Inside the Social Studies Classroom
Jere Brophy, Jan Alleman and Barb Knighton

PHOTO BY TOM STANULIS
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At the time of writing this column, the daily news is about the economy—it is volatile at best, creating uncertainty across all sectors of our society and world. At the same time, as I read the articles in this issue of the New Educator, I am, once again, uplifted and inspired by the work of our faculty and students. I hope you will be, too. We take a great deal of pride in the research and outreach of our faculty, and it is a joy to read about how their work touches the lives of children and teachers here and around the world.

For example, Laura Apol, professor of literacy and a poet in her own right, has initiated a "Writing for Healing" project. She and her collaborators are working with a Rwandan organization, using narrative writing to help facilitate the healing process for the survivors of genocide—a remarkable and poignant story. Apol’s work in Rwanda is among many projects supported by the Literacy Achievement Research Center, or LARC, led by Nell Duke and MSU newcomer Douglas Hartman, who are interviewed in this issue. Our cover story features Jere Brophy and Jan Alleman, who, through their long-term collaboration, have reshaped social studies teaching in schools. Social studies is a staple of education.

It is yet again time to celebrate change! Perhaps the most evident transition for many of us is the changing of the seasons. In part, it may be the result of observing fall’s changing colors around our homes and the beautiful campus of Michigan State University. It reminds MSU alumni and friends of the excitement of the beginning of another school year and of all the positive and ongoing transformations taking place throughout the university and within the College of Education. I feel a bit of awe and pride when I look at the physical renovations that have been completed at Erickson Hall. Beyond what’s already been completed is the continuing work on the fifth floor, which truly will be the topping on the cake. The combination of education and construction has made for a noteworthy amalgamation.

The change of seasons and physical spaces is only one transformation, however. Daily we are made more and more aware of the global modifications that, of late, have a greater impact on all of our daily lives. Our world partners become more and more interwoven with us. These mutual interests across the globe continue to increase rapidly. A vital focus is and will continue to be education with an international and
welcome

the K–12 curriculum, but through their research and curriculum development, they have assured that social studies content is relevant and meaningful for students. Over the years, they have worked very closely with teachers to make this content vibrant and engaging, particularly for early elementary children.

In this issue, you will also read about our students’ participation in many distinctive activities, from studying abroad in Malaysia to competing in the 2008 Beijing Olympics and attending the Paralympics. And, through a new partnership with the Chicago Public Schools (CPS), our students now can choose to complete their fifth-year teaching internship in Chicago. You may ask—why Chicago? Chicago is not only a major urban center, it is also a school district that is investing in reform and that hires up to 2,000 new teachers each year. The relationship with CPS provides a wonderful opportunity for our students to be both observers and participants in this reform agenda as interns, and then perhaps as first-year teachers.

The intent of the New Educator is to bring you snapshots and profiles of the work of this college. Through these articles, we want you to learn about our faculty and students. We hope you see our commitment to doing the kind of work that is relevant and important and to preparing the kinds of students who will enter their professions with both the skills and inspiration to make a difference. I also hope you will see how collaboration can define the work of our faculty and gain insights as to how sustained and productive collaborations define the spirit and culture of our college.

Obviously, I cannot know the economic conditions at the time you receive this magazine, but I hope these articles will provide some spark of pride and optimism about the work and impact of our faculty and the special qualities and attributes of our students and alumni. We remain focused on doing our very best in all our endeavors and achieving the level of excellence that you expect of us.

We thank you for your investment and loyalty to this college. We always welcome your comments.

Carole Ames

From the President

Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2008-2009 issue of The New Educator. The multicultural emphasis. The out-reach work of the College of Education is contributing to making this a dynamic and beneficial time. Evolving international courses, exchanges, study abroad trips and more establish the college as one on the cutting edge. How does this directly impact us as supporters of the college? The college proudly includes alumni and friends throughout the United States and around the world, with numbers continually growing. The College of Education Alumni Association itself also is growing in size and scope.

As a college with an eye to the future of education globally, nationally and locally, I invite you to join or maintain your membership in the MSU College of Education Alumni Association. We welcome you to encourage others to join, too. It brings the pride shared by so many around the world right back to the College of Education.

It was a pleasure to visit with so many alumni and friends of the college during the Homecoming Tent Party and I am already looking forward to next year’s gathering.

Kathryn Rodgers
Class of 1970 and 1974

COE Alumni Association
Here are some thoughts from a few New Educator readers—the first to appear in this new standing feature. What do you think about what you read in this magazine? Or, what would you like to share with fellow alumni, colleagues and friends? We hope to prompt more conversation, so please send us your letters. Write to Nicole Geary at ngeary@msu.edu or 518 Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824-1034.

Thank you very much for sending me a copy of the MSU education magazine. It was very special to me to read such a nice article about my dad. MSU was a huge part of our lives growing up, and even though I attended Eastern Michigan University to major in special education (I didn’t want my dad to be my advisor) and now make my home in California, I still consider myself a “Spartan.” My dad was a very special man that contributed so much to so many. Thank you for recognizing him.

Amy Nomura, Stockton, Calif.
Daughter of Donald Burke, late professor of special education; and resource specialist/department chair at Tokay High School, Lodi, Calif.

I am a past graduate (’81) from the MSU Deaf Education program. I was so thrilled to read in the recent New Educator, Spring 2008, about the collaborative program to house those with American Sign Language (ASL) skills in Snyder-Phillips Hall! How I wish that option was available to me during my four years at MSU!

I have since gone on to specialize in educational interpreting. An ASL immersion living environment, such as is now available at MSU, would have been extremely beneficial to me in my chosen career. I applaud you and the team that put this together!

Cindy Kowalski-Affonso, Jerome, Mich.

Editor’s note: Deaf Education students and faculty celebrated the new ASL living-learning community at MSU on Sept. 25. Flip to page 15 for more.

I read your article, “Reaching Out,” in the Spring 2008 New Educator. I found your article very interesting because I have a flower/gift shop in Fowlerville and also adopted a beautiful sweet girl from China two years ago. It also struck a chord with me because I just met with Nancy Romig from MSU’s Confucius Institute last week regarding having my daughter enroll in the immersion preschool at Post Oak Elementary School. Upon speaking with Nancy, I learned my daughter doesn’t qualify for the preschool because we don’t live in the Lansing School District.

I was very impressed with the immersion school philosophy of half of the day taught in American methods and the second half of the day in traditional Chinese. The school is a 40-minute drive one way for me and Nancy mentioned that if there were enough people they could start a school in a different area. Upon reading your article, I thought maybe with the Zhang family and other families we could start a school in Fowlerville or nearby.

Laura Rittman, Byron, Mich.

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You might be wondering why the image of a mortarboard is starting to appear each time you see or receive materials from the MSU College of Education. After all, we typically think about commencement ceremonies just once or twice a year. Our graduates wear the square-shaped caps—often with education’s signature light blue tassel—only during those moments, as they celebrate the joy of completing prestigious degrees.

However, commencement, by its very name, does not constitute an ending. Rather, the occasion signifies that its honorees have achieved knowledge that will enable them to continue learning, to keep rising to higher levels of understanding, within their chosen disciplines. For educators whose mission is to incite growth and learning in others, graduation marks only one significant turning point during a career filled with countless new beginnings.

We in the College of Education also never stop evolving. With the growing impact of research findings, fast-changing technology and globalization, we charge forward. Michigan State University is known as a national leader in education graduate study, research and teacher preparation not only for its long history of excellence but for its record of commencing—embracing new initiatives, challenges and, therefore, beginnings. This magazine illustrates many of the ways College of Education faculty inspire fruitful beginnings throughout K-16 education.

So, please allow us to introduce a new College of Education logo. It bears a regal mortarboard and a blue tassel—symbols of achievement and, more importantly, progress in education.
DOCTORAL DEGREE RECIPIENTS

Spring 2008 Curriculum, Teaching & Educational Policy
Victoria Susan Bennett-Armistead Neil Duke
Crystal Gail Lunsford Lynn Fendler
Ji-Won Son Sandra Crespo/Sharon Senk
Eric Magnus Wilmot John (Jack) Schwille

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Curriculum, Teaching & Educational Policy
Victoria Susan Bennett-Armistead
Nell Duke
Crystal Gail Lunsford
Ji-Won Son
Eric Magnus Wilmot

Young Yee Kim (received two degrees) Gary Sykes
Danielle Lakethia Leslie Dorothea Anagnostopoulos

Educational Policy
Young Yee Kim (received two degrees) Gary Sykes

Educational Psychology & Educational Technology
Amy Tracy Wells Raven McCrory

Higher, Adult & Lifelong Education
Dorcia B. Chaison Reitu Mabokela
Andrew Loren Flagel MaryLee Davis
Kathryn Claire King Reitu Mabokela
Paul John Kurf Kristen Renn
Melissa McDaniels Ann Austin
Na Wei Reitu Mabokela
Lynne Anne Zelenski MaryLee Davis

K–12 Educational Administration
Ranee Delores Ikerd Beyerlein Marenette Benham
Muhammad Ahmad Khalifa Christopher Dunbar
Mary M. Ombonga Christopher Dunbar
James David Smith Christopher Dunbar

Kinesiology
Amanda Leigh Paule Yevonne Smith
Michael Jon Roskamp Gail Dummer
Jennifer Lynn Stiller Dan Gould

Measurement & Quantitative Methods
Young Yee Kim (received two degrees) Mark Reckase

Summer 2008 Curriculum, Teaching & Educational Policy
Hasan Awad Abdel-Kareem Charles (Andy) Anderson
Thomas Bryan Crisp Laura Apol
James Edward Fredricksen Lynn Fendler
David John Grueber Charles (Andy) Anderson
Kristin Lee Gunckel Edward Smith
Won-Pyo Hong Avner Segall
Denise Kay Ives Mary Juzwik
Kathleen D. Mosley Mark Conley
Jill Annette Newton Glenda Lappan
Rui Niu Lynn Paine

Educational Psychology & Educational Technology
Kathryn Hershey Dirkin Punya Mishra
Lindsey Mohan Mary Lundeberg
Stephen Micheal Vassallo Punya Mishra

Higher, Adult & Lifelong Education
Shenita Brokenburr John Dirkx
Ildiko Porter-Szucs John Dirkx

K–12 Educational Administration
Patrick Kim Halladay Gary Sykes

Kinesiology
Melissa Grace-Fraser Alexander Gail Dummer
Todd Anders Gilson Martha Ewing
Jeong-Dae Lee Yevonne Smith

Measurement & Quantitative Methods
Soyeon Ahn Kimberly Maier
Xin Li Mark Reckase

Rehabilitation Counselor Education
Jae Chul Lee John Kossulek

School Psychology
Julia Ann Ogg John Carlson
The MSU College of Education has taken the lead in developing resources for educators across Michigan to connect their students to the world beyond our borders and to prepare them to survive and thrive in a global society. These opportunities span K–16 and are geared toward all educators, from those just beginning to explore how to internationalize their practices to those ready to establish formal relationships with schools and programs overseas.

A powerful example of this leadership took place in April 2008 when the college’s Office for K–12 Outreach and the U.S.-China Center for Research on Educational Excellence teamed up with the Education Alliance of Michigan to host the second annual Internationalizing Michigan Education conference. Over 250 teachers, administrators, association representatives, state Department of Education employees, students and others attended the daylong event. Keynote speakers included WWJTV-Detroit Community Affairs and Editorial Director Carol Cain and Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson. Cain shared observations from her production of the documentary Building Bridges: From the Great Lakes to the Great Wall. Patterson outlined the many ways Oakland County and Michigan are already active in the global economy. Both emphasized the importance of internationalizing the curriculum to prepare students to live and work in the economy of the future.

Also participating in the conference was a delegation of 10 high-ranking education officials from Chongqing, Michigan’s automotive counterpart in China. After hearing a presentation from Dr. Weiliang Zhao, deputy commissioner of the Chongqing Municipal Education Commission (CMEC), Michigan educators watched as the superintendents and school board presidents from the Utica Community Schools and the Armada Area Schools joined Commissioner Zhao and College of Education Assistant Dean for International Programs Jack Schwille in signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the school districts, the CMEC and the College of Education. This agreement will pave the way for study tours and exchanges for K–12 students and teachers, internship opportunities for candidates in teacher and administrator preparation programs, and sister-school relationships for elementary, middle and high schools in Michigan with their counterparts in Chongqing. Michigan school districts will have opportunities to find qualified Mandarin teachers for their world language programs.

A highlight of the conference was music by a chorus of students from Chongqing, Armada and Utica, who prepared for the event over the Internet. The Chinese students spent the week before the conference staying with host families in each district, experiencing school in large and small communities and sharing with their U.S. hosts a glimpse of student life in China.
This relationship with Chongqing reflects a clear vision on the part of the MSU and College of Education administration and a consistent effort on the part of College of Education faculty to establish strong international ties with strategic partners such as China. Over the past three years, k–12 Outreach Assistant Dean Barbara Markle and University Distinguished Professor Yong Zhao, director of the U.S.-China Center, have arranged six study tours for Michigan k–12 and higher education leaders and state policymakers, as well as the leaders of many of the state’s professional educational organizations. These study tours have provided them with access to key Ministry of Education officials, as well as opportunities to visit schools and universities to observe firsthand the educational achievements and challenges of this economic powerhouse of the 21st century. The Confucius Institute at MSU has developed online language resources and summer camps for Michigan students (see sidebar), most of them at little or no cost to schools.

Clearly, the College of Education is taking the lead in bringing the world—and world-class practices—to Michigan schools.

Confucius Institute Offers Successful Summer Camps

More than 60 children returned to their Lansing-area schools this fall with a few new Mandarin words in their vocabulary—not to mention an understanding of Chinese customs and, say, brush painting skills or tai chi moves. The MSU Confucius Institute’s second collection of summer camps for k–12 students gained popularity with local families looking for a dose of Chinese learning. They also were held in more locations, including facilities in the Lansing School District, East Lansing Public Schools and the College of Education.

Coordinator Nicole Ellefson said many parents plan to return during summer 2009 and explore options for their children to continue Chinese language instruction during the school year. About half of the participants were in kindergarten through second grade.

“Parents are starting to realize that young early language learning is really the way to go,” Ellefson said. “We’re hoping the camps provide a window of opportunity for parents and students to access the Confucius Institute’s resources online.”

Visit confucius.msu.edu for more information.
Test results often seem to dominate discussions about school performance in the public eye. For those in the classroom, however, keeping track of students’ progress means far more than monitoring standardized test scores such as the MEAP results in Michigan. Teachers and principals must be able to develop, administer and analyze a wide variety of assessments to improve student learning—yet the vast majority of them have never received direct instruction and training for those tasks.

To help address this growing need, the College of Education launched its first-ever Certificate in Educational Assessment program for practitioners in September 2008. Initially, 10 people are enrolled for the three-course sequence, with four coming to campus and six participating live online from across Michigan one evening each week.

Created by faculty members who have developed assessment systems for the state and federal governments, the new program is designed for educators with little technical background. Professors Edward Roeber and Sharif Shakrani emphasize major concepts and their relevance to student achievement, not complex statistics.

“The No Child Left Behind law has really raised the stakes for schools,” said Roeber, who previously oversaw assessment and accountability for the Michigan Department of Education. “Everybody needs to not only evaluate the results but also to understand the programs themselves, including their strengths and shortcomings.”

The first course emphasizes how to balance summative assessments (required at the national, state or local levels) with interim benchmark checks and classroom-based exams, observation and other methods for gauging learning on a daily basis. Students have a choice for their second course, between one covering large-scale assessments more intensely and one emphasizing classroom assessments in greater depth. The final course will offer hands-on experience with analyzing, reporting and effectively incorporating results into teaching.

Lansing School District Assessment Coordinator Francisca Kidder, an MSU graduate who is now enrolled in the course sequence, said she had never seen so many balanced perspectives on assessment linked within one succinct program.

“It’s exactly what every educator, especially every assessment coordinator, should know,” she said, noting she will recommend it to teachers in her district. “This program will help them direct their instruction in a way that is conducive to generating effective curriculum—so that we can strengthen what students don’t know and what they are not yet ready to do.”

While those who complete the certificate can apply their credits (9) toward a master’s degree of their choice, Roeber and Shakrani hope to eventually develop a full master’s degree program in educational assessment if interest and participation grows sufficiently.

Department of Teacher Education leaders, meanwhile, are studying strategies to produce teachers who are more proficient in using formative, or classroom, assessments to improve student learning. They have increased the visibility of a broad range of assessments in the teacher preparation program, and are currently in the planning stages for expanding opportunities to experience, learn about and practice effective assessment techniques, both as undergraduates and during the internship year. For now, a new course on classroom assessment, CEP 830, will be available to fifth-year teaching interns along with College of Education graduate students and those pursuing the certificate in assessment. It will be offered for the first time in spring 2009.

For more information, contact Ed Roeber, roeber@msu.edu or (517) 432-0427.

College Launches Program on Effective Assessment for Practicing Educators
See ya’ SIRS . . .?

The familiar SIRS (Student Instructional Rating System) forms Michigan State University students use to evaluate their classes each semester could soon disappear from the classrooms of Erickson Hall and IM-Circle. The Center for the Scholarship of Teaching is testing two alternative student evaluation systems this year with the hopes of adopting a system that assesses the quality of teaching and student learning more effectively. Center for the Scholarship of Teaching Director Suzanne Wilson explains: “The current SIRS are neither flexible enough to accommodate a range of teaching styles and class arrangements (such as seminars, lectures and laboratories) nor focused on what students learn. We need much better data on what students feel they learn in their classes (and why) if we are to use student feedback to inform program redesign and faculty evaluation and promotion.”

The systems in the pilot, which are being used by 20 to 30 faculty members in the College of Education this year, were selected following a series of invited presentations from organizations with expertise in faculty evaluation last spring. After evaluating their flexibility and potential for generating useful data, the college plans to adopt a new evaluation system for the 2010–11 academic year.

Erickson Hall is expected to become the first building on campus boasting full replacement of its original curtain wall windows. Adding to the sleek exterior of Erickson’s previous building addition, the ambitious project started late this summer and will continue through spring.
In Tribute to Excellent Teaching

Four faculty members and two graduate students received the College of Education’s top award for outstanding teaching in 2008. Another group of distinguished instructors will be honored this spring.

Tom Bird, an associate professor of teacher education, infuses his teaching and mentoring with his habit of intellectual probing. Teacher candidates and doctoral students alike apprentice themselves at Tom’s workbench. They value his pragmatism, his responsiveness and his passion for putting things in the ‘tool position’—cutting straight to the usefulness of available theories, knowledge and resources. He teaches a reasoning process that involves interns’ careful description of teaching dilemmas, consideration of multiple interpretations and identification of alternatives for action. The oral consideration of these cases in TE 801 prepares candidates to write a case study. Tom refers to this process as “the assistant teacher’s workshop.”

John Dirks, a professor of higher, adult and lifelong education, took over and for a long time single-handedly kept alive the college’s commitment to adult and continuing education. In addition to a heavy teaching and advising load, a commitment to running a sizable state-backed information agency and a teacher’s commitment to studying his own learning, John has been a model colleague and teacher. He was an early adopter of online teaching, finding technology an ideal way to instruct adult learners. With his development of a Problem Based Learning format, John was among the first to create conceptual maps to help students navigate the virtual world of learning and explore their personal and professional development.

Teacher Education Professor Lynn Paine worried about whether her work could make a difference when she was a doctoral student. She has—in her international comparative education research and her teaching and advising of students. Lynn’s goal is “to problematize the taken-for-granted . . . to juxtapose the familiar with the unfamiliar.” Her graduate students cite her courses as the “epitome of global awareness . . .” and think of themselves as “better thinkers, better researchers, better educators, and better citizens of the global community.” Lynn purposefully attends to students as learners, connects her research and teaching and makes her teaching transparent. She also is devoted to helping her international advisees acclimate themselves to the U.S.

Professor Steve Weiland never stops making connections; his mind is a virtual hypertext environment with links that connect literature, academe, media, sports, history and popular culture. A long-time, successful classroom teacher and advisor, Steve was an early adopter of technology, stepping up to the online teaching challenge and developing a format unique to the College of Education’s online MA program (MAED). The professor of educational administration teaches online courses as being about content and process. His courses are thus “meta-oriented” in teaching and learning, calling on students to think critically about what it means to live, learn and teach with digital media. According to his nominators, Steve is a rare colleague who connects our past, present and future in an intellectual world where teaching and learning have become immediate, constant and digitally-enriched.

Gina Garner was a speech-language pathologist in public schools for 10 years, and she currently is pursuing a doctorate in the Department of Teacher Education. Gina’s students in the elementary teacher preparation program describe her as “passionate,” “thought-provoking” and “respectful.” Her passion for teaching is evident in her syllabi, her student evaluations and her professional demeanor. Gina’s pedagogical approach is influenced by techniques, approaches and assumptions she used while working as a special education teacher. She also uses cutting-edge technologies to create a classroom community for her students, posting updates concerning state and national policy and links for interesting information.

To Valerie Struthers Walker, teaching is inquiry, both personal and professional. As a doctoral candidate in Teacher Education, and charged with designing a course to explore diversity in children’s literature, Valerie has learned to be a better teacher by studying her teaching, incorporating new technology into her classes and striving to instill critical practices in her students. Valerie encourages prospective teachers to adopt an understanding of literature, continually challenge their own interpretation of texts and push themselves for ever-deeper complexity and nuance. She works closely with her students to elevate their scholarship, continually revise their practices, improve their product and prepare for careers as scholarly and inquiring professionals.
Erickson’s Evolution in Learning Spaces

Take the Walking Tour

Patrick Dickson, Professor of Educational Psychology

The design of learning spaces has evolved rapidly in the past decade in response to changes in technology and students, pedagogy and design. Since 2004, the entire first floor of Erickson Hall has been gradually redesigned to create a seamlessly articulated suite of spaces to facilitate teaching and learning with technology.

Renovations throughout the rest of the building, one floor at a time, reached the top, or fifth, floor last spring and continue this academic year. With the installation of new windows underway, the building will soon be construction-free and completely refreshed. Meanwhile, IM-Circle also has been in construction mode, while approximately 3,500 square feet of locker room space is transformed into new research laboratories and office suites. The project has an anticipated completion of winter 2009.

Come and visit! The following are a list of things to note as you walk around Erickson’s ground floor. (Imagine yourself on a nature trail with this as a guide.)

1. Front entrance. Note the inviting spaces to sit in the lobby and how students are using them. (Before redesign, this was a lifeless, cold space). What makes the spaces inviting? (Furniture, color, texture, lighting, partial enclosure).

2. Reception area: The “genius bar.” Walk into the space just beyond the lobby. On your right is our “genius bar” (patterned after Apple stores) with friendly “technology interns” (undergraduates ready to provide support). Stand in the middle of this room and look around. Note various spaces for people to meet in small groups. Note the glassed-in room with equipment for creating video, podcasts, etc. The office in the back is for Terri Gustafson, who leads technology support for faculty and students. (Support infrastructure requires a mix of technology and people). Note the doors leading into 133D and 133E with glass windows. (Tech support is immediately available for instructors. Proximity matters). Feel free to talk with the interns.

3. Lower lobby: Learning space or . . . ? Walk out, turn left and stand at the top of the stairs looking toward the Red Cedar River. What do you notice? Before the redesign, this was a barely used space people passed through on their way to the Kiva. Notice the people, what they’re doing, where they’re sitting. The Sparty’s coffee shop reflects the integration of food services into learning spaces (libraries used to try to keep food out). Notice the outdoor spaces, accessible via wireless. (Previously this area was overgrown, blocking the river view).

4. Meeting rooms for faculty and graduate students. Walk down the stairs, turn left and walk up the ramp. Note there are two nice lounges designated to encourage spontaneous meetings of faculty and graduate students. (The rooms cannot be reserved).

5. Circle around the central spaces. At the top of the ramp, turn left and walk slowly, looking into 133D and 133E, turn left at the corner and walk past 133F and 133G. This suite of spaces, all near technology support personnel, includes two large classrooms divided by a wall that can be raised, one large conference room and one smaller conference room. Notice how many computers there are and the location, mobility and reconfigurability of the furniture. Notice the flat panels around the edge of the rooms. (The college requires all teacher education students to own a laptop and the large screens encourage them to use their technology in the classroom). Notice the projectors, whiteboards (high tech and low tech), etc. In 133F and 133G, there also are Polycom teleconferencing systems. Each room has a control panel to allow sharing screens. (Designed for different sized groups and pedagogies; and for flexibility. Moves away from labs with rows of computers on immovable furniture . . . enabled by wireless mobility).

6. Further variations of “high-tech” classrooms. Walk down the corridor beside rooms 132, 130 and 128 and look at how they are being used, where the furniture is located, etc. (Notice again the frosted windows). Each of these rooms has a different look and feel and reflects continuing exploration of what works and what instructors and students need. Again notice the investment in large flat screens to encourage integration of laptops. You can also walk down the corridor beside rooms 107, 109, 111 and 113. One room is equipped with an emphasis on science teaching (laboratory sinks, cabinets for special purpose equipment, etc.). Here the rooms have less emphasis on technology, but are equipped with projectors, etc.

7. Corridors as learning spaces. As you walked the corridors, did you pay attention to the canopied study spaces or “nooks”? These nooks show how an unused space can be redesigned to encourage students to sit down outside of class and work on their laptops (Notice the desktop that swings out. Why is the canopy important? How many people are these seats designed for? Notice the direction the people face. Are these isolating booths or socially inviting orientations?)

Now, walk back to the lower lobby, buy yourself a cup of coffee and sit down for a while. Make notes. Watch the flow of students and instructors; notice the variations in furniture height, configuration, location; see the textures, colors, foods and how laptops, cell phones and iPods are used. Think about how your building or classroom might be made more functional with less technology but more support—for using laptops students own, by having flexible furniture, teleconferencing, whiteboards, etc. Where would you locate support personnel near your “high tech” learning spaces?
Coming Home to the College of Education

More than 800 people stopped by the College of Education Homecoming Tent Party this fall, making the annual meet-and-eat bash even more successful than last year. Besides the usual friendly greetings, rockin’ band music and great food (including delicious pulled pork sandwiches and sauerkraut dogs), this year’s hot spot on Demonstration Field also featured lawn games and face painting fun for all ages. We had brisk air and bright sunshine before the 12 p.m. game kick-off, when the Spartans held off the Iowa Hawkeyes to deliver another Homecoming win! Thanks to our sponsors for helping to create this priceless gathering, welcoming all those who serve, support and call the College of Education their alma mater. Let’s carry on the tradition.

1 Kinesiology junior Alyse Smith paints an extra splash of school spirit on the hands of education sophomore D’Angelo Farmer. 2 College of Education undergraduate students proudly carry their banner during the MSU Homecoming Parade. 3 Tent Party visitors check out the college’s impressive showing in the 2009 U.S. News & World Report ranking of graduate programs. 4 Alumni and friends fill their plates with delicious tailgate-style fare before the big game. 5 Children including (left to right) Marshall Weber, Daniel Gutierrez and Alexis and Mitchell Darga enjoyed playing lawn games.

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College of Education faculty, staff and students helped mark an historic addition to MSU’s diverse on-campus community Sept. 25 during the opening celebration of the new American Sign Language (ASL) Living-Learning community at Snyder-Phillips Hall. The residence hall environment—the only option of its kind in Michigan and across the Big 10—now houses 11 students who use or study ASL in close proximity, including future teachers of the deaf or hard of hearing. For more information, visit www.asl.msu.edu.

Expand Your Career – Online

The College of Education now offers more opportunities to learn online. These 30-credit graduate programs—including two new in 2009—are flexible, accessible and taught by our faculty.

- **Master of Arts in Teaching and Curriculum.** Beginning spring semester 2009, the Department of Teacher Education will launch an entirely online version of this popular program, while it continues to be offered on campus. This program is ideal for K–12 teachers who want to make connections with teacher education faculty and learn the latest theory and practice through an interactive online learning community. Visit www.education.msu.edu/te/matc or e-mail matc@msu.edu.

- **Master of Arts in Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education.** An online version of this program begins for the first time in fall 2009. This coursework prepares individuals for entry-level leadership positions in postsecondary education, public agencies and business settings. E-mail driscol2@msu.edu or visit www.educ.msu.edu/content/default.asp?contentID=506.

- **Master of Arts in Education.** This continuing online program is for practicing classroom teachers, school administrators, coaches or adult educators. It’s designed to build on prior professional experience and engage students in a dynamic online community. Available concentrations include special education, technology and learning, preschool through postsecondary leadership, literacy education, science and mathematics, and sport leadership and coaching. Visit education.msu.edu/onlineed or e-mail onlineed@msu.edu.

- **Educational Technology: Certificate, Master’s and Endorsement.** These programs are all offered entirely online. The certificate program consists of three 3-credit courses. The courses are 8 weeks long, and each follows consecutively after the other. E-mail edutech@msu.edu. After completing the certificate, students apply to the master’s online degree program. Students typically complete the 5 required and 2 elective courses within a 2-year time period and can add the Educational Technology (NP) endorsement to their Michigan Teaching Certificate. E-mail msuermot@msu.edu. Visit edutech.msu.edu for more information.
Chicago connections
Halway through the school year, and all the way across Lake Michigan, Amanda Craik can see her future career unfolding fast.

She’s putting her teaching skills to the longest and toughest test yet. She’s surrounded by second-graders at a school serious about success, supported by fellow Spartans in a big city filled with risks and resources.

She’s one of the first College of Education graduates ever to be placed in Chicago Public Schools (CPS) for the fifth-year internship. College leaders began offering the opportunity soon after forging a unique and promising relationship with the nation’s third largest district last school year.

“I’ve felt really welcome here,” said Craik, whose interest in urban teaching grew as an undergraduate during two summer teaching fellowships in Detroit. “I thought it would be a great opportunity to get more experience. Now, I feel like I know the students so much more, and not just as learners, but as people.”

With Craik, 15 other aspiring educators from Michigan State University are now honing their teaching skills in the Windy City. Most live in a Hyde Park apartment complex close to their classrooms and all share the added responsibility of completing required coursework at a distance.

The intention is to give committed young people another, larger context for experiencing urban education before they enter the field—beyond existing placement sites in Michigan and building on the college’s comprehensive urban preparation efforts starting as early as freshmen year.

The Chicago interns are working where teachers must be sensitive to social justice and serve the needs of all learners, in schools of high poverty on the city’s south side.

“We want to provide our teacher candidates with real context experiences in Chicago’s under-resourced school settings,” said Sonya Gunning-Moton, assistant dean for student support services and recruitment. “This is not teaching on Michigan Avenue.”

Making the Connection

Dameka Redic, who manages Chicago Public Schools’ giant student teaching system, said the district approached MSU College of Education Dean Carole Ames because leaders were looking for the highest-quality teacher preparation programs in the country. The district has ties to more than 100 universities in 10 states and an average of 2,000 teaching interns in its schools each year. But the majority stay for five months or less.

“We were really impressed with the full year of practical experience for teachers; we think that’s key,” Redic said. “Being a producer of top-quality educators, we’re looking at building a solid pipeline where these individuals are vested for a solid year and can make connections between the community they live in and the schools they teach in.”

Ames, with leaders from the Department of Teacher Education, saw the rich environment for on-site learning CPS could offer MSU teacher candidates—and the career potential.

The more than 27,000-teacher district hires between 1,500 and 2,000 teachers each year, including a high percentage from its pool of existing interns. In fact, Redic said about 80 percent of them transition into full-time employment with the district.

“That’s important for us because we are trying to ensure that our teacher candidates see there are opportunities for jobs,” said Gunning-Moton, who is coordinating the program with associate professor of teacher education, Dorothea Anagnostopulos.

Plus, “they have had great success with our teachers they have hired.”

INTERESTED IN THE CHICAGO INTERNSHIP?

Chicago Public Schools …

- Employs more than 27,000 teachers and hires between 1,500 and 2,000 annually.
- Partners with 113 universities nationwide to place about 2,000 teaching interns each year—about 80 percent transition into full-time employment with the district.
- Offers professional development tailored specifically for teaching interns.
- Gives qualified interns early admission to district job fairs and places a recommendation stamp on their résumés.

Source: CPS Department of Human Resources
Many Spartans already have found satisfying careers teaching in CPS, with at least 115 hired since fall 2000 (see next article).

**Looking Forward**

Another round of applications began in October, and both institutions hope to grow the number of MSU teacher interns headed to Chicago for the second year. Specifically, they would like to fill a full cohort of 25 to 30 people.

Like last year, the selected group will travel to the city in the spring to interact with local educators in schools and experience cultural activities such as museum visits and a walking tour of the neighborhoods.

"Every day is a different challenge. Being there for the whole day, I see what teachers have to deal with," he said. "I love the big-city lifestyle. There is a lot of history and culture that you can just bring into the classroom."

Eventually, College of Education leaders hope, the internship also will help attract young people who are from Chicago to study at MSU.

The city and surrounding areas already offer MSU’s largest draw of out-of-state students, according to the Office of Admissions. Illinois sends the highest number of domestic students from outside Michigan each fall, accounting for 3.6 percent of the entering class in fall 2007. That compared to the next highest state, Ohio, at 1.1 percent.

"We have started our recruiting of Chicago public high school students to think seriously about attending Michigan State University for teacher preparation," Gunnings-Moton said, noting those students could return home as teaching interns highly prepared for the unique educational challenges of their urban hometown.

"That’s the long-term vision.”

CPS shares that vision, and more, says Redic, who foresees potential partnerships in research that inform strong urban teacher preparation and even residencies for MSU faculty.

"I really think this is the first step. There are so many paths we can take with this, and that’s what makes it so exciting.”
As a child, Kristina Utley knew she wanted to become a teacher. Even in kindergarten, she expressed her desire to help others in the classroom setting. Her father encouraged her to pursue a different profession, to make more money.

However, Utley kept going with her studies and, when she came to MSU, decided to fulfill her dream. At the end of her internship year, as a final exam, she was asked to make a presentation to her family about what she had accomplished as an educator.

“It was at this point, my dad realized my passion for teaching and that it overcame any amount of money that I could ever make,” she said. “He even cried during the presentation. Since that day, my dad has been my number one supporter.”

Today, 26-year-old Utley teaches in Chicago Public Schools and is among the growing population of MSU College of Education alumni to head to the Windy City post-graduation.

Her hard work and passion led her to becoming a literacy coach at Rachel Carson Elementary School, a rare position for such a young teacher. She teaches kindergarten through eighth-grade students about books and reading. In addition to working with students, Utley also coaches teachers on new literacy practices and techniques that help engage students in reading.

“The most exciting thing for me is when they come in and they are so excited about a book that they read the night before,” she said.

Utley said she always wanted to work with inner-city school children. She has made the goal of putting literature into the hands of low-income household children a reality by exciting kids with new books.

“Even with some of (our) toughest kids, (we) give them the right type of book and they get so engaged in it,” she said.

This is Utley’s fourth year teaching in Chicago. She graduated from MSU in 2004, completed her full-year internship in Lansing and then moved to Chicago.

Utley first taught second-graders at Chicago’s Mollison Elementary School during the 2005–06 school year. That was her first time teaching on her own.

She said the most essential thing she has learned through her experiences is how crucial the first day of class is with a new teacher.

“Going in that first day of school and really being pretty strict and really setting up rules and expectations right away is really important to set the tone for the rest of the year,” she said.

After finishing a year at Mollison, Utley transferred to Carson Elementary. She quickly adjusted to a sixth-grade classroom for two years, and then was promoted to literacy coach.

Her principal, Javier Arriola, said MSU College of Education alumni are distinguished from the other staff members because of their innate sense of curiosity.

“What I see about MSU-educated teachers is that they have passion for teaching, but they’re also not fully satisfied with what we are doing, so they ask questions,” Arriola said. “They understand teaching is a moving target.”

Utley finds comfort in the five MSU graduates that also teach at her school.

“Having that MSU bond definitely helps,” she said. “A lot of them come from the same experiences as myself and they came here with the same education. We all have very similar viewpoints when it comes to working with students.”

Fellow Spartan Stephanie Mulder also works as the other literacy coach at Carson. Mulder and Utley are the only literacy coaches in the school and are responsible for working with both teachers and students.

Mulder is going into her 10th year of teaching since graduating from MSU. She said she loves her job because the students she works with become so eager to learn. She hopes to continue her education and eventually open her own school.

“I’m interested in the charter schools they have here,” she said. “They are run by Chicago Public Schools and other companies.”

She plans on staying in Chicago to open the school and doesn’t want to leave the area any time soon, she said.

“There’s just always something to do,” she said. “It’s such a fun place. Having such young people around all the time makes it a great place to live and work.”
Like the forms of literacy it studies, LARC—the Literacy Achievement Research Center—has grown more complex.

In the good sense of the word. The nation’s largest literacy research center is as large as it’s ever been, with 26 principal investigators and 45 research assistants across five campus departments, their bylines in more than 150 publications in the last two years alone.

Although LARC scholars have always used a variety of research methods, their collective work is becoming increasingly multidisciplinary—covering everything from poetry knowledge and parental involvement to e-learning foreign languages and virtual history lessons.

They study how students of all ages and abilities learn to comprehend and compose, erasing lines between
research and everyday practice, materializing a mission statement that was recently updated to more fully recognize their strengths.

And they have a new director.

Award-winning literacy researcher Douglas K. Hartman joined the College of Education from the University of Connecticut this fall, assuming co-leadership with Nell K. Duke. The professor of language and literacy brings an accomplished record of scholarship with expertise relevant to today’s pressing topics, especially as teacher education attempts to conquer the complex new literacies of online reading and writing.

Hartman joins Duke in overseeing an ambitious, and visible, agenda. Last academic cycle alone, LARC posted informational reading comprehension assessments free online for educators, co-hosted its third summer Literacy Institute with the National Geographic Society, and saw center Principal Investigator Patricia Edwards become vice president of the International Reading Association. Adding to the collection of public resources developed by LARC, MSU also is in negotiations with Scholastic Inc. to go national with a DVD that was created to give Michigan child care providers effective literacy-building strategies.

With Hartman, Duke plans to continue upholding the premise she and late luminary Michael Pressley envisioned when they launched LARC five years ago, expanding the pool of thinkers who influence literacy scholarship across campus and venturing further toward the possibilities that are increasingly global—and digital—environment holds for literacy.

The New Educator sat the two directors down for a conversation early in the academic year.

Q So, what attracted you to MSU?

DOUG: I knew about the great work in literacy that colleagues were doing here, and the important role that LARC played in supporting that work. Previ-ous research centers have tended to be narrow in focus. It was the breadth of LARC that caught my eye, that you could imagine 25 or so colleagues, often who spoke in different discourses, willing to be a confederacy, if you will, in sharpening each other’s work . . . LARC is the ideal. It’s situated in an accomplished college and university, oriented to take on the complex literacy challenges of a new century.

Q What does Doug’s arrival mean for LARC?

NELL: It means senior leadership and cutting-edge scholarship. Doug looks at literacy but he also looks at pre-service teachers, and their intersection. The need for really top-notch scholarship in those areas is very high. And we were looking for a headline maker. Doug brings that, the buzz, which really does matter . . . He also brings senior editorship at the Journal of Literacy Research, which has a history of publishing lots of different kinds of research, from a lot of different backgrounds. The journal’s tradition and where it’s going is a nice match to how we’ve tried to define the center.

Q What does Doug’s arrival mean for LARC?

DOUG: Literacy is also important because it’s been institutionalized in recent times through No Child Left Behind, which really puts it on people’s radars—because of the funding, because of the assessment, because of the prominence in the media. But pre-NCLB, literacy also had the eye of larger society.

Q In the really big picture, what would you say LARC is trying to accomplish?

NELL: We’re trying to figure out how to prepare kids to be readers and writers in the current environment of texts, and the future environment of texts. That’s really a big nut we are trying to crack.

DOUG: The way I’ve heard that expressed often is, ‘We need to prepare students for their literate futures, not our past.’

Q Okay, but what do you mean when you say LARC tends to specialize in complex literacies?

NELL: Research in LARC is largely focused on understanding how students learn to comprehend, compose and critique entire texts, not how students learn to read and write individual words—which is an important topic, but one that is addressed extensively in other places. LARC researchers are interested in how students develop literacy of complex genres: poetry, content-rich informational texts, sophisticated narrative texts and a wide variety of digital genres. We strive to figure out how to help students become literate for the textual world of today and tomorrow.
Doug, you study “new literacies.” What does that really involve?

DOUG: The new literacies are those reading and writing strategies that are distinctive to communicating through the Internet and other digital communication technologies. Online literacy requires skills and knowledge that can be different from those necessary to read and write print offline. For example, when reading offline, teens are usually asked questions by a teacher after they read an article to see if they understood the information. But online, teens come to the Internet with questions of their own in mind before they read information on a web page. When questions are asked and who is asking them is no small matter when it comes to reading comprehension. Ensuring that teens know how to pose productive questions when setting out to read online takes on greater prominence.

Also, offline, there is ample evidence that effective teen readers parse a single article or chapter down to its key points, prioritize those points and then stitch them together into a summary of what they’ve read. Online, though, a number of profound challenges are introduced: the number of texts to be read and summarized is increased manyfold, the quality of information is variable (some have more trustworthy information than others), the form information is communicated varies across sites, like blogs, wikis, e-mails, discussion boards, all of which make the parsing, prioritizing and reconnecting more complex and skill-intensive. There’s plenty of evidence that teens get lost in the vertigo of textual material online or latch onto one simple factoid, thinking it is the be and end all to understanding an idea, concept, person or event.

What are the challenges of doing research and professional development in this area?

DOUG: Change. Who knew a year ago that Twitter would be ubiquitous? Who would have anticipated three years ago that wikis would be in such favor today? The sea of rapidly shifting applications used for the new literacies is dynamic beyond compare. The 500-year culture of analog print and books never evolved this quickly. It is the rapidity of these digital shifts that will probably mark this era of literacy’s history as epochal . . . though time will give us a better perspective on the moment we’re living through right now. The practical challenge
ate assignments for students in mixed general and special education classrooms. For example, some students can be directed through a series of on-screen prompts for a persuasive essay, asking for supporting arguments one at a time, while others see one large box for their entry. All text on the VHM also can be played aloud through a text-to-speech feature that’s been popular even among strong readers.

The principal investigators and their team continue analyzing assessment and interview data representing 500 students, of which about 20 percent have mild disabilities.

“What we suspected was that whatever would help kids who are identified as having disabilities would also help kids in general education,” said Okolo, noting they compared the VHM to traditional textbook learning. “Kids who use the VHM know more factual information and they, by our measures, develop a richer understanding of history.

“It’s shown that kids, when given the proper support, can learn sophisticated content.”

Those are important findings for special education research on social studies, which, Okolo says, is the least represented subject area in the special education literature.

A project of the Literacy Achievement Research Center, the VHM also offers significant insights about how students write about history, develop historical thinking strategies, evaluate source credibility, interpret images and more.

“History is fascinating, the story of people and the past,” Okolo said. “It’s a great domain to have kids practice problem-solving and literacy.”

The team also is piloting a component that could soon allow students to create their own exhibits for other students. The curator role is currently reserved for teachers.

Visit vhm.msu.edu to learn more. Visitors must register and create a log-in.

for work in new literacies is studying these new reading and writing tools quickly enough so we have rigorous enough information that can be helpful for curricular and instructional decisions in today’s classrooms . . . and to do it all before a new literacy strategy or tool falls out of favor. It’s ever more apparent that we need to equip our teens to know how to learn on their own . . . and to design school cultures that have high adaptive capacity.

Q LARC is really committed to training graduate students, as well, right?

NELL: From the beginning, we said that part of our mission was to train the next generation of literacy scholar-leaders. We’re interested in mechanisms for providing intense training for our doctoral students. Doug brings a lot of experience in terms of thinking about how to develop doctoral students, and for the current context. That is much more difficult than it was 25 years ago. New scholars have to know a lot more methodologies; they have to really be able to move in and out of the realm of practice and research comfortably. They have to have at least some knowledge in a whole lot more research topics.

Q How well poised is LARC to take on all these challenges?

DOUG: I think we are very well poised . . . because of the expertise in place, the capacities that have been developed, and the potential. Where on the planet can you find more than 25 researchers in one institution studying a construct as important as literacy, with nearly 50 research assistants who are supported by funding from key agencies and foundations?

NELL: The College of Education has a long tradition—perhaps because we are a land-grant university—of being on the cutting-edge in terms of understanding how to make the work we do here at the university relevant and implemented in real classrooms. That’s a tradition I value. Within the center, we have a lot of people who spend a lot of time thinking about that research-practice connect or disconnect, and who work on it actively.

We’re well poised topically, because we have Doug and others who have really thought a lot about the kinds of comprehension and production demands posed by today’s and tomorrow’s classrooms. And we are well poised because we are not ivory towerish as a group. We’re convinced that what we’re doing only really matters if it actually improves complex literacy skills. That’s a definite strength of our center and our college.
THE POWER OF Poetry
They first glimpsed the possibilities during an overdue kitchen table conversation.

The prospective educators they could inspire.
The bridges to children still unbuilt.
Their mutual love for the craft.
Poetry.

Laura Apol and Janine Certo, two talented writers, true believers of teaching, imagined themselves capturing the world’s great poems lost along the way to classrooms, channeling their passion into effective education models for the often-avoided genre.

Together.

They had traveled separate, distinguished paths as scholars of literature and writing education. But since that casual meeting, at the close of the 2006–07 academic year, they have become a sort-of unstoppable pair of poetry pioneers.

More than imagination, they have quantifiable data showing their approach to improving pre-service teachers’ poetry understandings makes a difference.

They expect to complete a children’s collection of poetry from the work of poets laureate (their rebellion against watered-down rhymes) within a year.

Talk with them for a minute about their plans to continue research in teacher education, their upcoming projects in the field and a million yet-to-unfold ideas. You can feel the growing excitement Certo and Apol share as colleagues.

And the momentum.

They are building recognition for the genre as a valuable scholarly enterprise in this College of Education and beyond, taking steps toward growing appreciation for the art in society at large—even while an era of accountability emphasizes basics in schools.

The latest: Nearly $40,000 from the Spencer Foundation to study kids’ poetry knowledge and development in a local, urban school district, starting this winter.

“Spencer doesn’t fund luxuries,” said Certo, who received the prestigious grant. “They fund progressive work that is supposed to improve education globally, to make the world a better place.”

Early Blossoming inside Erickson

Apol remembers that she was in the car, on the way to run a marathon in Washington, D.C., when she and her companion had the idea.

Trillium.

A public poetry reading for the College of Education, to be held each spring.
Poem for Those Who Don’t Teach

Janine L. Certo

So much depends on the professor in winter. 8:30 AM shoes clack in halls to class; podium, screen, desks, and light-skinned youth.

Somewhere, someone is wondering what the hell they’re doing with their life. Not us. We’re the lucky ones, making medicine, politics, poetry, music, social science complex, so sad and beautiful. Don’t tell me the university is a bubble. Don’t say those who can, do; those who can’t, teach. When the Israeli professor shielded students at Virginia Tech, that was love. Booker T. fought for books, study “of things themselves,” illumination of experience. Anne Sullivan marched Helen to the pump, pumped water to hand, spelled W-A-T-E-R over, over again, opened up a world for her in WATER. So when the Red Cedar melts and summer halls are dark to nowhere, somewhere a parent already dreads dropping off the child, taking trip after trip from car to dorm, the sadness growing quiet as the blue heron rises. But for today, it is spring on a bridge, and professor and student get to watch the bird climb.

So much depends.

Why Glori Hates Dogs

Laura Apol

Glori tells one story with two sets of dogs:
Rwandan dogs and the dogs of the Europeans.

At the start of the story, Ecole Technique Officielle became haven for whites and Rwandans—Europeans and Tutsis taking refuge together.

Outside the school walls there were bodies and machetes.

Inside, there were UN soldiers and guns: peacekeepers, they were called.

As if terror and peace were the same.

Glori tells how the soldiers would not stop the killers, would not redirect their mission, would not shoot to protect the living or the soon-to-be dead.

Fearing disease, the soldiers shot instead Rwandan dogs that fed on Tutsi corpses at the gate.

The patient killers looked on in peace.

This is one reason that Glori hates dogs.

But there is another:

Trucks came for the waiting whites—the ex-pats, soldiers and priests. Trucks left behind the black Rwandans—women, children and men.

Twenty-five hundred Tutsis were killed when the trucks pulled away.

No room on the trucks for babies with black skin.

Then Glori adds:

The whites didn’t want their dogs to be killed.

So they took them along.

They left the Tutsi children; they saved their dogs instead.

She says this with a rage so pure.

I know I am looking into the face of God.

It was 1998. Apol and her colleague—professor Joseph (Jay) Featherstone, also an accomplished poet—were the featured readers, with open mic time for students, faculty and staff. The turnout was fantastic; almost 80 people attended and dozens read their own poems or poems they admired by others.

Support within the college persisted after that first successful event, taking the form of colleagues and administrators who provided constructive ways to think about poetry as part of a professional identity in education—more than a hobby.

“I’m very grateful to be in a department and college that values the role poetry can play in an academic environment,” Apol said. “Dean Carole Ames and the various TE department chairs have always encouraged this creative work as a scholarly pursuit, and in a college of education, that’s a rare thing.”

Trillium, too, continued and still occurs twice each academic year, often melding into vibrant and welcome expressions of not only poetry readings, but also music and visual arts.

After the first Trillium, Apol, now an associate professor of teacher education, received a Lilly Teaching Fellowship from Michigan State University for the following school year. She used it to develop a master’s level course on reading and writing poetry, an option specifically for educators.

She also saw the need for bringing poetry to undergraduates. She had been to creative writing courses offered elsewhere on campus, and often saw teacher education students mystified about linking their new poetry skills with their future careers as teachers.

But she had to return to her regular teaching load and only taught the poetry course once.

“It took until Janine got here with her interest in writing theory and poetry for us to talk about getting an ongoing course on the books,” Apol said.

Poets, Educators, Scholars

“. . . when the arts and aesthetics are left out, where does the soul go?” Certo says.

And Apol: “Poetry makes us human. It reminds us who we are . . .”

Their perspectives as devoted artists come tumbling forth when they are asked to consider the consequences of children getting little exposure to poetry or, worse, none at all.

“The kinds of genres in schools are the ones that are typically tested, so often times, poetry isn’t represented,” said Certo, an assistant professor of teacher education. “By the same token, it’s pretty unusual for a college of education to require that teachers have some type of poetry skill and interpretation.”

So, the teacher educators in them decided to co-design and teach a course, an innovative workshop-style approach
to improving pre-service teachers’ knowledge, skills and dispositions. TE 491: Reading, Writing and Teaching Poetry launched last fall as the focus of Certo’s own Lilly Teaching Fellowship—an award she earned soon after the pair’s first meeting.

And the researchers in them, Certo as principal investigator and Apol as mentor, created an original 63-item instrument to collect a tremendous amount of compelling pre- and post-course data. For example, 15 out of 23 students—who most likely would be asked to teach poetry on the job within a few years—were unable to interpret the possible meaning of a provided poem.

“Or they didn’t even take a shot at it, because they were so completely lost,” Apol said. “They couldn’t have told you the last time they had read a poem. If they had written a poem, they’d written a rhymed love poem. And suddenly, by the end of the course, they had a whole portfolio of poetry.”

Special education senior Meryl McLaughlin, who took the course last year, said she appreciated finding poetry as a creative way to express events in her own life. But she was most impressed with the prospects of bringing the art into children’s lives.

“Before taking TE 491, I was not comfortable when it came to poetry, let alone teaching it,” she said. “My favorite part was getting to see the lessons we planned in class implemented in a school setting. Seeing how positively the students responded really got me exited to use poetry in my classroom one day.”

From the Office to the Classroom to the Stage, and Back

Apol and Certo selected strategies to gradually immerse students in high-quality, diverse poetry, asking them to write from a variety of prompts: something in their backpacks, a piece of art, an overheard conversation. They brought in poets, planned teacher panels and introduced students to ‘workshopping’—a process of supportive, critical feedback that improved students’ writing skills and their confidence as readers and writers of poetry.

Workshopping was beneficial to Certo and Apol as well; they started to critique each other’s poetry outside of class and then in class as a model for students. Soon, they had a pattern of meeting before each course, then debriefing afterward over dinner, a practice that added a level of richness to their research findings and relationship as colleagues.

“(The course) gave us the ‘assignment’ we needed to spend time together and it was an awesome year,” Certo said, remembering how they barely had time to say hello in her first year at MSU. “When Laura and I teach together, there’s a lightness and humor in the room, which I think was helpful for a course where students could really have some trepidation…”

It also helps that Apol and Certo are themselves poets as well as teachers of poetry. Apol—whose second book, Crossing the Ladder of Sun, won the 2004 Oklahoma Book...
Laura Apol was working in Oklahoma City, immersed in a world of poetry teaching and readings, at the time of the tragic Murrah Building bombing. And suddenly, she was inundated by other people’s written words. “I cannot tell you how many people, who I am certain never have written or read a poem before in their lives, would come up to me and give me poems,” she said. “They would say, ‘I just had to write this’ . . . It was as if, somehow, what that experience tapped into was something that needed self expression.”

Apol was witnessing the power of a simple act—writing—for a complicated purpose—healing.

Just over 10 years later, she found herself buoyed by that knowledge in a place striving to stay emotionally afloat: Rwanda.

The Story Continues

Certo and Apol, along with doctoral students Erin Wibbens and Lisa Hawkins, have already been invited to present on a panel at the 2009 meeting of the American Educational Research Association to be held in San Diego. The Division K/Section 7 session will address creativity as a form of pedagogy in teacher education.

TE 491 was offered for a second time this fall, and Apol and Certo plan to continue gathering data on students’ poetry knowledge and skills each semester it’s offered. They hope enrollment will grow.

The course is among the options all elementary education, special education and child development students with language arts teaching majors can choose for their advanced writing requirement.

Meanwhile, Apol will soon head to Rwanda again (see sidebar, right) and Certo is gearing up for her Spencer research project at nearby Averill Elementary School.

Forty fourth- and fifth-graders there are in for a four-week journey toward composing and performing their own poems, with visits from local and national poets along the way. Award-winning slam poet D. Blair of Detroit will be among them.

Working with teachers, Certo wants to explore what urban pre-adolescents know about poetry and how they develop that knowledge, specifically through the contemporary, slam and hip-hop styles.

“I do this work because of an activist approach; I want poetry to be in schools,” Certo says and notes she and Apol will continue collaborating, even on their separate projects.

“Poetry is such a way to get kids interested in writing and expressing themselves . . . While I don’t anticipate that every student is going to come out feeling the way Laura and I feel about poetry, I am sure that they are going to be moved.”

Award—put it this way: “When poetry is taught in a College of Ed, it’s often taught by people who appreciate poetry, but it’s rarely taught by people who themselves are poets. We’re modeling more than the teaching of poetry; we’re modeling how to live like poets in the world.”

The TE 491 students are required to go to poetry readings, and to read at Trillium. Last year, a few of them were at the Creole Gallery in Lansing, Mich. when Certo herself took the stage for her first public reading.

“She came back to class and I’ve never seen anything like how excited she was and they were,” Apol said. “And then, you just couldn’t keep her off the stage! She went everywhere reading poems, and the students did too.

“We really believe that people who are themselves turned on by reading and writing poetry can, with a little bit of pedagogical knowledge, be excited and communicate that excitement to younger writers.”
To ask someone to write is to invite them to stand up. To ask someone to write is to invite them to fight for life.

Emery Rutagonya, survivor and head of research and education programs, Kigali Memorial Center

Her international outreach project there developed out of a 2004 meeting of then-MSU graduate student Ken Bialek, with a mother and daughter who, with 11 other relatives, survived the genocide of nearly a million fellow Tutsis by hiding in a tiny house. The mother, Rose Gakwandi, who now runs AMU—a Rwandan organization for children orphaned by the genocide, promised that if God kept her family safe, she would spend the rest of her life doing God’s work.

“I think God got a good deal out of it,” Apol said.

The year after the initial meeting with Gakwandi and her daughter, psychiatric nurse Glorieuse Uwizeye (who will begin MSU’s doctoral program in Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education next fall), Apol and Bialek made an exploratory trip to Rwanda in 2005. According to Apol, she “couldn’t talk at all” in the first few days of somberly touring genocide sites. But she soon saw the pain-mending potential that narrative writing could bring to the African region. They discussed a project that could truly reach young people and returned a year later to finalize logistics and get started.

Now, the collaborative team of U.S. and Rwandan partners plans to hold a weeklong writing workshop for a dozen teenaged survivors at the Kigali Memorial Center. The specially designed process was tested last fall with the enthusiastic young people who will facilitate the workshop—historians, sociologists and psychologists who themselves lost most or all family members to the 1994 killings.

“We needed to know how the facilitators were going to respond,” Apol said. “It’s imperative for us not to do more damage.”

The program they developed not only explores victims’ trauma but also provides them with an opportunity to look forward with some hope and purpose. The format also allows participants to free-write before drafting more structured prose, in this way moving from private feelings to more controlled and public expressions.

“Participants start to realize that it’s not a bottomless pit they are falling into,” Apol said of rekindling horrific memories. “They can sort of go in and come back out. And they can use the telling of their experience to make a difference.”

As the narratives are written and collected, Apol plans to use her skills as a writer and scholar of children’s literature to improve on pieces that participants wish to make more public. The intention is that those stories will be published as curriculum materials and literature for children of Rwanda and the world—thus expanding and completing the healing process.

“The sense of hope comes not only through writing stories,” Apol said, “but by making these stories public.”

She believes the narrative workshop offers a rich model that can be used for therapeutic reasons with many children, such as victims of domestic violence or natural disasters.

Other project partners include Yakov Sigal (a pediatrician and MSU faculty member), Tatyana Sigal (a psychiatrist and affiliate of MSU) and Frank Biocca (an MSU professor of communication studies).
UNCOMMON COMMITMENT, PARTNERSHIP PAYS DIVIDENDS IN UNDER-EMPHASIZED SUBJECT AREA >> Nicole Geary
ELLENCE IN EARLY SOCIAL STUDIES
Janet Alleman and Jere Brophy cringe when they see some of the social studies lessons suggested in early elementary textbooks.

Hours spent building candy houses for a lesson on shelter. Moments peering at drawings of igloos and teepees.

The children may be just 6 years old, yes, but if their teachers don’t find and illuminate connections to big ideas from their own world—local climate and building supplies, for example—those images are just images.

“It’s what makes the difference between trivia and serious learning,” says Brophy, who, after earning a reputation among the nation’s top experts on effective teaching, chose to launch into a subject-area specialization for the first time in the late 1980s.

Alleman, a fellow faculty member at Michigan State University’s College of Education, was equipped with the skills of a veteran social studies educator and the same goal: to help teachers make social studies more powerful—and meaningful—for even the youngest learners.

Together, they went on to develop frequently cited guiding principles for good primary classroom activities and continue to contribute a steady stream of scholarship valuable for K–3 social studies, and beyond.

They have been heralded for reconceptualizing that barely studied segment of education through their emphasis on cultural universals, or human activities related to nine “big ideas” that are part of life in all societies but not well understood by early grades students.

Their book on children’s thinking about those concepts, the results of interviews with nearly 1,000 kids over eight years, received the 2006 Exemplary Research in Social Studies Award from the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS).

But they didn’t stop there.

In a rare, long-lasting collaboration with practicing teacher Barbara Knighton, Brophy and Alleman have analyzed and documented, in fine detail, how to truly engage students in social studies activities that are structured around big ideas with applications to life outside school.

Inside the Social Studies Classroom, a just-published case study 10 years in the making, mixes the scholars’ established principles and pre-developed lesson plans with the thoughtful, tested input of a successful day-to-day practitioner, giving teachers a rich model for reference.

Alleman, who prepares pre-service teachers, and Knighton, now in her 16th year at Waverly Community Schools in Lansing, have witnessed their own performances evolve dramatically in the process.

“No matter what social studies content you’re teaching, this book will give you ways to strengthen how you teach,” Knighton said. “This shows that young kids are really capable of going very deep and coming out with great understandings of and an appreciation for history, world connections and civic responsibility.”

The authors say the principles they describe are widely applicable across the curriculum and multiple grade levels. They plan to publish another book addressing issues of general practice in elementary schools, such as community building and motivating students, within one year.

Tentatively titled A Learning Community in the Primary Grade Classroom, it will mark the latest but certainly not the last accomplishment from this unlikely group of researchers.

“I really look to them for how they frame the questions and what kind of insights they gain,” said former NCSS president Margit McGuire, a professor and director of teacher education at Seattle University. “Jere’s deep knowledge in the psychology of learning and Jan’s deep knowledge in elementary social studies makes them a pretty amazing team.”

By Brophy, Alleman and Knighton

By Brophy and Alleman
(Received the 2006 National Council for the Social Studies Exemplary Research Award, Washington, D.C.)
Forging Their Future

The partnership started 20 years ago.

It seemed logical for them to collaborate then, since Brophy was handling the social studies portion of the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects without the subject-area expertise Alleman had accumulated over years teaching in elementary and university classrooms.

They seemed so different at first: Brophy was a reserved, research-focused educational psychologist; Alleman an animated, practice-based teacher educator.

But soon, while beginning to analyze the current research, textbooks and curriculum in elementary social studies, they saw they shared many of the same values as scholars—and people.

“It’s always been our secret. We are both really curious, and we have the same work ethic,” Alleman said. “We come at things in different ways. However, we’re really open to what each other has to say and think, never feeling threatened, trying to push an agenda in really great ways.”

Publicly, they started making bold, researched statements about new possibilities for early social studies, while, behind the scenes, they developed the kind of working commitment as colleagues that somehow lasts for decades.

“You can’t really force collaborations,” said Brophy. “Very little of what we’ve done was totally predictable at the time we started.”

Finding the Right Fit

Brophy and Alleman had been discovering and writing articles about social studies teaching topics—such as integrating other subject areas and supporting citizenship education—for nearly 10 years when they published their first book together.

*Powerful Social Studies Teaching and Learning* was released in 1996 and is widely used today in undergraduate social studies pedagogy courses. A greatly expanded second edition, also designed for K-6 teachers, was published in 2007.

Meanwhile, hoping their breakthrough study on children’s thinking could directly inform practice, Alleman and Brophy developed...
classroom units based on the cultural universals (starting with shelter, food and clothing). They just needed to find teachers to pilot the curriculum.

“We had several false starts,” said Alleman. She laughs remembering the first time she nervously taught one of the units in a local classroom with Brophy—the highly regarded co-author of Looking in Classrooms—

“[Jere] strikes you as more shy, but listen carefully and don’t blink . . . He is a living, walking example of motivation for me.”

observing her. “I can point to the place on the road on the way to Haslett . . . where I had this thought: ‘What am I doing?’”

The College of Education Excellence in Teaching Award winner did a wonderful job, of course, but the idea later fizzled in the interest of finding a more authentic situation.

That’s when they, after years of searching, found Knighton.

She was a first- through third-grade teacher in her fifth year at Winans Elementary School, and she admitted she felt least confident teaching their target subject area.

“Social studies is far more important than most people realize, and we think it’s under-emphasized,” Brophy said. “That just underscored that most elementary teachers don’t get good preparation in social studies.”

Knighton was gutsy, however, and willing to be challenged with these two professors from the nearby campus. While they didn’t foresee her becoming a major, or such long-term, research collaborator, she impressed them with her analytical mind (she was once an engineering major at Michigan Technological University) and her interest in continuous improvement.

“She might say, ‘I never thought of that before and she means it,” Alleman said. “She’s never taking the lesson as a script. She’s always engaged meta-cognitively with her kids.”

Letting Findings Unfold

So the scholars enveloped Knighton in their productive and trusting partnership.

A pilot for a few units led to the trial and final development of all nine, since published as the three-part Social Studies Excursions, K–3 series. One year together became 10, documented through hundreds of hours of audio-taped lessons in Knighton’s classroom.

“The more we saw of Barb, we knew that she was an unusually fine teacher,” Brophy said. “We basically picked her brain until she was frazzled.”

In turn, the trio uncovered an unprecedented pool of specific teaching strategies that have lasting impact on early elementary students—always directed by ensuring children understand the lesson’s big ideas, proven through years of observation in multiple units and grade levels.

For example, they learned that assigning children to determine the number of countries represented by products in their closet, with their parents’ help, fosters significant excitement when learning about clothing (a cultural universal), especially among special needs students. They determined that co-constructing a poster, timeline or map with students made them more likely to use that item as a resource later.

Through a larger lens, they addressed the growing need for scholarship of teaching and learning in the early grades, they created models for teachers that could later be complemented with video and, most importantly, they re-affirmed why learning social studies matters to little kids.

“Through these units, (the students) see that people are more alike than they are different,” Knighton said.
“I marvel at Jan’s energy and her dedication to her students . . . she’s always looking for ways to improve her courses, including ways that most faculty members wouldn’t consider.”

“You can be a really successful person and not be a great reader or writer . . . But you are really going to struggle to be a successful person if you don’t know how the world works.”

**Mining for More . . .**

Despite the magnitude, Brophy says it’s too early to tell how much their collective work will truly impact the field.

The impact they have made on each other as professionals, however, is already clear.

They each established a better balance between research and teaching, with Brophy gaining new understandings about how social studies educators—and other subject-matter-focused colleagues—think about curriculum, instruction and assessment of learning.

And Alleman, who once put a ‘Testing, Do Not Disturb’ sign on her elementary classroom door when she wanted to try something different with students, says her collaboration with Brophy has taken her to places as a social studies educator she probably never would have gone.

“Jere helped me really clarify things that had been a part of my teaching forever,” she said. “I constantly leave our conversations with new insights.”

She applies those insights to her interactions with aspiring teachers in the College of Education, literally reconstructing her courses each year, modeling the kind of teacher who truly never stops learning.

The scholars’ zest for contributing new knowledge is also apparent in their forthcoming projects.

Continuing in social studies, Brophy has begun a study on what motivates students to learn history. He plans to ask history and history education majors at MSU and other colleges why they are interested in learning history and what they gain from doing so.

Alleman has enthusiastically pledged to replicate their children’s thinking about cultural universals study on an international level, perhaps establishing resources to study kids in India, Vietnam and Tanzania.

She also has a cross-disciplinary book about the characteristics of meaningful homework, titled *Homework Done Right*, in the works with assistance from Brophy, Knighton and three classroom teachers who graduated from MSU.

Although their individual projects have shifted, Brophy and Alleman say they are by no means parting ways.

“They’ve been an incredible team,” Alleman said. “When you dig and find gold, you keep digging.

“We keep finding more gold.”
Thomas Jefferson is rightly given credit for emphasizing the importance of education in a democracy. He believed education for all would be a crucial part of the success of the “experiment in democracy” undertaken in 1776. He had faith in the citizen and his ability to elect wise and virtuous leaders, if that citizen were educated to do so. Jefferson developed an elaborate plan for making education available to every citizen and for providing a complete education through university for talented youths who were unable to afford it. He considered his three most important life accomplishments to be authoring the Declaration of Independence and the Statute of Religious Freedom and founding the University of Virginia.1

College education is often viewed as a primer for life, enabling us to understand ourselves and the world we live in, preparing us to function effectively as individuals and members of a family, society and the workforce. Individuals who invest in higher education are rewarded for their efforts with higher earnings and significant contributions to the economic and social fiber of their communities and the nation. Since the 1960s, higher education in the United States has been viewed as one of the most productive means of growth. Acquiring a college degree is a form of human capital investment.

Since the end of World War II, the number of young people enrolled in college has increased steadily. More young men and women are enrolled in postsecondary education today than ever before, both in terms of number and percent of the population. In 1975, 63% of American adults ages 25 and over had at least completed high school; 14% had a bachelor’s degree. In 2000, 84% of adults had a high school diploma, and 26% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. The most recent U.S. Bureau of Census figures show that, in 2007, 86% of all adults 25 and over had completed high school and 30% had at least a bachelor’s degree. Both figures were all-time highs.

About 33% of young women 25 to 29 had a bachelor’s degree or higher in 2007, compared with 26% of their male counterparts. These percentages are significantly different from older populations (44- to 74-year-olds), where men remain slightly more likely than women to hold at least a bachelor’s degree. Over the past five years, the percentage of women with a bachelor’s degree increased significantly (from 25% to 34%), but it remained statistically unchanged for men at about 27%.

Much of the increase in educational attainment levels among the adult population is due to a more educated young population replacing an older, less-educated population. As more and more people continue their education beyond high school, this more highly educated population pursues opportunities to enter scientific, technical and professional occupations that yield higher returns on their investment in education.2

The Economic Value of Higher Education

In today’s economy, education is closely related to economic growth. However, it is not certain to what extent education is the cause of economic growth. It is likely that economic growth is an important factor in encouraging upward educational expansion, while educational expansion generates a greater capacity for economic growth.

How cost effective is higher education? Does going to college pay off for students and their families? Most Americans think so. Currently, almost 85% of young adults graduate from high school and about 2 out of 3 high school graduates continue on to college. Young adults decide to go to college for many reasons. One of the most compelling is the expectation of future economic success.

On average, a person with a high school education will earn about $1.4 million from ages 25 to 65. This compares with about $2.5 million for adults who complete a bachelor’s degree and $4.9 million for adults with a professional degree. In contrast, adults with less than a high school education will earn an average of $1 million (see Tables 2 and 3 and for more information). Educational attainment and therefore earnings differ significantly by race, ethnicity and gender, especially for older and less educated workers.3

The differential earnings based
on educational attainment have increased over the past 25 years. Recent Bureau of Labor Statistics data (2008) confirms that the incomes of college graduates, especially those with advanced degrees, have been rising faster than the incomes of those with less than a bachelor’s degree. This rising differential constitutes the principal evidence for the emerging “knowledge economy.” As former President Bill Clinton wrote in 1997, “Today, more than ever before in our history, education is the fault line between those who will prosper in the new economy and those who will not.”

College Enrollment and High School Drop-Out Rates

In October 2007, 67.2% of high school graduates from the class of 2007 were enrolled in colleges or universities, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. Specifically, the college enrollment rates were 68.3% for young women, the highest percentage in the history of the United States, and 66.1% for young men. In total, of the nearly 3 million youth who graduated from high school between October 2006 and September 2007, about 2 million were attending college in October 2007 (see Table 1 for more information).

As these numbers suggest, nearly 1 million high school graduates did not go to college last year. Recent high school graduates who weren’t enrolled in higher education during fall 2007 were likely to be in the labor force (76.6%) or unemployed (19.9%). These are not the only youth who aren’t in college. Between October 2006 and October 2007, 426,000 youth dropped out of high school. The labor force participation rate for dropouts was much lower than for high school graduates, at 56.2%. The unemployment rate for recent high school dropouts was 26.9%. Together, these youth are missing out on an excellent investment opportunity: a college degree.

The Cost of Higher Education—and Not Graduating

Like many investments, pursuing a college education can be an expensive proposition. Colleges and universities in the United States have changed significantly over the past 30 years. As larger populations expand the educational opportunities and teaching and learning strategies move beyond the boundaries of college campuses, the price of education increases. Advances in approaches to research and increasing fierce competition for talented faculty members and students do not produce a reduction in prices, as competition often does in the commodity-driven marketplace. Instead, colleges and universities feel compelled to offer improved and expanded academic programs, more specialized faculty, sophisticated equipment, new and renovated buildings and increased academic and financial support to needy students. All of these factors contribute to the fact that college tuition in the United States is outpacing inflation—even though the price of tuition at most colleges and universities only partially covers the actual cost of education. At Michigan State University, as with most public universities, state support, endowments, grants and gifts make up much of the difference in the total cost of educating our students.

Why should students and families take on these costs? Because higher education remains one of the best investments of a lifetime. Despite continued increases in college costs for tuition, fees and room and board, research data shows that these increases have not outpaced the additional earnings students realize by attending and graduating from college. The data shows that it took about the same number of months to earn back the costs of college in 2000 as it did in 1970. Graduation, however, is the key: the same research data indicates that college costs have been rising faster than the additional earnings derived from attending college for students who fail to complete their undergraduate studies. The penalty for failing to graduate from college is especially high for students who borrow money for college. These studies conclude that high school graduates with modest academic skills or uncertain motivational factors that increase their chances of leaving college before

### Table 1: Educational Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007 U.S. High School Graduates (Numbers in Thousands)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total 2007 High School Graduates</strong></td>
<td>2,955</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>1,511</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>1,444</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>2,114</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrolled in College</strong></td>
<td>1,986</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in 2-Year College</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in 4-Year College</td>
<td>1,275</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>999</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1,467</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Higher education and economic development

Over the past 25 years, the movement toward expanding higher education has attracted a lot of attention among policymakers and employers. Higher education has become increasingly important for the development of the nation’s economic well-being and survival in a globally competitive economy. Today, higher education is expected to equip people with increasingly higher levels of knowledge and skills to meet the growing challenges and changing demands of the workplace and society. In a globalized economy, education is conceived as an essential prerequisite to promote the economic development of society, as well as the enrichment of individual lives. Thus, it is widely assumed that higher education is an investment in “human capital” that is expected to be the basis of economic prosperity in the “knowledge-based” or “information” economy—terms that recognize the role of knowledge in economic growth. The concept of a knowledge or information economy is often used to illustrate the shift from an industrial economy based on low skills to knowledge-intensive production and services as the backbone of the economy. In automobile production, the replacement of line workers with computer-driven sophisticated robotic technology is an example of this shift. The discourse of knowledge economy also emphasizes international collaboration of research and development, lifelong learning and transferable skills and competencies to meet changing workplace and organizational needs.

A competitive economy today and tomorrow can only be based on a well-educated population and innovative and dynamic research and development programs. In the age of globalization, the knowledge economy discourse has become a way to describe the relationships between the state, society and the economy. It places institutions of higher education in an increasingly important role for states and the nation because of their central tasks: generating and disseminating new knowledge and innovations, and educating and training a highly skilled labor force.

The personal and societal value of higher education

Focusing on the impact of education on the economy is indeed important, but it does not capture the total value of education to the individual and society. Education may be defined as acquiring and imparting knowledge and skills. Therefore, it follows that the primary aim should be to foster the intellectual maturity that is required for people to become both democratic citizens and productive economic participants.

We recognize that the value of education goes beyond immediate economic and societal benefits. Educational historian Diane Ravitch states: “It should be remembered that . . . whether or not individuals get a better job with a better education, they will nonetheless find personal, lifelong value in their knowledge of history and literature, science and social science, art and mathematics. And democratic society
itself is dependent on the judgments of a majority, which suggests that everyone benefits by disseminating reason, knowledge and civic wisdom as broadly as possible.8

We must value education for itself, not just for its economic value. Mathematics and science learning are not only key levers for increasing productivity, but also teach us about gathering evidence and reasoning logically. Learning foreign languages is a means of improving international trade but also a means of appreciating and understanding the cultures and habits of other people. College graduates enjoy benefits beyond increased income. These benefits include increased professional mobility, improved quality of life for their families, more hobbies and leisure activities, better consumer decision-making, higher savings rates, better ability to cope with stress and increased fringe benefits, including more and better health insurance. Higher education benefits society, too: lower incarceration rates occur among highly educated individuals. Social cohesion is higher among the more highly educated, as reflected in higher voting rates. One can even argue that investment in education accrues interest, in that the educational achievement and cognitive development of children are positively affected by the educational attainment of their parents.9 While it is clear that investment in college education is a financial burden, the long-term benefits to individuals as well as to society at large appear to far outweigh the cost.

While individuals enroll in colleges and universities for a variety of personal reasons, one of the most common is to gain the necessary skills and knowledge to get a good job. Higher education and training are fast becoming prerequisites for employment, with up to 70% of new and replacement jobs now demanding postsecondary qualifications.

In addition to the monetary and economic benefits of enhanced educational attainment, studies show that regions and cities with greater shares of an educated workforce, especially highly educated workers, enjoy lower crime rates, have fewer demands placed upon social services, greater civic participation and improved personal health. These benefits accrue to subsequent generations.10

In 1806, Thomas Jefferson stated in his 6th Annual Message to the new nation:

“Education is here placed among the articles of public care, not that it would be proposed to take its ordinary branches out of the hands of private enterprise, which manages so much better all the concerns to which it is equal; but a public institution can alone supply those sciences which, though rarely called for, are yet necessary to complete the circle, all the parts of which contribute to the improvement of the country, and some of them to its preservation.”

Jefferson’s words are as relevant today as they were 200 years ago.

NOTES

### Table 3: Educational Attainment & Expected Lifetime Earnings Relative to High School Graduates, by Education Level, 2007, 25- to 65-Year-Olds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Relative to High School Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less Than High School Diploma</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, No Degree</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate Degree</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Degree</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

College Welcomes 6 New Faculty Members

Jeffrey Bale  
Assistant Professor, Teacher Education (Language), Ph.D., Arizona State University  
Bale says his research interests in educational language policy are most directly informed by his professional and political experiences outside of the academy. He spent nine years in the secondary classroom teaching English as a Second Language and German in Washington, D.C., Chicago, Mexico City and Tempe, Ariz. Most recently, he coordinated the English as a Second Language (ESL) program for the Tempe Union High School District, impacted as it is by Arizona’s ideologically charged policy environment surrounding English language education. Currently, his research investigates the long-standing connection in the United States between ideologies of national security and formal language education policies, especially in terms of heritage learners and speakers of so-called “critical” languages such as Arabic. His work also looks comparatively at the language education policies in the United States and Germany.

Kristen N. Bieda  
Assistant Professor, Teacher Education (Math), Ph.D., University of Wisconsin–Madison  
Bieda taught mathematics in middle school, high school and college settings, including with gifted students and community college students, during the past seven years. As a teacher and a student of mathematics, she has long been interested in how people come to adopt mathematics practices, such as problem-solving, representing mathematical ideas and justifying or proving their reasoning. As a researcher at MSU, Bieda is now focused on how middle school students develop competencies related to justification and proof, and how middle school teachers develop a pedagogy of proving. She strives to inform teacher education, curriculum and professional development programs, and her research interests feed her own instruction. The framework of her mathematics pedagogy course is built upon the foundational processes of doing math: representational fluency, communication, reasoning and making connections across ideas.

Douglas K. Hartman  
Professor, Teacher Education (Literacy) and Educational Psychology & Educational Technology, Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Hartman does his work on “new literacies” deep in the world of Web 2.0, studying the unique reading and writing challenges posed online and designing new instructional methods to address them. He recently co-directed the New Literacies Research Lab while on the faculty of University of Connecticut, following appointments at Teachers College, Columbia University, University of Pittsburgh and University of California, Berkeley. Hartman also serves as senior editor of the Journal of Literacy Research. His research on new literacies overlaps with scholarly interests in adolescent literacy, health literacy and the history of literacy. He brings an award-winning record of expertise to his new position as co-director of MSU’s Literacy Achievement Research Center (LARC), where he plans to foster continuing collaborative efforts that link complex literacy research with practice.

Laura R. McNeal  
Assistant Professor, Teacher Education (Urban education), J.D., Washington University, St. Louis, Ph.D., Illinois State University  
McNeal's work focuses on the intersection of law and education, with a particular emphasis on urban education and the rights of students with disabilities. Her research explores how legal frameworks impact educational practices and how educators can navigate complex legal and ethical considerations in their work. McNeal is dedicated to promoting equity and justice in education systems, advocating for the rights of all students, and preparing educators to be effective advocates in the field of law and education.
McNeal first became passionate about urban education when she became involved with MSU’s Broad Summer Scholars program for Detroit teenagers, teaching students learning strategies to ease the transition from high school to college. She soon shifted her scholarly interests from higher education and law to the intersection of law and policy and its influence on student achievement in urban schools. McNeal also served as a research associate for the MSU College of Education’s Future Teachers for Social Justice grant from the Skillman Foundation, also in Detroit, before departing to join the faculty at Georgia State University. Upon returning to join the MSU faculty this fall, she has continued researching the effectiveness of that state’s Graduation Coach program, which assesses and assigns individual intervention plans for high school students at risk for dropping out. Often applying her background in law, McNeal also recently developed a curriculum module on special education law for teachers and administrators.

Ron Zimmer
Associate Professor, Educational Administration, Ph.D., University of Kentucky

Zimmer comes to MSU eager to interact with policy students and pursue his individual research interests after nine years at RAND Corporation, where the senior policy researcher focused on school choice, school finance and accountability. He asks whether allowing families to have greater choice in education can lead to better outcomes for individual students. He has studied choice in the context of No Child Left Behind, analyzing implementation of the supplemental educational service (SES) and school transfer options under the law. Currently, Zimmer is researching charter school effectiveness across eight states, high school reforms including greater autonomy in Chicago and various reforms in Pittsburgh.

Dalebout Oversees Student Affairs

The College of Education hired Susan Dalebout (Ph.D., Ohio State University) to serve as coordinator of student affairs and teacher certification officer, beginning last July. She succeeds Joan Smith, who retired this fall after 14 years in the position.

Dalebout is a double Michigan State University alumna (B.A., M.A. in audiology and speech sciences) who has been an educational and clinical audiologist, as well as an associate professor of communication disorders. She most recently came from University of Virginia, where she served as associate director of the Communicative Disorders Program with responsibility for all functions related to academic student affairs.

Among her duties in the College of Education, Dalebout advises candidates for advanced teacher certification, manages student information and serves as a liaison concerning university and state (Department of Education) policies and procedures. She can be reached at sdl@msu.edu or (517) 353-5054.

Pivarnik Helps Government Adopt First-Ever Physical Activity Guidelines

Moderate physical activity during pregnancy does not contribute to low birth weight, premature birth or miscarriage and may actually reduce the risk of complications, according to a College of Education professor who contributed to the U.S. government’s first-ever guidelines on physical activity. Kinesiology Professor James Pivarnik and doctoral students Lanay Mudd (see page 48) and Erin Kuffel wrote the section on pregnancy and postpartum activity as part of the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines unveiled Oct. 7 in Washington, D.C. by the Department of Health and Human Services. Pivarnik, who was named president-elect of the 20,000-member American College of Sports Medicine in June, attended the event and spoke on behalf of the organization and MSU.

“There has been quite a dramatic change in regards to pregnancy and exercise,” said Pivarnik, who has studied the topic for more than 20 years. “While it used to be thought that avoiding exercise meant avoiding harm to the fetus, research now shows physical activity can not only improve health of the mother but also provide potential long-term benefits for the child.”

Specifically, the guidelines call for women to get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week during pregnancy and the postpartum period, preferably spread throughout the week.

Also as part of the new guidelines, the government recommends 150 minutes of activity for adults per week. The move toward measuring recommended exercise by overall minutes as opposed to specific time and frequency requirements mirrors research recently published by Mudd, Pivarnik, Mathew Reeves from MSU’s Department of Epidemiology, and Ann Rafferty from the Michigan Department of Community Health. That study, published this month in the journal Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise, used a broader approach toward calculating compliance with exercise requirements and found when measured by the amount of energy expended, the number of respondents who met guidelines was significantly higher.

For more information on the government’s new guidelines, visit www.health.gov/paguidelines. —Jason Cody
Covell Picked among Best by Students

College of Education instructor Cindy Covell was honored by the MSU Senior Class Council as one of two Outstanding Faculty Award winners for the 2007–08 academic year. The awards, selected from student nominations, are presented annually to faculty or staff members who exemplify “achievement both personally and professionally, through determination, enthusiasm and love for Michigan State University.”

Covell, who spent 24 years teaching grades K–8, is now in her third year instructing teacher education methods courses for seniors and interns. She also has previous experience as a curriculum coordinator focused on teacher development and received a master’s degree in curriculum and teaching from MSU in 1999. Allison Zolad, a current teaching intern who nominated Covell for the award, says Covell made mathematics engaging for everyone in class. “She took the time to conference with us individually and with our teaching partners to discuss our success and struggles in planning and implementing math lessons,” Zolad said. “Cindy showed that she genuinely cared about the success of every student.”

Books


Elizabeth Heilman, an associate professor of teacher education, is co-author, with Paul Shaker, of Reclaiming Education for Democracy: Thinking Beyond No Child Left Behind. She also is editor and author of chapters in Critical Perspectives on Harry Potter, Revised Expanded Second Edition. Both books were published in 2008 (New York: Routledge).

Assistant professor of teacher education Beth Herbel-Eisenmann is co-editor, with MSU Ph.D. Janine T. Remillard and Gwendolyn M. Lloyd, of Mathematics Teachers at Work: Connecting Curriculum Materials and Classroom Instruction, published in December as part of the Studies in Mathematical Thinking and Learning series (New York: Routledge).

Educational technology faculty members Punya Mishra, Matthew Koehler and Yong Zhao are the co-editors of Faculty Development by Design: Integrating Technology in Higher Education, published in 2007 (Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing).

Kristen Renn, an associate professor of higher, adult and lifelong education, is co-editor, with Paul Shang, of Biracial and Multiracial Students: New Directions for Student Services, Number 123, published in October (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass).

The Handbook of Asian Education, by University Distinguished Professor Yong Zhao, is expected to be published in December (New York: Routledge).

Kudos

The TE 150: Reflections on Learning course taught by associate professors of educational technology Matthew Koehler and Punya Mishra received first place among fully online courses in the 2008 Awards Competition in Instructional Technology, an MSU-based competition funded by AT&T.

Timothy Tansey, an assistant professor of rehabilitation counseling, also received an honorable mention for CEP 877: Assessment and Research in Rehabilitation, in the blended course category. The winning faculty and staff teams, along with screen shots and descriptions of their courses, are featured at attawards.msu.edu.

Samantha Caughlan and Mary Juzwik, both assistant professors of teacher education, received the Bates-Byers Endowment for Technology and Curriculum to study the efficacy of using video and online social networking technologies for improving English teachers’ skills in structuring and leading dialogic instruction, including discussion. The two-year, $85,000 grant begins in 2008 and ends in 2010.

Roger G. Baldwin, a professor of higher, adult and lifelong education, received a 2007 Robert J. Menges Presentation Award for faculty development research from the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education. Deborah DeZure, Kristin Moretto (a HALE doctoral student) and Allyn Shaw (a HALE alum) shared the honor as fellow presenters.

James S. Fairweather, a professor of higher, adult and lifelong education, received an Erasmus Mundus visiting professorship from the European Union to teach at University of Tampere in Finland and University of Oslo in Norway from March through June 2008. During that time, Fairweather assisted in developing a higher education administration doctoral program at Tampere and explored the possibility of creating a joint program between MSU, Finnish universities and Peking University in Beijing.

Fairweather also was selected to hold the Dr. Mildred B. Erickson Distinguished Chair in Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education during the 2008–09 school year, succeeding Professor//
Ann Austin. He plans to focus on promoting work related to international and domestic higher education policy for students and faculty in the College of Education.

Associate professor of teacher education Guofang Li received the Early Career Award from the American Educational Research Association’s Division G, which focuses on social contexts of education. The honor, presented during the annual AERA meeting March 26 in New York City, recognizes an individual in the early stages of his or her career who has made distinguished research contributions to the field.

Susan Printy, an associate professor of K–12 educational administration, was named an Outstanding Reviewer for Educational Administration Quarterly, regarded as the field’s preeminent research journal. Printy, who has been a member of the editorial board for four years, was recognized for the quality, quantity and timeliness of her contributions.

Post-doctoral fellow Edna Tan, who works closely with teacher education faculty members Angela Calabrese Barton and Andy Anderson, received the first runner-up award for outstanding doctoral dissertation at the annual meeting of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching (NARST) in spring 2008. Matthew Wawrzynski, an assistant professor of higher, adult and lifelong education, was named an American College Personnel Association (ACPA) Diamond Honoree. The award recognizes higher education professionals who, throughout their careers, have made outstanding contributions to higher education and to student affairs in particular. Wawrzynski will be recognized at ACPA’s annual convention March 30 in Washington, D.C.

Peter Youngs, an assistant professor of teacher education, was named an Outstanding Reviewer for Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis (AERA) for 2008.

LEADERS

Marilyn Amey, a professor and chairperson of the Department of Educational Administration, was named chair of the Dissertation of the Year Award Committee for the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

Deborah Feltz, a professor and chairperson of the Department of Kinesiology, was president of the North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity for the 2007–08 school year. She completes her service to the multidisciplinary association of scholars from the behavioral sciences as past president this school year.

Mary Juzwik, an assistant professor of language and literacy, was elected publications chair and an executive board member for the National Conference on Research in Language and Literacy through 2010.

Phyllis Pietka, an instructor and coordinator of special education teachers, died Aug. 2 at age 57. Upon retiring from East Lansing Public Schools, where she was a teacher, teacher consultant and director of special education, Pietka rejoined the College of Education full-time with enormous enthusiasm for preparing and supporting the next generation of special educators. She applied her own expertise as an effective teacher and leader to many roles, including instructing undergraduate and graduate courses, coordinating the master’s degree program for candidates focused on learning disabilities and serving as a mentor and field liaison to teaching interns. She also received her bachelor’s (1973) and master’s (1976) degrees in special education from MSU. In the words of one of her colleagues, Pietka was “filled with passion for living and imagining possibilities for all people, especially those students with disabilities and the teachers who teach them.” One of her last requests while battling cancer was that friends send donations to the MSU special education programs in her honor, in lieu of flowers.
Journey the Malayan Way

L
ast summer, eleven young teachers arrived at University Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) and found themselves shaking hands with the country’s top education officials while the national news media took photographs. Not only did their journey represent the College of Education’s first study abroad trip to Malaysia, it was one of the Southeast Asian nation’s first-ever educational visits of this kind from American college students.

The group received many more warm welcomes over the following six weeks, as they traveled to sites of historical or ecological importance and settled in with the families of Malaysian educators. The experience, which represents the college’s third pre-internship study abroad opportunity for teacher candidates, allows students to observe classroom teaching in Malaysian schools before developing and co-teaching lessons with their cooperating teacher. Meanwhile, those who participated in this year’s trip also put aside their preconceptions and tried dancing moves, ate unfamiliar fruits, wore traditional clothing and even attended a wedding (photo, above) to soak up their host country’s culture before returning to the classrooms of Michigan.

The trip was attended by recent MSU graduates as well as current teaching interns and organized by two Malaysians—Kurnia Yahya, who received her Ed.S. from the MSU Department of Teacher Education, and Sri-Hayati Kamal, a current MSU doctoral student in educational administration. Their role in creating a successful new study abroad option represents the College of Education’s continuing ability to maintain rich, collaborative connections around the world.

TEACH IN MALAYSIA The Pre-internship Teaching in Malaysia program will be offered again this summer (early July to mid-August). Visit malaysia.wiki.educ.msu.edu for more information.

An elementary education major from Grosse Pointe, Mich., Becky Szelic had always wanted to participate in study abroad and she already knew some things about Malaysia: her father spent about a year there in combined business trips. However, she didn’t fully understand the vast contrasts that can exist between cultures until she arrived and felt the uneasiness of being in the minority. In the Malaysian school, she envisioned more fully the prospects of working in her own multicultural classroom in the U.S. Szelic, 22, says there is no question she returned from Southeast Asia with a more open-minded perspective. She is now completing her internship in Detroit.

When I heard there was a study abroad trip to Malaysia, I was very interested. My father has spent time there on different business trips and, whenever he came back, he would always talk about how different and beautiful the country was. Since I had heard so many great things, I decided it was a place I wanted to go. I wanted to learn about a culture and religions completely different from my own. I always wanted the chance to teach in a school setting outside the United States.

Once I got to Malaysia, it was almost like a culture shock, but it was not too hard to get used to the new life I would have for six weeks. Since I had been in a few schools in the United States, I was accustomed to the building looking a certain way and the teachers teaching a certain way. In Malaysia, the schools looked different and the teachers only taught one subject for an hour. They would move around to each class, while the students stayed in the same room. This is something I will remember. Seeing the diversity of teaching in a different setting helped me appreciate the small things schools in the United States have.

I also will remember the great weekend trips that were arranged for us. I loved being able to go to different cities in Malaysia, especially the cities that my father had talked about since I wanted to see them for myself. The cities were very interesting and illustrated a lot of Malaysia’s history and flavor. We were able to learn about the cities educationally, but also as tourists, which added to a great experience. The cities were unlike places I have seen and I am glad I was able to view the beauty of Malaysia.

As a person, I believe I grew quite a bit. I had to learn how to adjust to living in a country that was completely different in regards to food, culture and language. Being so far from home was difficult at times, but it made me stronger and it made me realize I could do anything. In six short weeks, I was able to learn and appreciate a different culture and different religions. I know I will be more open-minded now, even within my own country.

As a teacher, I was able to learn how another country teaches, but also I learned about myself as a teacher. Since my students had a hard time understanding English, I had to learn to adjust my lessons, even how I spoke. I knew this would help me in the United States, to adapt to different abilities and to students who are English language learners. Also, my students were not exposed to teachers who taught outside of the box, so as a teacher who does not think inside the box, I was able to bring my ideas to teach these students and know that I reached them in a different way. Overall, it was a great experience to travel and teach in Malaysia.

"Renee Liberman, 22, and Becky Szelic, 22, take in Malaysia’s sights during their trip to the country."

"Circled: Renee Liberman (left) and Becky Szelc (right)."
Special education graduate Renee Liberman said going to Malaysia was one of the best decisions she ever made. The 22-year-old from West Bloomfield, Mich., didn’t spend much time shedding her initial apprehension. She found herself happily immersed in a daily family routine that often involved meeting neighbors near her host father’s hamburger cart in the evenings and rising early to begin teaching most mornings. Through the school’s language barrier, Liberman saw a different, exclusive system for special needs children and the familiar dedication of teachers to boost their students’ futures. Now completing her internship in small-town Leslie, Mich., she says the cross-cultural summer journey confirmed her career is on the right track.

In September 2007, I decided to sign up for the Pre-internship Study Abroad Program in Malaysia for a cultural experience. I was excited, nervous and clueless about what to expect. When I began to tell people my plans for summer 2008, most people did not even know where Malaysia was. They were even more surprised to hear that a Jewish girl was interested in going to spend time living with a Muslim family. I listened to everyone’s concerns, nodded my head and told them, “I will be fine.” The truth is, I was very excited, but the nerves did not really hit me until June, when I received my host mom’s name and my school placement: Puan (Mrs.) Maznah Hashim and Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjung Malim (The Primary School of Tanjung Malim). At this point, my nerves multiplied by the thousands. I did not even know how to pronounce my mom’s name or the school where I would be working! However, all of my nerves and anxiety dissipated once I stepped foot into my home for five weeks with Puan Maznah, or Mak (mother).

I could not have felt more at home. The whole family greeted me, including my six new siblings! I was so excited and anxious to become accustomed to my new home and family. My youngest brother and sister took me on a tour of our house, where I met the family turtles and catfish. Not long after that they taught me how to play carrom, a finger version of pool. After just a few hours, I knew that I was going to have a special connection with my family.

I was always surrounded by my family, even at school. My youngest brother and sister were students there and my mom was a teacher. I would see them in the hallways and at lunch, and was always greeted with a “Hi Kakak (sister), how are you?” I loved my time in the special education classroom. The teachers were quite curious about the American education system and enjoyed learning and seeing the different teaching techniques we used. The short five weeks I spent in the school were challenging, yet very educational. It was hard to adapt to the different curriculum expectations and teach with a language barrier. However, I learned more in that short time about myself, the goals I want to hold for my students, the importance of global education and the prominence in seeing each student as an individual than I had during my entire undergraduate experience at MSU.

I will forever cherish the time I spent at the school, but what came home in my heart August 14th was my Malaysian family. Our different religious backgrounds, citizenships and life experiences do not have any effect on the relationship and bond we share together. Some of the best times during the trip were spent at home playing and sharing jokes with my family. For every game or dance I taught my brothers and sisters, they had something equally exciting to share with me. As I made my departure toward the plane, my youngest brother, Da’iy, repeatedly yelled, “I love you Kakak!”
Mwalimu Earns Fulbright-Hays to Study Students in Zambia

When Michelle Mwalimu first visited her family in Zambia during sophomore year at Stanford University, she was able to see the African country’s economic state firsthand.

“I was jarred by the poverty levels,” she said. “At the same time, there were a lot of great things that aren’t often highlighted in the media about Africa. The cities are bustling; there’s a lot of economic activity.”

Today, Mwalimu is working toward a doctorate in educational policy and a graduate specialization in international development. Her research involves studying the educational structure of schools in Zambia. She was recently awarded the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad fellowship to help her with the costs involved in conducting research in Africa.

Close to 600 students applied for the fellowship and about 130 were awarded last year. A total of 15 MSU students—including six from the College of Education—have received the prestigious award over the last five years (2003 to 2007).

Mwalimu will be leaving for a yearlong trip to Zambia in January. She recently traveled there to do preliminary interviews with students, teachers and administrators in community schools. Her dissertation will focus on underprivileged students in Zambia’s community schools as opposed to government-funded primary schools. She also will study what happens to them after they complete seventh grade.

“The kids in the community schools that I spoke to over the summer had really big dreams,” she said. “They will say things like astronaut, doctor, teacher or nurse as job choices.”

Mudd Explores Links between Exercise and Birth Weight

As an undergraduate student, Lanay Mudd surveyed 312 women in the Grand Rapids area...
Two student-athletes, Cole Malatinsky of Holt, Mich. and Kate Burdick of Ann Arbor, Mich., were honored with the President’s Award at the yearly MSU Student Athlete Support Service’s Academic Excellence Gala last spring. The award is given to the male and female student athletes with the highest grade-point average that year. Malatinsky graduated with a cumulative GPA of 4.0 with a degree in kinesiology. He played defense on the MSU football team from 2003 until 2007. He is currently working toward his master’s degree in sport administration at MSU. Burdick graduated with a 3.9951 grade-point average and a degree in kinesiology. She is currently enrolled in the graduate-level physical therapy program at Oakland University.

Two 2007–08 teaching interns, Meghan Callahan and Lisa Phillips, won top awards in the Michigan Association of Teacher Educators 23rd Annual Michigan Student Teacher/Intern of the Year Award competition. Callahan received second place for her exemplary internship year, teaching first grade at Waterford Village Elementary School in Waterford, Mich. Phillips won the third-place award for her work with fourth- and fifth-graders at Le Baron Elementary School in Pontiac, Mich. A third MSU teaching intern, Sarah B. Martin, also earned an honorable mention in the competition for her performance at Seminole Academy in Mt. Clemens, Mich.

Amanda Gray Idema, a doctoral student in Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education, was elected to serve as president-elect of the Michigan Academic Advising Association, or miacada. During her three-year term, which began Oct. 1, she also will become president and past president. Fellow Hale doctoral student Shannon Burton is currently president of the association.

Joseph Friedhoff, a doctoral student in educational psychology and educational technology, is co-editor of the book, Meeting the Challenge of Adolescent Literacy: Research We Have, Research We Need, with associate professor of teacher education Mark Conley and fellow students, Michael Sherry and Steven Forbes Tuckey. This information was mistakenly omitted from the Spring 2008 New Educator.
On Aug. 20, doctoral student Nicole Forrester walked into the iconic Bird’s Nest stadium with the roar of 100,000 people in her ears and the built-up hopes of eight years in her heart.

It was pouring rain and she had a swollen, taped ankle hidden from sight—sprained just three days before during a simple jog.

But she looked up through her lingering disappointment to the stands and let the amazement of the moment wash over her.

After limited warm-ups and through numbing pain, she soared up and over the high jump’s towering heights three times.

And when Forrester sent the bar crashing down, barely missing qualification for the finals in her first Olympic competition, she didn’t stop to cry.

“It’s not like a final destination. It’s just a point in the journey,” said the 32-year-old from Canada, a person who still chose to compete in Europe just three weeks later, and who could barely walk after Beijing. “I left everything on the track, so I have no regrets.”
Tough on the Track

As a veteran world competitor, Forrester has learned to develop the kind of emotional toughness she soon plans to research as a student at Michigan State University.

She sometimes faltered mentally as a University of Michigan high-jumper caving under NCAA pressure. The path to making her home country’s Olympic team, however, truly tested the five-time national champion’s perseverance.

She missed the Canadian qualifying height by just one centimeter in 2000. Then, in 2004, she severely injured the same ankle one month before the trials.

Now in her fourth year in MSU’s Department of Kinesiology, the 6’3½” Forrester said she has since been drawing on her academic studies in sports psychology—and the support of faculty members—to strengthen the mental part of her game.

In the months leading to this year’s successful Olympic bid (jumping up and over 6’4½”), she relied on frequent conversations with kinesiology Professor Dan Gould, who began helping her develop a stronger, more focused mindset when he became her sports psychologist consultant—or mental coach—nearly two years ago.

Gould is an expert on how psychological factors affect Olympic athletes’ performances, having conducted a series of studies for the U.S. Olympic Committee in the 1990s and early 2000s.

“Athletes who tend to do better at the Olympics engage in mental training a year to a year and a half out,” he said. “Each of us has an optimal emotional temperature at which we perform best. We help (Nicole) identify what those feelings are . . . to develop a thermostat and adjust.”

The results of that training (and their constant U.S.–China e-mail exchanges) were no more apparent than when Forrester’s seemingly catastrophic Beijing injury occurred—and she still turned out a calm, phenomenal performance.

“If I wasn’t experienced enough to stay calm, I probably would have freaked out,” she said. “But I was prepared for the game. I was aware of anything that could possibly derail me.”

Ambitious about Academics

Adding to her high-stress year, Forrester also passed her comprehensive exams in February—an accomplishment she called “similar to trying to qualify for the Olympics.”

She chose to attend MSU because she saw a match between her own interests, such as self-efficacy and goal orientation in sports, and the expertise of faculty members, including professor and kinesiology Chairperson Deborah Feltz, associate professor of kinesiology Martha Ewing and University Distinguished Professor of educational psychology Jere Brophy (see page 32).

“I feel very fortunate to be surrounded by advisors and professors who really appreciated my own athletic pursuit,” Forrester said.

Now that she has returned to Ann Arbor, where she lives, trains and helps coach the U-M Track and Field team, Forrester plans to focus on her forthcoming dissertation at MSU.

The project, which she expects to propose by the end of fall semester, will explore what makes athletes “make the leap from good to great” and sustain that success. The first-of-its-kind study will attempt to apply a research concept used in business to sports.

While preparing for the Olympics, it was difficult to apply her growing expertise on the topic to herself as an athlete.

“It’s so closely intertwined to what I was doing, so I tried not to engage and overthink things,” Forrester said.

But, after eight years of riding the ups and downs of her emotions, after countless successes and failures at the high jump pit, she has decided to continue competing for four more years.

She hopes her discoveries at MSU will bolster future studies on athletic greatness, and catapult her performance to new heights on the world stage—literally.

Watch for her at the 2012 Olympics.

“I decided that I don’t want to look back and have any regrets, having not done something out of fear,” Forrester said. “This is when I make the transition from good to great.”

On the Web: www.nicoleforrester.com
As a high school student, Aaron Moffett coached a community swim team in his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware. Two team members were hearing impaired. One of those athletes had issues with fitting in and saw himself as different from everyone else. “I saw how sports helped him find and develop his personal identity,” said Moffett, 31. “He was able to succeed, and that’s when I knew I wanted to continue in this area.”

Moffett graduated from MSU in 2005 with a doctoral degree in kinesiology, focusing on adaptive physical activity and the psychosocial aspects of sport. This is his fourth year as an assistant professor of kinesiology at California State University, San Bernardino. He teaches four to five classes each quarter and encourages students to get involved with disability sports and activities.

“People with disabilities aren’t dissimilar to us,” he said. “Through small accommodations, you can make an athlete with disabilities do great things.”

Moffett developed the annual DisAbility Sports Festival at csusb, which he organized for a second time this October. More than 220 athletes participated in 11 different events, including wheelchair basketball, wall climbing and hand cycling.

The festival provides opportunities for people with disabilities of all ages to overcome obstacles and become athletes. During the festival, Moffett said he was able to simulate the shot-put event for a participant who used a motorized chair.

“It was phenomenal to see the smile and the tears that it put on his dad’s face,” he said.

More than 200 people volunteered to staff the event; most of the volunteers were students.

“The big goal of this event is to try to enhance the opportunities for people with disabilities within the university and the community,” he said. “I want to teach our students how they can provide more opportunities for people with disabilities.”

Anna Ho, a kinesiology junior at csusb and a student of Moffett’s, took part as a volunteer. She said she was able to watch the athletes overcome huge obstacles, and it made her feel motivated to stay involved.

Her favorite part of the day was when an athlete wanted to climb the wall but was initially restricted by his wheelchair. Ho said volunteers har-
nressed his wheelchair into the ropes for the wall climb and she watched as he climbed all 38 feet.

“His heart is made of gold because he had the motivation to do it,” she said of the athlete.

Ho said the experience she gained at the DisAbility Sports Festival helped her concretely decide what she wanted to do with her career in physical therapy. She said she wants to work with children and help them overcome obstacles created by disabilities.

“I want to let them know they don’t have to give up,” she said.

**BRINGING IDEAS BACK FROM BEIJING**

In order to prepare for the upcoming events and learn more about disabilities in sports, U.S. Paralympics (a division of the U.S. Olympic Committee) selected Moffett to travel to Beijing, China for the Paralympic Games right before his festival. He learned about the logistics of an event of its size and was asked to bring ideas back for the American committee’s growth.

The Paralympic Games were held after the Olympic Games ended in China. More than 15 events were held in Beijing using the same facilities. Events included track and field, swimming and rowing. The Paralympic Games are automatically put on by the country that wins the bid for the Olympic Games.

“We were told to network with businesses and come up with different ideas,” Moffett said. “We need to address how we can develop more programs and get more young people involved in sports and activities and get them involved in the Paralympics movement.”

In the U.S., the Paralympics are only broadcasted for a few hours, which is a shame, Moffett said.

He said he is hoping more people will begin to recognize the importance of the events.

“So many people don’t know about the Paralympic Games,” he said. “It’s called Paralympics because it’s supposed to be as important as the Olympic Games.”

The group Moffett traveled with included 33 athletes, guardians and coaches. A few group members, including Moffett, were able to watch an American athlete win a gold medal in the discus-throwing event. Moffett said they stayed for the medal ceremony and watched the American flag being raised up.

“Even though you didn’t have anything to do with that athlete’s performance, you’re so proud of them,” he said.

With the contacts he was able to make in China and the lessons he learned over the past two festivals, Moffett said next year’s festival at CSUSB will be even better.

“There already are people asking us about when we are going to do the next festival,” he said. “It’s pretty inspiring.”

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**Shakrani Receives MSU Distinguished Alumni Award**

**Professor of measurement and quantitative methods** Sharif Shakrani, who received his master’s (1969) and doctoral (73) degrees from the College of Education, was honored as a 2008 Distinguished Alumni Award winner during the MSU Alumni Association’s Grand Awards ceremony in October. The awards are presented to alumni who have achieved the highest levels of professional accomplishment and demonstrate personal integrity and character. Shakrani joined the College of Education faculty three years ago and serves as co-director of the Education Policy Center at MSU, a role through which he significantly informs and influences the educational community in Michigan and beyond. A national expert on educational testing and achievement, Shakrani brings to the university years of experience overseeing assessment systems designed to improve student outcomes for the state and federal governments. Among his many accomplishments, Shakrani played a major role in revising the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) test, developing the No Child Left Behind Act and improving the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

**Holtschlag Honored for Contributions to International Education**

Margaret Holtschlag, who graduated with a master’s degree in reading instruction in 1987, was honored by MSU International Studies and Programs last March with the Glen Taggart Award for Community Contribution to International Understanding. A former College of Education Alumni Association board member, Holtschlag has long been dedicated to forging connections between K-12 classrooms and other parts of the globe. She realized that goal through her leadership in LATTICE (Linking All Types of Teachers to International Cross-cultural Education), a 70-member organization that provides professional development opportunities for educators through interactions with MSU’s international students and faculty. Holtschlag, who recently retired after 30 years teaching in elementary schools, also helped lead the College of Education’s pre-internship study abroad trip to South Africa for teacher candidates and has shared expertise with teachers in Vietnam. Her BIG Lesson program, a model for teaching about history and science based on community resources, continues to grow across Michigan.
The American Educational Research Association honored Marisa Cannata with an Outstanding Dissertation Award in Division L: Education Policy and Politics. Her dissertation explored the process teachers use to find their first jobs and how they undertake the job search. Cannata currently is doing post-doctoral work at Vanderbilt University, where she also is associate director of the National Center on School Choice. She received her Ph.D. in educational policy during spring 2007.

Chad Casciani was named the 2009 Korea District Teacher of the Year. Casciani works for the Department of Defense Dependents Schools, which provide education for the service men and women and their families in Europe and Asia. Casciani was honored for his work in the cities of Seoul and Daegu, South Korea. He received a master’s degree in educational technology in 2007.

Elaine Haglund received the 2008 Nicholas Perkins Hardeman Academic Leadership Award from California State University, Long Beach. The award recognizes distinguished individuals who contribute to leadership at the university. Haglund, who received her master’s (1970) and doctoral degrees (72) in sociology from MSU, currently works as a professor in CSULB’s Department of Educational Psychology, Administration and Counseling.

Stacey Helewski was named the 2008 Outstanding First-Year Teacher in Yavapai County, Ariz., where she teaches at Camp Verde High School. Helewski completed her teacher certification after graduating with a bachelor’s degree in English in 2006. She is currently pursuing a master’s degree in teaching and curriculum.

Brian Langley was honored with the Recent Alumni Award from the MSU College of Natural Science for his outstanding growth as a teacher. Langley works at Novi High School, where he teaches science courses. He earned his master’s degree in curriculum and teaching from MSU in 2002 and is currently working toward his Ph.D.

East Carolina University’s College of Education named MSU alumna Linda Patriarca as its new dean in July. Formerly an MSU faculty member, Patriarca joins the ECU staff with expertise in special education programs. She earned her doctorate from MSU in special education, teacher education and reading in 1976. Since then, she also has worked at Caldwell College, University of Detroit-Mercy and the Michigan Department of Education.

Thidziambi Tshivhase-Phendla was named dean of the University of Venda’s School of Education located in Limpopo Province, South Africa. Phendla received her doctorate in K–12 educational administration in 2000.

In April, David A. Sam was sworn in as president of Germanna Community College, located in Culpeper, Fredericksburg and Locust Grove, Virginia. Sam received his Ph.D. in higher, adult and lifelong education in 2002.

Tony Santoro was honored as an outstanding first-year teacher in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District. Santoro teaches fifth grade at Merry Oaks International Academy of Learning in Charlotte, N.C. He received his bachelor’s degree in elementary education in 2006.

Martha Warfield was promoted to the position of associate vice president for diversity and inclusion at Western Michigan University in July. She received her doctorate in counseling psychology from MSU in 1979. Warfield also was awarded the 2008 Humanitarian Award from the Metropolitan Kalamazoo Branch of the NAACP.
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When Alvin and Irene Arens considered making a gift to Michigan State University, it was important to them that their gift would have a deep and long-lasting positive impact. As a professor emeritus of accounting at MSU, Alvin Arens has witnessed what he called, “the development of a system where education is not attainable for those without financial resources.”

Understanding that a parent’s level of education has implications for their children’s education, coupled with a strong belief that higher education represents a clear path out of poverty, the Arenses decided they would focus their giving on students who represent the first generation within their families to attend college. The Arens Scholars in education, nursing and business are students who will graduate and go on to serve as models for their children, their grandchildren and other young people in their lives. It is by serving as a living example and having an understanding of and experience in higher education that the Arens Scholars will break the generational cycle of poverty within their own families. The Arenses specifically selected the colleges of Education, Nursing and Business (where they have established similar scholarships) because students would graduate trained for a “profession.” The Alvin and Irene Arens Scholarship in Teacher Education provides full-ride scholarships for students from their freshman year through their internship year—five years total. This represents a substantial investment, as a new Arens Scholar in education is identified each year.

Al grew up on a farm in southwest Minnesota, one of four children. Irene, an only child of immigrant parents from Norway, grew up on the northwest side of Chicago. While neither had parents who progressed beyond the eighth grade, their parents did have a strong sense of the importance of higher education, and all of their children graduated from college. Al attended the University of Minnesota on the G.I. Bill and received a bachelor’s (accounting), master’s (finance) and Ph.D. (accounting). Irene attended St. Olaf College in Minnesota for her bachelor’s degree and the University of Minnesota for her master’s degree in library science. It is fitting that the two of them met in college.

Upon receiving a job offer from MSU, Al and Irene moved to the East Lansing area—home for the past 40-plus years—where they raised three children. From 1978 through his retirement last year, Al served as the PricewaterhouseCoopers Professor, the first endowed named professorship in the Broad College of Business. This fall, Al and Irene were recognized by the MSU Alumni Association with the distinguished MSU Philanthropist Award. The honor is well deserved, especially when one considers the generations of families their gifts will impact, coupled with the thousands of students the Arens Scholars in education will inspire over their teaching careers. The Arenses certainly have made the deep and long-lasting positive impact they set out to achieve.

To make a donation online to an endowed fund established with the College of Education or to view a complete listing of funded endowments, visit www.education.msu.edu. Simply click on “Endowed Funds” under “Giving.”

Join the 2009 Leadership Circle!

The Leadership Circle is distinctive to the College of Education and recognizes individuals who are dedicated to supporting the efforts of the college through annual gifts of $1,500 or more.

Membership benefits include:
• The opportunity to select a recipient of the Crystal Apple Award
• Invitations to College of Education events, colloquia and conferences
• Special communications on research and publications
• A commemorative pin

Contact the College of Education Development Office at (517) 432-1983 for information about joining the 2009 College of Education Leadership Circle.
Sustaining Success

The thank-you letters named scholarship donors receive each year offer a unique window into the thoughts and success stories of their student recipients. In the case of the Arens scholarship, winners can receive up to five years of continuing support. Here, we share excerpts from four current recipients’ progressive letters.

**Angela Marocco**
Intern; Donley Elementary, East Lansing

2006
“My father suffered a stroke five years ago, leaving him disabled and unable to ever work again. My family was concerned that our current financial situation would strain my education. However, your scholarship has thankfully restored hope for my college education . . .”

2007
“It meant a great deal to me to be able to personally meet you and express my thanks. It was an amazing opportunity to learn more about the both of you. I also appreciated the chance to learn about each recipient and their touching stories.”

**Christopher Wright**
Senior; future math teacher

2007
“This scholarship will undeniably assist me in my effort to become the first of my family to graduate college . . . I pledge that your contribution will make a positive impact not only on my well-being, but on the future of every child I plan to teach.”

2008
“. . . Since the start of my junior year, I have been raising my GPA significantly each semester. I realize that I could graduate with a cumulative 3.5 out of a possible 4.0, and I have made it my goal for graduation. This is going to take an almost perfect year, but I really believe I can do it.”

**Destiny Edwards**
Junior; future English/ESL teacher

2006
“As a dedicated student, getting to college was a (financial) obstacle that I didn’t know how I was going to overcome. With your help, I know that I can hold my head high and focus on furthering my education.”

2007
“After your enormous efforts, I find myself speechless . . . I know that because I have been given a fighting chance, I can change the lives of my future family. I know that teachers have the power to change lives and I believe that MSU is equipping me with that power.”

2008
“I have had the chance to concentrate solely on my studies and have had the opportunity to avoid stressing about finances and getting through college. As a result, I have succeeded greatly with my grades, education and knowledge.”

**Alexandra Kiewiet**
Sophomore; future special ed. teacher

2007
“Because of this scholarship, it is possible for me to attend the college of my choice. Since I was very young, teaching has been my dream . . . As I am among the first generation in my family to attend college, financial aid is essential for my success.”

2008
“I received my degree in elementary education with a specialization in language arts. I graduated with honors, with a 3.7 cumulative grade-point average . . . when I graduated this past May, I walked across the stage knowing that my education was made possible by your generous support.”

“You are more than donors to me; I think of you as family . . . You not only fund my education, you actually care about how my life is going, and that is the thing that makes me so emotional whenever we meet. I can’t even begin to fathom how two people can change the world like you have.”

—Destiny Edwards, 2008
The annual donation amount required to join the Leadership Circle increased from $1,250 to $1,500 in November 2007.

The College of Education gratefully expresses appreciation to the following donors who made gifts to the college between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008, or who have established endowed funds or deferred gifts to the college. For more information on giving, please contact the Development Office, 513 Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824-1034, or (517) 432-1983.

The Leadership Circle

The 2007–08 College of Education Leadership Circle is made up of individuals who supported the efforts of the college in one of two ways: first, annual members who made a gift to the Leadership Circle level or more, and Lifetime Leadership Circle members who have provided $30,000 or more to an endowed fund in the College of Education. Lifetime members are denoted in italics.

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If you have noticed a growing gap in the quality of school facilities in poor and affluent communities, you are not alone. While a new generation of inspiring school facilities has been built in suburban areas, many children in central city and rural areas have been left behind in outdated and often run-down structures.

Efforts by policymakers and the courts to address this issue have been handicapped by the lack of reliable measures of school facility quality. Past efforts have relied on subjective survey responses or small-sample engineering evaluations, neither of which offers much guidance on the cost of needed improvements.

In collaboration with other researchers affiliated with the Education Policy Center at MSU, I have developed new methods for measuring the quality of school facilities and the cost of bringing facilities up to adequate standards. We have applied our procedures to all Michigan school districts, but since they utilize data that are available for school districts nationwide, the methods can be readily replicated elsewhere.

Michigan is one of the few states in which school facilities are funded entirely by local property taxes. Variations in property wealth across districts create inequalities in their ability to pay for facilities. Our research quantified large and systematic variations in school facilities across local communities that are highly correlated with local property wealth. Children’s education in Michigan’s high-income suburbs is supported with nearly double the capital facilities available to central city students. Facilities in many of Michigan’s poorest school districts are inadequate.

Equally striking is that Michigan’s central cities are taxing themselves at an average rate 43 percent higher than the average rate in high-income suburbs.

These inequalities matter for children and communities. Building quality affects student and teacher health, attendance, morale and performance. In his Ph.D. dissertation, Thomas Davis, a former College of Education student now on the faculty of the University of Maryland, showed that school facilities had a significant impact on student achievement. Research also shows that teacher turnover, a major problem in low-income schools, is significantly influenced by school building quality. It is difficult to attract and retain top-notch educators to work in dilapidated buildings when other schools offer much more hospitable work environments.

The opportunity to work with modern technology is ever more important to prepare students for emerging high-skill jobs. Today, students attending public schools in affluent communities use computer-controlled machine tools, computer graphic art equipment, television studios and more. These learning opportunities stimulate students’ interest and imagination, keeping them engaged in school. But they are rarely available in less-affluent communities.

This problem cannot be solved by local communities themselves. It will require action by the state or national government. Indeed, courts could mandate action, since Michigan’s current system of funding school facilities is clearly vulnerable to legal challenge. As policymakers craft responses to the current financial meltdown, initiatives to support public investment in school facilities deserve serious consideration. Such investment would provide immediate economic stimulus, which can be amortized and paid back over 20 years. Our analysis indicates that, at an annual cost of around $20 for the typical family, significant progress could be made toward providing adequate facilities for all children.

Public investment in the schools of poor communities would improve school outcomes, help stabilize neighborhoods and provide needed demand in construction and allied industries. It is one of the most promising forms of public investment available to policymakers.
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HELLO, NEW ALUMNI! A group of MSU teaching interns ham it up at Donley Elementary School in East Lansing, Mich. near the end of the 2007-08 academic year. They are (left to right): Leslie Green, Emily Quinn, Miranda Stevenson, Amanda Winter, Lisa Napierala and Nina Tignanelli.
A memorable painted steel structure by artist Caspar Henselmann, titled “US 1-9,” graces the back patio of Erickson Hall.