusion in our next Athlete. Your classmates want to know what you have been up to!

Virginia Nichols, B.L.E.D. '74, age 58, of Geneva-on-the-Lake, Ohio, died at her home on April 24, 2006. Nichols began her teaching career at Rowe School in Conneaut, Ohio, as an elementary teacher, and taught for many years in the Geneva School System.

Angelo Candela, B.S.Ed. '38, M.Ed. '57, of Ashtabula, Ohio, died Dec. 8, 2006. For 38 years, Candela worked in the Ashtabula Area City Schools as a team leader of federal programs, including Title I, Title II B and Title III.

Robert Bethel, B.S.Ed. '49, of Crooksville, Ohio, died March 16, 2007, on her 89th birthday. Bethel taught elementary education and was the school principal. He married Betty, his wife of 52 years in 1959.

Patti Brenneman, B.Ed. '79, M.Ed. '80, and her husband, Dick, recently visited Dick's birthplace in southern Italy. They are enjoying their six grandchildren, their good friends and travel.

Patti Brenneman: Ohio Superintendent of 2007

By Katelyn Burkhart

Being named the top superintendent in Ohio hasn't enlarged the ego of Patricia Brennamen, M.Ed. '91. In fact, she was recently nominated for the award before, but demurred because, she said, "others deserve the honor more." Last year, with some coaching, Brenneman finally filled out the nomination— and was named Ohio Superintendent of 2007 by the American Association of School Administrators.

"I really know how to tackle tough issues and make decisions that make a difference to kids," said Jim Mahoney, M.Ed. '79, Ph.D. '89, a Foundation for Appalachian Ohio board member. "She would never admit it, but she is truly one of the finest leaders I know."

The Superintendent of the Year title celebrates "educational renewal," evidenced by new initiatives, progress in student learning and positive changes within the school district. Now in her 14th year as the Oak Hills Local Schools district superintendent, Brenneman excels in all these areas, affirmed by Oak Hills "excellent" Ohio Report Card rating for the sixth consecutive year.

Brenneman deeply values the school-community connection, which she traces back to her College of Education: "It is an honor to be at Ohio University. My experience at OU taught me the importance of getting in touch with a community. I had professors who guided me to a deeper understanding of teaching, not just of philosophy and theory, but of human behavior."

As superintendent, Brenneman arranges community discussions whenever critical issues arise. "We have grandparents sitting beside teachers beside state senators. We don't just make a decision and tell people into the process."

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Patti Brenneman, front row, second from the left, with school staff.

Be sure to complete and return the enclosed postcard for inclusion in our next Athlete. Your classmates want to know what you have been up to!
**The Importance of Giving**

“Something we could do that would help people”

By Amy Robison

Caryl Rentz, B.S.Ed. ’45, is a retired second-grade teacher, living in a modest, charming home outside Dayton, Ohio. She’s a voracious reader who likes to “gallivant” with friends and help out her grandkids whenever she can. She doesn’t understand why anyone would want to write about her.

Caryl’s life may seem ordinary, but her impact has been extraordinary. Thanks to the scholarship she endowed within the College of Education, that impact will reach far into the future, giving future generations of elementary-school teachers the chance to make their own extraordinary impact.

Born to Arthur and Nora E. Brown in 1923, Caryl was the third of four children. Nora was the disciplinarian; Arthur was a doctor for the Veterans Administration. After several job-related moves, the family settled near the VA hospital on Dayton’s west side.

Caryl always knew she wanted to teach. She excelled academically, and after being named valedictorian, she followed in her sister Fay’s footsteps, choosing to attend Ohio University.

Caryl’s eyes twinkle when she recalls her time in Athens: “I lived in Lindley Hall my freshman and sophomore years, the Beta Theta Pi fraternity house my junior year and Howard Hall my senior year.”

Why would a young lady live in a frat house? Caryl laughs at the raised eyebrows this fact elicits. “Remember, it was during World War II. There were no boys on campus!”

Caryl believes the College of Education prepared her well for a career in elementary education. She has fond memories of student teaching in “RuPu” and seems dismayed that Putnam Hall is no longer referred to by the catchy nickname.

“I hated it when I had to leave,” Caryl admits. But she moved back to Dayton and married Donald, a General Motors engineer she had met while working at home over summer breaks. Donald was quiet and unassuming, a perfect foil for his outgoing, energetic wife. “He was wonderful to me. I couldn’t have done better for a husband,” Caryl testifies. The couple also had two sons; the youngest is a Bobcat.

Caryl started out substitute teaching and soon found a permanent position teaching second grade at Harman School. Caryl jokes, “Some of my favorite students were the ones the rest of the school couldn’t stand. I’d just make up my mind to domesticate a child, and I was able to change quite a bit of behavior.”

Caryl taught at Harman for almost 30 years. In retirement, she and her husband endowed the Donald and Caryl Rentz Scholarship with a gift of $15,000. “We just decided it was something we could do that would help people,” Caryl says.

One of those people is 2007 recipient Jennifer Osborne. “I’m paying for school on my own, so this scholarship has really assisted me in getting the things I need without having to worry about being in a great amount of debt in the future,” Osborne says. “I really appreciate the help and support.”

That sentiment is echoed by all those whose lives have been touched by Caryl and Donald Rentz—and will continue for many years to come.
Dear Readers,

I am delighted to announce your inclusion in the new director of development for the College of Education. Since joining the COE family in 2007, I have been impressed by the talent and dedication of our faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends.

My favorite part of this job is connecting with people—meeting colleagues for the first time, visiting alumni and friends in surrounding communities, interacting with students in the halls of McCracken—I feel honored to be a part of an organization so passionate, collaborative, and innovative in its approach to education.

I would like to thank you for keeping the College of Education close to your hearts. Without fail, our alumni and friends are eager to hear about our new education initiatives and quick to share their fond memories of Ohio University.

Our former students remain an integral part of the College’s legacy and its future. Simply put, we couldn’t do it without you. That’s why I also would like to thank you for your generosity, talent and time. It is because of you that the College of Education can continue to prepare talented, responsible, ethical educators.
The College of Education is pleased to acknowledge the following scholarships that were established in fiscal year 2007.

**NEW SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Sandra Asik Memorial Scholarship
Sandra Asik received her B.S.Ed. in 1965, majoring in elementary education. After graduation, she went on to teach kindergarten and first grade in Lorain City Schools for 30 years. Established by Sandra’s husband, Raymond “Ret” J. Asik, B.S.Ed. ’63, The Sandra Asik Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to a student of early childhood education. The undergraduate recipient must have junior or senior status and attend the Athens campus.

The Dr. Norman “Ned” Dewire and Shirley W. Dewire ’57 Endowed Scholarship
Established by Dr. Norman “Ned,” B.S.Ed., ’58, and Shirley, B.S.Ed. ’57, Dewire established this award to benefit students of early childhood education at the Athens campus. Candidates must demonstrate financial need.

The Edward L. Nugent Scholarship
The Sandra Asik received her B.S.Ed. in 1965, majoring in elementary education. After graduation, she went on to teach kindergarten and first grade in Lorain City Schools for 30 years. Established by Sandra’s husband, Raymond “Ret” J. Asik, B.S.Ed. ’63, The Sandra Asik Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to a student of early childhood education. The undergraduate recipient must have junior or senior status and attend the Athens campus.

Dr. Irene Bandy-Hedden, B.S.Ed., M.Ed., is Ohio University’s 2006 Alumna of the Year. She is pictured with Sara Minning, recipient of the Irene Bandy Award for graduating seniors.

**GRANTS RECEIVED**

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<td>School Study Council of Ohio</td>
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**IN PICTURES: OHIO COE STUDENTS AT WORK**
The education of women has been historically neglected in Africa, and Kenya, with a staggering 60 percent illiteracy rate among adult women, reflects that reality. As men move to cities seeking employment, women often remain in rural areas to raise families and work farms, where they face a growing scarcity of resources. To respond to these challenges, Kenyan women must be educated and empowered to act. And in the absence of effective schools, popular education (i.e., community-based, informal education) may provide an answer.

Currently I am doing dissertation research in Kenya with the support of the U.S. Fulbright Scholarship Program. My research explores the popular education practices and leadership development strategies used by women’s grassroots organizations in Kenya, such as the Green Belt Movement and the Vindo Multipurpose Cooperative Society. To determine how these organizations educate rural populations about environmental restoration, sustainable development and women’s empowerment, I am conducting ethnographic, participatory-action research in cooperation with rural Kenyan women. I want to understand how women’s organizations raise the consciousness of ordinary citizens and engage their skills in collective action.

I first came to Kenya for a study-abroad program through Kalamazoo College. My senior thesis research focused on the struggle for survival and identity among street children in Nairobi. I interviewed many young people who moved from rural areas because their families could not afford to support their basic needs. These young people face incredible obstacles in gaining access to education, employment and self-sufficiency, locking families into an intergenerational cycle of poverty.

A key strategy to empowering children is to strengthen their families and communities. Street children in Kenya are symptoms of structural problems: poverty, landlessness, unemployment, lack of education, food insecurity, environmental degradation and other factors associated with rural-to-urban migration and a struggling economy. Many organizations now provide education, employment and training to women and mothers, empowering them to gain the income necessary to support and educate their children.

From studying women’s grassroots organizations, I can identify and communicate effective practices, while enhancing my own skills as an educator and activist. The knowledge and skills that I learn in Kenya translate to my own community in rural Appalachian Ohio. In spite of the distance and differences that separate us, Kenyan women’s groups have developed strategies for popular education that may be adapted to other rural communities seeking sustainable development in the twenty-first century.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Catherine Cutcher, M.A.Ed., ’00, is a Ph.D. candidate in cultural studies in education and a U.S. Student Fulbright Scholar in Kenya. She also is the former assistant director of African studies at Ohio University.

“The cultural studies in education Program at Ohio University prepares students to become global citizens and educators committed to activism and social change—to “think globally and act locally.””

By Catherine Cutcher, Fulbright Scholar

Grassroots education for Kenyan women
IN FOCUS --> College of Education student Aaron White welcomes visitors to his 2007 Student Research and Creativity Fair tri-fold exhibit on students’ test-taking anxiety.