NEW EDUCATOR

ACCELERATING CHANGE

Kinesiology Researchers Study Physical Activity in Youth

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

» Principals Fellowship Fosters School Improvement
» Rethinking Conflict Resolution in Early Childhood
new educator

New Educator is published twice a year by the Office of the Dean, College of Education, Michigan State University, for the faculty, students, staff, alumni and friends of the college.

We welcome your comments and news items. Please address your letters to: New Educator, College of Education, Michigan State University, 518 Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824-1034 or to ngeary@msu.edu.

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DEAN
Carole Ames

PRESIDENT, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
Wendy Darga

MANAGING EDITOR / WRITER
Nicole Geary

CONTRIBUTORS
Andy Castro, Jason Cody, Andy Henion, Laura Seeley

PHOTOGRAPHY
Harley J. Seeley, Media Relations;
Tom Stanulis; Alex Stanulis

LAYOUT / DESIGN
Charlie Sharp, Sharp Designs

PRINTING / BINDING
Millbrook Printing, Grand Ledge, MI

ON THE COVER
Assistant professor of kinesiology Karin Pfeiffer conducts research on measuring and increasing physical activity in children.
PHOTO BY HARLEY SEELEY.

A six-foot limestone relief sculpture honoring the power of education stands in a shaded area outside the Law College Building on campus. The sculpture, created in the 1930s, is one of four that were removed from the original Detroit College of Law building façade in downtown Detroit before the building was demolished.
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As the economic recession continues, higher education institutions, both public and private, across the country have felt the impact. Michigan State University has not been spared the effects of the economy but is responding in a proactive manner by planning and preparing for necessary budget reductions. As President Simon and Provost Wilcox have emphasized, we must sculpt the university in new ways to maintain its excellence and, at the same time, respond to the fiscal realities. I refer you to the University web site “Shaping the Future” (http://shapingthefuture.msu.edu/) to read the President’s most recent comments.

I have many occasions to meet with my education colleagues across the country, and I can assure you that each is having to address challenging budget conditions and make difficult choices that affect short term adaptations as well as longer-term structural reorganizations and program offerings. We, too, are having to make difficult decisions while striving to maintain our progress on recent initiatives (e.g., urban education, global education), continue to make strategic investments in our top priorities, and sustain excellence across our mission. Yes, there will be areas where we necessarily have to divest, but there will also be new opportunities for us to consider and perhaps embrace. As we move forward, you can be assured that we will be both thoughtful and strategic in our choices, looking to sculpt our future as a college of education that lives up to its reputation and standards for engagement, relevance and excellence. And, indeed, we will continue to be a significant contributor to MSU’s future.

This issue of the New Educator offers a spectrum of articles that showcases the richness of our research and breadth of our outreach. You will read about faculty members across this college who are conducting research that concerns the well-being of children, the condition and quality of k–12 education, and policies affecting the direction and substance of education reform in urban as well as international contexts.

I want to highlight a brief feature on the Doctoral Fellowship for Enhancing Global Understanding. As we prepare future researchers, professors, educational leaders and policy makers through our doctoral programs, we want to provide them with global learning experiences and contribute to the development of their global competencies. Through this college-sponsored program, a group of our doctoral students participated in a three-week study trip to China. Our students were able to learn about Chinese culture and traditions and their curriculum, pedagogies, and schooling in such a way as to inform and enlighten their own future teaching practices and research. During their stay, our students visited schools in China and interacted with Chinese students, educators, administrators, policy makers, and university leaders and researchers under the guidance and with the assistance of faculty of their host university. This program is one of our recent initiatives to bring global perspectives to our college.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the New Educator. As we move forward in these challenging times, we appreciate your continuing support. We look forward to the promise of the future.
For an impressive 15th consecutive year, Michigan State University has the nation’s top graduate programs in both elementary and secondary education, according to the *U.S. News & World Report*’s 2010 edition of “America’s Best Graduate Schools.”

A total of seven College of Education specialty areas rank in the top eight within their classifications based on a survey of education deans. Rehabilitation counseling also retains its No. 1 ranking from the category’s latest ranking in 2007.

Overall, the College of Education ranked 17th among the 278 institutions surveyed nationwide—and 9th among participating public universities—when measures such as institutional capacity, reputation and research funding were considered. 2010 rankings were released in April 2009.

## ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
1. Michigan State University
2. University of Wisconsin–Madison
3. Teachers College, Columbia University (NY)
4. University of Georgia
5. Ohio State University
   University of Virginia (Curry)
6. Vanderbilt University (Peabody) (TN)
7. University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign
8. University of Michigan–Ann Arbor
9. Indiana University–Bloomington
10. University of Virginia–Bloomington
11. University of Michigan–Ann Arbor
12. University of Washington

## SECONDARY EDUCATION
1. Michigan State University
2. University of Wisconsin–Madison
3. Stanford University (CA)
4. University of Georgia
5. Ohio State University
6. University of Virginia (Curry)
7. University of Michigan–Ann Arbor
8. Pennsylvania State University–University Park
   Pennsylvania State University–University Park
9. University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign
10. University of Virginia–Austin
   University of Virginia (Curry)

## CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION
1. University of Wisconsin–Madison
2. **Michigan State University**
3. Teachers College, Columbia University (NY)
4. University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign
5. Ohio State University
6. Stanford University (CA)
7. University of Michigan–Ann Arbor
8. University of Georgia
9. University of Washington
10. University of Texas–Austin
11. University of Virginia–Austin
   University of Virginia (Curry)

## EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
1. University of Wisconsin–Madison
2. Stanford University (CA)
3. University of Michigan–Ann Arbor
4. University of Maryland–College Park
5. **Michigan State University**
   University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign
6. University of Maryland–College Park
7. University of Minnesota–Twin Cities
   Vanderbilt University (Peabody) (TN)
8. University of California–Los Angeles
9. University of California–Berkeley
10. University of California–Berkeley

## REHABILITATION COUNSELING*
1. Michigan State University
   University of Wisconsin–Madison
2. University of Wisconsin–Madison
3. Stanford University (CA)
4. University of Michigan–Ann Arbor
5. University of Pennsylvania
6. University of Arizona
7. University of Arizona
8. University of Arizona
9. Southern Illinois University–Carbondale
10. University of California–Los Angeles
11. University of California–Los Angeles
12. University of California–Los Angeles

## ADMINISTRATION/SUPERVISION
1. Vanderbilt University (Peabody) (TN)
2. University of Wisconsin–Madison
3. Harvard University (MA)
4. Teachers College, Columbia University (NY)
5. Ohio State University
   Pennsylvania State University–University Park
6. Stanford University (CA)
7. Stanford University (CA)
8. **Michigan State University**
9. University of Southern California (Rossier)
10. University of Texas–Austin
   University of Texas–Austin

* Ranked in 2007
It is with great sadness that I write with the news that our dear colleague, Jere Brophy, died Thursday, October 15, 2009 at his home in Okemos from an apparent heart attack. There are no words to express the loss of this intellectual giant to the field of education, but more importantly, we have lost an esteemed colleague, a cherished friend, and generous mentor. Jere's warmth of character was apparent in all his interactions. He always had an inviting smile, was known for his laid-back manner, and greatly enjoyed a good chuckle. He had a genuine interest in other people, their families, lives, work and ideas. To the world, Jere was an internationally-renown scholar whose writing informed researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners alike. To us, he was all that, but, in addition, we had the privilege of having him as our beloved colleague.

Jere came to Michigan State University in 1976 after receiving his PhD in clinical psychology and human development from the University of Chicago and serving on the faculty at the University of Texas at Austin. He came to MSU as a Professor and Senior Researcher in the Institute for Research on Teaching (IRT). From 1981 to 1994, he served as Co-Director of the IRT and, in that capacity, convened scholars to share their works-in-progress through the “Invisible College” prior to the annual meetings of the American Educational Research Association.

At MSU, Jere held the position of University Distinguished Professor, which is the highest faculty distinction in the university. Jere's honors and awards are among the most prized in the fields of education and psychology. He received the 2007 E. L. Thorndike Award from Division 15 of the American Psychological Association. This award, signifying a career of distinguished contributions to knowledge, theory and practice in educational psychology, was very special to Jere because, as he said, “The recognition comes from one's peers.” He was elected as Fellow in the American Psychological Association, the International Academy of Education, the American Psychological Society, and the American Educational Research Association. He was elected to the National Academy of Education and was recognized with an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Liege, Belgium, in 2004. He served on editorial boards for many of the most prestigious journals in the field of education. Jere was a prolific author having written over 300 articles, chapters and books. Jere Brophy's work was as well known to practitioners as scholars. His research on effective teaching, classroom management, and student motivation influenced both theory and practice with lucid and incisive thought and writing. More recently, he applied these ideas to the construction of social studies curriculum and received the Award for Exemplary Research in Social Studies from the National Council on Social Studies. It is hard to imagine an undergraduate or graduate student in education or psychology who has not encountered the work of Jere Brophy.

Jere is survived by wife Arlene, of 46 years; daughter, Cheri (Mark) Speier of Okemos; son, Joe (Missy) Brophy of Rockford, Mich.; 4 grandchildren, Mark and Chris Speier and Jered and Carmen Brophy; brother Tom Brophy of Villa Park, Ill. and sister, Kathy Brophy of Lombard, Ill.

Jere Brophy will be fondly remembered for his great works. His good will and good cheer will be cherished in our memories. His unexpected departure when still in the prime of his life and work is especially difficult for his colleagues and friends. We will miss him greatly but will learn to smile when we share "Jere stories.”
Michigan State University is becoming a much-needed training ground for researchers who use methods from economics to address critical policy issues in education.

Doctoral students can now apply for a new interdisciplinary specialization focused on the best approaches for answering questions such as how teacher quality is linked to student achievement and whether loan policies influence college completion rates.

Faculty in the College of Education and the Department of Economics received a five-year, $5 million grant from the federal Institute of Education Sciences (IES) to support the initiative. The funding will provide up to 25 selected students with $30,000 plus tuition and healthcare for each year they participate.

The first group of nine students was admitted for fall 2009.

"The quantitative approaches economists have developed to explore a wide range of problems are now being applied to education more and more," said Co-director Robert Floden, a University Distinguished Professor in the College of Education. "The problem is there is a national shortage of people who are well trained to use these methods."

MSU will be unique among institutions preparing researchers to study economics of education because of the cross-departmental focus. The project will draw on faculty with related expertise from at least six doctoral programs: Economics; Educational Policy; K–12 Educational Administration; Labor and Industrial Relations; Measurement and Quantitative Methods; and Teacher Education.

Co-director Jeffrey Wooldridge, a University Distinguished Professor of economics, said the Department of Economics participating faculty members have experience in education research. They use longitudinal statistical data—that is, data following the same set of students, teachers or schools over time—to analyze the effects of school funding, class size, teachers’ educational training and other factors on student performance.

Wooldridge said the economists’ expertise in longitudinal data analysis will be a good match with the MSU education researchers’ expertise in designing school-based experiments and measuring educational outcomes.

"It’s clearly a two-way exchange here," he said. "We hope to be able to attract students we might not otherwise be able to attract. We should be able to attract higher quality students."

In addition to coursework required for their doctoral program, students in the specialization attend an ongoing research seminar, work with core faculty on related research projects, take new courses in economics of education and complete an apprenticeship with an outside organization.

Participants are recruited in their first or second year of doctoral study. A national search is now underway to select the next group of students who will begin working on the specialization next fall.

"These students will have a strong understanding of education issues related to policy decisions and very strong training in quantitative research," Floden said. "There is a need to improve these methods so the educational community can get better estimates of the associations between policy variables and student outcomes."

Nicole Geary

Floden and Wooldridge lead a steering committee that will oversee the program, including Dale Belman, professor of labor and industrial relations; Stacy Dickert-Conlin, associate professor of economics; Barbara Schneider, John A. Hannah Distinguished Professor of education; and Ron Zimmer, associate professor of K–12 educational administration.

ON THE WEB
pirt.wceruw.org
MORE INFO
lisaroy@msu.edu or (517) 432-8253

Michigan State University undergraduate students interested in law, social work, psychology and other professions that involve working with children and schools now have an opportunity to study education issues—without pursuing teacher certification.

The College of Education began offering the new Minor in Educational Studies during fall 2009. Students take one required teacher education class and choose among a variety coursework related to their particular interests, such as special needs students, urban schools or education reform, in order to satisfy the 18-credit requirement. More than 25 students have expressed an interest in the program so far.

Call (517) 355-1825 for more information.
COMMENCEMENTS

LEFT: The college conferred a total of 67 doctoral degrees, nine educational specialist degrees and 457 master’s degrees during the 2008–09 academic year. Here, Marjorie Terpstra celebrates receiving her Ph.D. in curriculum, teaching and educational policy. Terpstra became an assistant professor of education at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., starting in fall 2009. BACKGROUND: The College of Education moved its baccalaureate commencement ceremony from the Auditorium to the Breslin Center for the first time in May 2009. In total, 443 students received bachelor’s degrees in elementary education, special education, kinesiology and athletic training during 2008–09.
Leaders of the Teacher Education Study in Mathematics (TEDS-M), a worldwide effort to examine the mathematics preparation of future teachers, plan to release major findings in late January 2009.

And Michigan State University scholars continue to be at the center of the four-year initiative covering 17 nations. College of Education scholars María Teresa Tatto and John (Jack) R. Schwille and Sharon Senk of the College of Natural Science work with the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) as principal investigators at the global level, while William Schmidt leads the United States portion of the research.

Using national representative samples from each participating nation, TEDS-M is expected to tell us if what teachers learn in teacher education leads to more effective knowledge of mathematics for teaching. Researchers have analyzed a range of data, such as governing policies, curriculum alignment, and achieved outcomes of programs.

The U.S. study is expected to provide comprehensive new information about elementary, middle and high school mathematics teacher preparation across the nation and how it compares in the international context. Data collection has included public and private institutions, as well as alternative routes to teacher preparation.

Both TEDS-M and U.S. TEDS-M anticipate releasing their reports during press conferences in Washington, D.C. Visit teds.educ.msu.edu and usteds.msu.edu, respectively, for more information.
Honoring Excellence in Teaching

Three faculty members and five graduate students received the College of Education’s top award for outstanding teaching in 2009. Another group of distinguished instructors will be honored this spring.

Professor Charles “Andy” Anderson is a prominent national contributor to the science education community and a committed educator in science teacher preparation. His doctoral courses are characterized by thoughtful organization of content and structuring of work to encourage and scaffold scholarly talking and writing. He integrates opportunities for students to do more authentic scholarly work and demonstrates a high level of personal care and concern. When meeting with Andy, students receive his full intellectual engagement and find a committed partner with whom to tackle problems.

Teacher education doctoral student Christine Dawson is a promising scholar and a dynamic teacher. Students respond to her enthusiastically, describing her teaching as “amazing,” “creative” and “caring. And her influence is not limited to the classroom. She takes students to conferences where they learn that exemplary teaching goes with scholarship about teaching. To quote her nominating letter, “Ms. Dawson stands out for her . . . induction of teacher candidates into the professional discourse of English education, and her innovative way of weaving the teaching of writing into her work.”

Anne Heintz is a doctoral student in educational psychology and educational technology who shows great commitment to her students and their learning. Most notably, she was instrumental in redesigning almost every aspect of the online version of TE 150, resulting in an innovative course that engages students with psychological issues related to teaching and learning. Students are presented with readings, cartoons, YouTube videos, and even magic tricks to help build nuanced understandings of topics. They are assessed through a composite of intellectual activity, from quizzes to the quality of online discussion postings.

Kinesiology doctoral student Sheila Kelly has the ability to combine high-level expectations for student performance with a talent for keeping undergraduates focused. She always uses a short film clip to illustrate the concepts for the day, a time-consuming task rewarded when student conversations become quite animated. Several have become so excited about content that they have decided to pursue graduate school. Sheila also translates research into the classroom. She fulfilled her research practicum requirements by conducting a study on students’ motivations for enrolling in her classes.

Cheryl Krohn, who is pursuing her Ph.D. in curriculum, instruction and teacher education, challenges future teachers to understand their role as citizens in a global context so that she believes, they will be able to reach students more effectively. She brings that commitment to her elementary social studies classes for pre-service teachers, and she has also influenced the internship-year program. By creating and sharing model lessons, Cheryl is a leader among other instructors working to infuse global themes. She gives her students an example of exemplary teaching; one that is engaged, reflective and committed to active global citizenship.

Kimberly Maier, assistant professor measurement and quantitative methods, has a skill for creating enthusiasm about statistics as well as engaging students with varying levels of knowledge. She clearly explains the material and avoids jargon whenever possible, but also moves at a pace that can challenge more confident students. Imaginative about teaching methods, she regularly “walks through problems” on the board and uses in-class activities to deepen understanding. Maier is also willing to help students advance their statistical abilities outside of class, illustrating an exceptional dedication to their learning.

Sheila Marquardt, a doctoral student in curriculum, teaching and education policy, focuses on student learning and how it will influence their future careers in teaching. This commitment is clear not only because of her energy, but her flexibility in adapting to diverse learners with different backgrounds and goals. Sheila is innovative and regularly asks for input to improve the classroom dynamics. Students talk about sensitive, even controversial, issues. But because she establishes a positive community, these discussions are not points of tension, but opportunities to learn.

Assistant professor of teacher education Peter Youngs is an energetic instructor in the teacher preparation and doctoral programs. At both levels, he employs discussions and presentations to engage all students and works closely with them to present their ideas in convincing ways. Peter teaches the critical “Professional Roles and Teaching Practices,” which covers how students view teaching and what faculty believe they should know and be able to do. His scholarly understanding of how students become teachers, and what the initial years are like, provides a strong foundation for successful teacher candidates.
Local school districts and organizations received loads of school supplies and recreational equipment earlier this fall thanks in part to students from the College of Education. First-year students were encouraged to participate in the university’s first campuswide Fill-the-Bus donation event Sept. 1, which coincided with the Colloquium with your College orientation session at Erickson Hall. Students dropped off their items in one of four buses located around campus—two of which were provided by College of Education alumnus Kellie Dean, president of Dean Transportation. Many also wrote “thinking of you” messages for community members that are supported by the partnering organizations, such as Lansing School District and the Refugee Development Center.

“We want them to see a connection between giving and where it’s going,” said Karen McKnight Casey, director of MSU’s Center for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement.
Two Earn University Distinguished Professor Title

College of Education professors Mark Reckase and Suzanne Wilson received one of Michigan State University’s highest faculty honors when they were named University Distinguished Professors in June 2009.

The distinctions, which are recommended by President Lou Anna K. Simon and approved by the MSU Board of Trustees, honor faculty members who have been recognized nationally and internationally for the importance of their teaching, research and public service achievements. Individuals holding the professorship receive an additional $5,000 annual stipend for five years.

Reckase has been a professor of measurement and quantitative methods at MSU since 1998 and actively involved in assessment and testing research for more than 30 years. He is an expert on standardized tests in K–12 education, focusing on developing models of the interactions between students and educational tasks and evaluating the quality of students’ classroom performance. His psychometric work also supports efforts to conduct research in many other areas, from exercise science to Advance Placement science exams. Reckase’s influence has been demonstrated through leadership roles with the most prestigious journals in the field. He also served as president of the National Council on Measurement in Education.

Wilson currently serves as chairperson of the Department of Teacher Education and has been on the faculty since 1987. She is nationally recognized for her leadership in research on education policy, teacher education and teaching, with particular influence on scholarship about the role of content knowledge and mathematics teaching. An outstanding teacher herself, Wilson founded the Center for the Scholarship of Teaching in the College of Education and has been instrumental in improving its highly-regarded teacher preparation and graduate study programs. She contributes to many national initiatives, including a National Academy of Education effort to advise the presidential administration on teacher quality.

A total of 120 MSU faculty members have received the University Distinguished Professor title since 1990. That now includes six current College of Education professors, including Jere Brophy, William Schmidt, Joan Ferrini-Mundy and Yong Zhao. Former College of Education awardees include Michael Pressley, Penelope Peterson and Judith Lanier.

LARC: Don’t Forget Writing Instruction

Scholars from the Literacy Achievement Research Center (LARC) at MSU have joined educators across Michigan urging schools to stay focused on writing after the state decided to reduce testing in the area.

Michigan students will now take the MEAP Writing Assessment only in grades 4 and 7, instead of grades 3 through 8. The decision, announced last spring, was made mostly because of concerns about logistics, finances and reliable test results—not disregard for the importance of writing.

However, Michigan Reading Association released a statement responding to the change over the summer. It was co-signed by the Michigan Department of Education, the Michigan Council of Teachers of English, the National Writing Project of Michigan and LARC.

“To my knowledge, it’s unprecedented for this number and range of organizations related to literacy to get behind the same idea in this way,” said LARC Co-director Nell K. Duke, who helped draft the initial statement with doctoral student Nicole Martin.

“Some administrators have told teachers that they can ease off on their attention to writing and focus their attention elsewhere . . . We just really want to underscore the message that we need to continue to give writing its due place in the curriculum.”

The organizations cite a long list of supporting research, bringing attention to weak writing proficiency levels in the U.S., the interrelated nature of writing and reading and the role of writing for later success in other content areas.

Michigan Reading Association
www.michiganreading.org

Literacy Achievement Research Center
www.msularc.org
A BETTER LOOK
If you haven’t been on campus in a while, this is the new Erickson Hall. New windows have been installed on every side, including around the Kiva, to transform the building’s exterior and boost energy efficiency. The project was completed by late spring 2009.
College Reaffirms Commitment to Detroit in New MSU Facility

This year, interns teaching in Detroit-area schools have been attending classes in a new local headquarters for the College of Education—and a prominent regional hub for the university.

MSU opened the doors at 3408 Woodward Avenue, a 22,000-square-foot building in the heart of the Detroit, earlier this fall. The facility now houses classrooms and offices to support many College of Education programs, as well as space for the College of Music, admissions, advancement and governmental affairs.

Leaders say the MSU Detroit Center represents a commitment to continue expanding the university’s engagement in Southeast Michigan. More than 150 people attended an opening celebration and open house on Oct. 1.

"Moving into the building helps us solidify our long-term presence in Detroit," said College of Education Dean Carole Ames. "Woodward Avenue provides a great location to improve our accessibility and visibility in the community."

Besides placing teacher candidates in local classrooms for the required fifth-year internship, the college has been offering unique urban learning opportunities in partnership with Detroit schools for many years. This includes a seven-week teaching experience for teacher education students in the city’s summer school program and activities for Detroit high school students interested in pursuing education careers.

The new building provides the College of Education with designated, flexible space for various classes, meetings, research projects and other purposes while maintaining connections to campus through teleconferencing technology. Staff members who facilitate the local internship program also have permanent offices in the building.

The College of Education previously used space rented from the Detroit Federation of Teachers or the facilities at YouthVille Detroit, a nearby neighborhood youth development center. The college continues to operate the Good Schools Resource Center, a school improvement initiative funded by the Skillman Foundation, primarily at YouthVille.

Visit semich.msu.edu for more information on how MSU makes a difference throughout Southeast Michigan, including the new Community Music School Detroit.

About the MSU Detroit Center

- A 22,000-square-foot, two-story building located at 3408 Woodward Avenue
- MSU signed a seven-year lease for $490,000
- Includes classrooms and offices for College of Education program and the new Community Music School Detroit, plus space for admissions, advancement and governmental affairs
New Institute to Help Meet Demand for Chinese Language Teachers

Michigan State University took another important step toward addressing the nation’s rising demand for Chinese-related education by establishing one of the first U.S. institutes dedicated to preparing Chinese teachers.

The College of Education already facilitates innovative opportunities to learn Chinese language and culture for thousands of students through its award-winning Confucius Institute. The new Institute for Teachers of Chinese as a Foreign Language will complement those efforts and build on the university’s renowned teacher education programs to support the emerging needs of Chinese language educators all around the world.

Chinese Language Council International, or Hanban, has promised to provide more than $1 million to help support the institute over at least five years. MSU leaders celebrated the signing of the agreement during a dinner for Chinese State Councillor Liu Yandong April 16 in Washington.

“This makes MSU a very central place for Chinese teacher education,” said University Distinguished Professor Yong Zhao, who will serve as executive director.

Many U.S. schools have trouble finding ways to expose students to Chinese language and culture as China continues to gain global influence. According to Zhao, there are more than 200 million Chinese students who study English, compared to less than 4 percent of American students who study the Mandarin Chinese language.

“The first bottleneck is the severe lack of high-quality, certified teachers for public schools,” Zhao said. “We can’t change that unless we have strong programs that can prepare teachers quickly. We have to look for more innovative ways to solve that problem, and this institute will develop those solutions.”

The College of Education recently created a post-B.A. program that recruits and provides mostly native Chinese educators with a two-year track for meeting Michigan’s teacher certification requirements and, just as importantly, making a smooth transition into American school culture.

The Institute for Teachers of Chinese as a Foreign Language will expand on existing certification and degree programs by providing training for practicing Chinese teachers around the world, conducting research on issues specific to teaching Chinese as a foreign language, developing new teaching resources and consulting directly with school districts.

The institute also is expected to collaborate with the Michigan Department of Education and various universities in China that prepare teachers who may work in the United States.

MORE INFO
confucius.msu.edu or (517) 355-3801

“This makes MSU a very central place for Chinese teacher education.”
A team of education experts from Michigan State University are playing a key role in a $75 million, U.S.-funded effort to improve basic education in Pakistan by improving teachers’ training and skills over the next five years. Last spring, faculty and staff from the College of Education began supporting the Pakistan Higher Education Commission’s initiative to create a standard curriculum for a four-year baccalaureate of education degree at Pakistan universities. Currently, teacher education programs in Pakistan vary widely and are often subpar, said Reitumetse Obakeng Mabokela, associate professor of higher education and the project’s principal investigator. “It’s unfortunate, but in Pakistan teaching is one of the least-respected professions,” she said. “And so the level of training and the quality of students that enter the profession is considered to be on the lower end of the spectrum.” Mabokela and her team are collaborating with 15 universities from Pakistan’s four provinces to improve their training and certification programs for instructors who will teach at the high-school level. In addition, the College of Education welcomed six doctoral students from Pakistan to campus this fall. A total of 60 doctoral-level and 45 master’s-level candidates—mostly university faculty members in Pakistan—are expected to study teacher education at MSU and 13 other U.S. universities over the course of the project.

The $6.9 million initiative led by MSU is part of the broader initiative called Pre-Service Teacher Education Program in Pakistan, or Pre-STEP, which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development. MSU is one of three partners, including two nonprofit organizations based in Washington, D.C.: the Academy for Educational Development, or AED, and the Educational Development Center, or EDC.

The AED will use a significant portion of the $75 million to make infrastructure improvements to Pakistan colleges and universities, while the EDC works with Pakistan’s government colleges, which train primary, or elementary, school teachers.

“For a U.S. university, this represents a very significant model for international collaboration,” said Gretchen Sanford, Pre-STEP program director for MSU. “I think, institutionally speaking, this is MSU at its finest.”

Sanford and Mabokela, who have worked on education reform in several countries including Egypt, Namibia and Mabokela’s native South Africa, are leading two small teams of scholars and administrative staffers—one based at MSU and one in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Safety issues are being addressed by an in-country security coordinator who makes sure team members know which areas in Pakistan are considered safe for foreigners. MSU’s Julie Friend, a travel security analyst, also is providing guidance.

Working with coordinators from each of the 15 universities, the first task was determining what is needed
to enhance the institutions’ capacity to deliver high quality teacher education for secondary-level teachers.

They have relied in part on data from the baseline study to offer professional development workshops and two major seminars—both led by College of Education faculty. The first focused on how the nation’s education faculty and policymakers can build on a set of existing standards for teachers previously adopted by the government. The other addressed issues of improving higher education in Pakistan more broadly and has been planned in collaboration with the nation’s Higher Education Commission.

Meanwhile, work is underway to develop the four-year program for teacher candidates one year at a time. College of Education professors in math, science and other subjects are expected to help shape the curriculum.

being the change they hope to see

Mabokela said Pakistan’s poor teacher training is reflected in the country’s literacy rates: Only 46 percent of the population is literate, while only 26 percent of females are literate, according to Pakistan’s Ministry of Education.

She acknowledges that Pakistan’s teacher salaries are very low compared to other professions within the country, and that overcoming the negative perception of teaching as a career could be difficult. But she’s hopeful the Pakistan government’s recent actions indicate a desire for education reform—including its new policy that increases teaching standards from a one-year diploma to the four-year baccalaureate.

“One has to be able to provide a teacher who is at least minimally qualified,” Mabokela said. “We cannot have teachers who are completely unqualified, underprepared and expect them to do miracles.”

The Pakistani doctoral students now training at MSU, for their part, acknowledge that much work is needed to improve education in their home communities. They look forward to returning to their university departments or schools of education with knowledge that will help build stronger capacity for change.

The chance to earn a Ph.D. with a full scholarship from USAID isn’t something they take lightly.

“If we are not training teachers well, we will not get desirable results,” said Andleeb Sharif, who was a lecturer in the Department of Education at Hazara University, located in northwest Pakistan. “We are going to prepare the future generation of teachers for these innovative practices.”

Pre-STEP, or Pre-Service Teacher Education Program in Pakistan, is a $75 million project funded by the United States Agency for International Development, or USAID (www.usaid.gov/pk).

MSU receives about 56.9 million as one of three partners, including the Academy for Educational Development, or AED (www.aed.org), and the Educational Development Center, or EDC (www.edc.org).

Faculty and staff from the College of Education are collaborating with 15 universities in Pakistan to improve how they train instructors who will teach at the high-school level.

About 60 doctoral and 45 master’s students from Pakistan are expected to train as teachers at MSU and other U.S. universities. The College of Education welcomed eight this fall.

Hear her discuss how MSU is helping to improve teacher education in Pakistan. Visit www.education.msu.edu and look under Podcasts/Videos.
“Come on, guys!”
Karin Pfeiffer shouts across the gym, laughing and following a few tired kids shuffling toward the basketball hoop.

They all wear belts with tiny devices to track their jumps and sprints. And Pfeiffer pays close attention.

She is in the middle of a four-year, more than $1 million study to determine how well accelerometers measure kids’ movements.

Her project’s research experiments have been a steady occurrence at IM Sports Circle on campus. And when the simulated after-school programs aren’t in session, Pfeiffer—like many of her colleagues—is working directly with other K–12 students in Michigan.

Kinesiology faculty members at Michigan State University are playing key roles in a growing number of efforts to improve children’s health as the Department of Kinesiology sharpens its focus on the role of physical activity in youth—a critical segment along the “cells to society” spectrum.

Their recent research ranges from how undergraduate mentors can influence children’s exercise behavior to possible links between high blood pressure and watching too much TV.

Chairperson Deborah Feltz said kinesiology scholars have shifted how they study kids’ physical activity to reflect a more holistic, interdisciplinary approach—as well as to address today’s alarming rate of childhood obesity. Sixteen percent of children ages 6 to 19 (or about 9 million) are overweight or obese, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. And that number has tripled since 1980.

“Kids have become more sedentary. There are not as many physical education programs today, or as much time to spend in them,” Feltz said. “So, we ask how we can go to where they are and try to do some different things that can make a difference.”

That means considering psychological factors such as motivation and confidence, the role of genetics and potential connections between physical activity and academic achievement.

It requires planning innovative, hands-on interventions with school communities and, recently, even exploring the advantages of fitness-related video games.

Kinesiology faculty members at MSU are committed to getting more kids moving. We jumped on their trail to find out more.
Getting FIT in Grand Rapids

With work getting underway this fall, one of the newest MSU efforts to promote healthy habits for kids is happening in Grand Rapids.

The university received a two-year, $1 million grant from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan with a hefty challenge: reduce obesity among up to 500 children in four elementary schools and their surrounding neighborhoods.

Joe Eisenmann and Karin Pfeiffer, both assistant professors of kinesiology, are leading the school-based physical activity and physical measurement components of the project, call the FIT initiative.

Pfeiffer’s job is to infuse 30 minutes of structured physical activity into each school day (outside of recess) using innovative tools such as classroom dance parties and exercise DVDs. She also will provide input to develop new community-based after-school programs, which will help students reach the overall federal guideline of 60 minutes of exercise each day.

Eisenmann—an expert on obesity-related risk factors in children—is training nursing students from Grand Valley State University to assess changes in FIT participants by collecting data such as weight, blood pressure and acanthosis nigricans (an indicator of diabetes).

The College of Human Medicine is coordinating the FIT initiative, while researchers from three other MSU departments, including pediatrics, human nutrition and public relations, oversee nutritional and promotional aspects of the program. At least a dozen local organizations also are involved.

“Successful behavior change needs multiple levels of influence on individual behavior,” said Jeff Connolly, a vice president with Blue Cross Blue Shield. “Although there is no clear-cut solution to solving the obesity epidemic, a sustainable and comprehensive population-based approach for intervention may help address the root causes and curb the increasing trend.”

(S)Partners for Heart Health

Last year, Kelly Mattran motivated her fifth-graders to do push-ups during commercial breaks and eat different colored vegetables at lunch. She managed to help one of them stay active despite a broken leg and, after a year’s worth of weekly e-mails, leave all three with a few lasting lifestyle lessons.

She was a (S)Partner, one of more than 30 MSU kinesiology and dietetics undergraduates trained to encourage healthy habits through individualized mentoring.

“I felt like I was a support group,” said Mattran, who graduated last spring after participating in the program’s pilot year. “One year probably isn’t enough to make a lifelong change, but I knew I was making an impact because of their excitement and commitment to the goal-setting.”

(S)Partners for Heart Health continued in four Michigan elementaries this year as an interdisciplinary team of researchers fine-tune elements of what could
be a sustainable school-based model for preventing cardiovascular risk factors in youth—and exposing college students to hands-on learning.

Besides helping them track nutrition and exercise goals through a secure Web site, (S)Partners interact with children in the two intervention schools during regular physical education lessons and breakout groups.

MSU medical students conduct all physical testing needed for the project, which is led by Joe Carlson, an associate professor in the Department of Radiology and a two-time graduate of the Department of Kinesiology. Kinesiology professors Deb Feltz, Joe Eisenmann and Karin Pfeiffer are co-investigators.

“Our ultimate goal is to help prevent premature health problems and decreased quality of life,” said Carlson, “and based on our data, there’s a lot that needs to be done. About 30 percent of the 182 students we monitored did not meet national pediatric targets for cholesterol and other blood lipids, while 39 percent are overweight or obese.”

That’s nearly a third more than the national average. Baseline data also showed about half the students were not achieving national recommendations for physical activity and “screen time” spent watching TV or playing video games.

Eisenmann said researchers hope to replicate the program with additional schools and universities, which could include a partnership with students and faculty at Central Michigan University. They are currently working with school districts in Holt, Marshall, Olivet and St. Louis, Mich.

A Model for Middle School Girls?

Motivating middle school girls to get active can be particularly challenging, depending on their attitudes and a lack of interesting options.

This school year, however, about 35 sixth- and seventh-grade girls in Lansing are stepping, learning African dances, power-walking, playing sports and more during a daily after-school club devised in part by Karin Pfeiffer.

She is working with College of Education colleague Kimberly Maier, assistant professor of measurement and quantitative methods, and nursing professor Lorraine Robbins to test a unique, two-part approach for influencing sedentary girls’ behaviors.

Specially trained school nurses encourage participants to choose more active lifestyles through a technique called motivational interviewing. Girls meet with nurses once a month, either alone or in small groups. Then the after-school program, which incorporates students’ input and a curriculum about healthy habits, provides a place to put those conversations into practice.

“A lot of interventions take a group approach to increasing activity, but this takes a step back to the individual level,” Pfeiffer said. “It embraces the fact that, at this stage, these girls have a lot of individual needs and concerns.

“We’re trying to figure out if this model can be more successful than previous environmental approaches.”

The researchers will measure change in girls’ activity levels based on participant surveys and output from accelerometers—devices used to record physical motion. They will compare their data, including measures of confidence and enjoyment, against a control group of about 35 girls that also fails to meet physical activity recommendations.

The project is funded by a two-year grant from the National Institutes of Health.
Karin Pfeiffer felt compelled to promote fitness long before public concerns about child obesity reached critical mass.

She was the kid in the backyard organizing all kinds of games, the high school basketball captain and the undergrad who played every intramural sport. It seemed natural to become a kinesiology scholar focused, firmly, on increasing physical activity.

“I just enjoy being physically active. That’s something I want other people to feel.”

Especially young people.

But how do we keep kids moving, and—perhaps more importantly—she asks, how do we know those movements are making a difference?

“If we can’t measure it very well, we have no idea,” Pfeiffer said.

That’s why she and Stewart Trost of Oregon State University have a $1.6 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to test the longitudinal validity of accelerometers—the most widely used tool for collecting objective data on physical activity.

The small devices, similar to pedometers, have been worn on the hips of about 200 5- through 15-year-olds during a series of carefully planned research sessions involving obstacle courses, runs, resting periods and other activities at sites in Michigan and Oregon.

Once completed, Trost and Pfeiffer’s findings on accelerometers, based on following the same kids over four years, could help hundreds of researchers gauge the success of youth interventions more precisely.

“The major questions in this field revolve around identifying effective interventions for increasing physical activity in youth,” said Russell Pate, vice provost for health sciences at University of South Carolina and a consultant on the project. “These studies require measures of physical activity that accurately detect change in physical activity, but such measures are currently lacking.

“This is a major limitation, and their research will overcome this.”

Along with checking the accuracy of output from three popular accelerometer models, the team is determining how well calculations used to interpret data from accelerometers hold up over time, especially as kids grow.

That involves methods for converting the number of accelerations, or “counts” gathered while a child bounds across a playground for example, into an amount of expended energy. Cut points are then used to describe whether the child achieved moderate or vigorous activity levels.

If Pfeiffer and Trost uncover problems with currently available pro-
tocols, the project could also influence how the field defines activity levels for certain age groups.

Graduate and undergraduate students began assisting Pfeiffer with the third year of data collection at IM Sports Circle in November. Each subject participates in four annual sessions, which includes two individual visits and two group visits.

Researchers get accurate physical activity measures for each child during the individual sessions by having them perform 12 different activities and collecting their expired gases with a mask and backpack system—which is the gold standard but too costly and uncomfortable for more widespread use in research. That data is then compared against information gathered with accelerometers during simulated after-school programs.

While the devices log children’s accelerations around the gym, kinesiology doctoral students like Darijan Suton also use direct observation to check their accuracy, watching and marking kids’ movements on a handheld PDA.

“If we don’t know their flaws and we use them to track physical activity, then the data we get could be misleading,” said Suton, who expects to use accelerometers in his own research on child athletes. “This study will tell us how much we can actually rely on accelerometers.”

In the meantime, Pfeiffer, who received her Ph.D. in kinesiology from MSU in 2001, is already imagining a better way to measure physical activity. She is working with MSU associate professor of engineering Subir Biswas to test a “wearable wireless network” of accelerometers placed on different parts of the body.

They hope the prototype design could eventually give researchers the one physical activity measure single accelerometers haven’t been able to provide.

“We can get frequency, duration and intensity from accelerometers, but they don’t tell you what kind of activity the person was doing,” Pfeiffer said. “With this system, you can actually train it to recognize patterns.”

Undergrad Assistant Wins Research Award

Undergraduate kinesiology students often experience research firsthand. In fact, senior Laura Vielbig earned a First Place Award in the 2009 University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum (UURAF) for her presentation in connection with the ongoing study of accelerometers led by assistant professor of kinesiology Karin Pfeiffer. UURAF is an annual opportunity for MSU students to share their research and creative work with the university community and compete against peers.

Vielbig’s project looked at whether children were more active during the structured or unstructured activity times of a group program. Unlike results from previous studies, she found that children were more active during structured activities such as soccer compared to time periods when they could choose what they wanted to do.

“This may be attributed to the high level of encouragement we gave them during the structured activity,” Vielbig said. “Future implications from these results could be to encourage after-school programs to structure their activities more often.”
Eisenmann Explores Genetic, Environmental Answers Behind Obesity Epidemic

Joe Eisenmann admits he is somewhat pessimistic about most major efforts to decrease childhood obesity in the United States.

Researchers often try similar approaches for changing children’s eating and physical activity habits and end up finding little evidence that they are effective for large numbers of kids.

But why are we failing?

Eisenmann, who directs the Biomarkers and Genetics Laboratory in the Department of Kinesiology, believes there are several overlooked risk factors: stress, genetics and maternal health issues, to name a few.

His recent study of 140 4- through 9-year-olds found that children born to women who were overweight during pregnancy are also overweight—even when they achieve recommended physical activity levels. On the other hand, kids born to normal-weight women were less likely to show metabolic risk factors, even when they weren’t getting adequate physical activity.

Eisenmann’s ongoing analysis of national data sets, a four-year U.S. Department of Agriculture–funded project with colleagues from Iowa State University, has also shown, for example, that maternal stress levels may affect children’s weight gain even more than family access to sufficient meals.

He is attempting to identify particular genes that could trigger obesity in kids, and the MSU Ph.D. graduate has even used wheel-running data from selectively bred juvenile mice to address issues associated with the metabolic syndrome and childhood obesity—a novel technique in the field of pediatric exercise medicine.

There are solutions for today’s obesity epidemic, he says, that can be uncovered through a more collective and open-minded research approach.

“This is a very complex issue we are dealing with . . . it’s not the individual associations, it’s the combined interaction of risk factors that we need to further tease out,” said Eisenmann, explaining that should involve exploring both genetic and environmental risk factors from the time before conception all the way through adolescence.

“We’ve known from previous studies that sedentary behaviors are linked to obesity, and that obesity is linked to high blood pressure, but this is the first time that we’ve linked those behaviors directly to elevated blood pressure.”

RESEARCHING OTHER RISK FACTORS

“We’ve known from previous studies that sedentary behaviors are linked to obesity, and that obesity is linked to high blood pressure, but this is the first time that we’ve linked those behaviors directly to elevated blood pressure.”
Kids’ TV Time Linked to High Blood Pressure

Sedentary behaviors such as TV viewing and “screen time” involving computers and video games are linked with elevated blood pressure in children regardless of whether they are overweight or obese, according to research published in Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine.

The findings suggest the trend in America of increased media exposure for children may be having a much more dire effect than previously thought, according to co-author Joe Eisenmann, an MSU assistant professor of kinesiology.

“The cardiovascular disease risk factors suggest that risks may be immediate and not just indicative of potential future problems,” Eisenmann said.

“We’ve known from previous studies that sedentary behaviors are linked to obesity, and that obesity is linked to high blood pressure, but this is the first time that we’ve linked those behaviors directly to elevated blood pressure.”

Eisenmann worked with Iowa State University colleagues David Martinez-Gomez and Greg Welk to analyze data on 57 boys and 54 girls ages 3 to 8. Sedentary behavior was determined by an accelerometer worn over the right hip and by parental reports stating the average time children spent watching TV, playing video games, painting, sitting or taking part in other sedentary activities each day for seven days. The children’s height, weight, fat mass and blood pressure were measured.

Eisenmann and his colleagues found that overall sedentary activity was not significantly related to higher blood pressure, but TV viewing and screen time were linked to elevated levels.

“It appears other factors, which occur during excessive screen time, should also be considered in the context of sedentary behavior and elevated blood pressure development in children,” Eisenmann said. “TV viewing often comes with unhealthy snacking behavior and also can lead to stress responses that disrupt sleep.”

To combat the problem, Eisenmann stresses parents and children need to adhere to limits set by the American Academy of Pediatrics of no more than two hours of TV watching per day. Also, that needs to be combined with at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day.
Leadership.

Two years ago, teachers at Roosevelt Elementary School often kept their classroom doors closed.

They had four principals in as many years and what seemed like an insurmountable slate of low test scores.

Coherence.

Then, facing the most serious sanctions under No Child Left Behind, Roosevelt was referred by the state Department of Education to the Michigan Principals Fellowship and Coaches Institute—a unique professional development model offered through Michigan State University.

Community.

The staff started focusing on small, content-specific instructional changes.

Strong school leadership emerged.

And, teachers attest, doors re-opened . . .
“I can honestly say this is the first time that I am really proud to be a teacher,” says Renee Petersen, who has been teaching special education at the Muskegon Heights elementary for 13 years. “I feel like things are finally moving in the right direction, and we really did have a long way to go.”

While participating in the fellowship program, Roosevelt’s MEAP results rebounded in both reading and math, with an especially impressive jump from 50 to 80 percent of students proficient at the third grade level.

The school also made adequate yearly progress (AYP) enough times to be relieved of federal scrutiny. But staff members say their most lasting accomplishments actually occurred behind the scenes.

Now in its third year, the Michigan Principals Fellowship is designed to foster systematic school improvement by teaching principals (and their staffs) to focus on the “instructional core”—or what really happens between teachers and students when they are studying specific content.

To do that, leaders must learn how to establish coherent strategies across all classrooms and grade levels and, just as importantly, empower teachers to unify and take action as a team.

All Title I schools in Michigan who fail to make AYP for four consecutive years are required to complete the ongoing, interactive training sessions led by staff and faculty from the MSU College of Education. More than 880 educators from nearly 150 schools have participated so far.

“We are giving schools a framework (see graphic) on which to improve,” said Barbara Markle, assistant dean for K–12 outreach programs. “It is deeply research-based and, therefore, it is not a quick fix.

“It’s about building capacity for school leadership.”

Markle’s office also helps Michigan—through the state’s intermediate school districts—train leadership coaches assigned to all schools in the “Corrective Action” stage under NCLB. These coaches, who are mostly retired school administrators, provide on-site support for 100 days of the school year and serve as mentors to principals participating in the fellowship.

Former principal Carmen Hannah played an invaluable role at Roosevelt by cultivating a productive coaching relationship with Principal Jaronique Benjamin.

Together, MSU outreach programs provide the greatest amount of direct contact with Michigan schools that are struggling to improve academic achievement through the Statewide System of Support.

And the work isn’t limited to schools missing AYP. College of Education faculty members have applied their evolving knowledge on school transformation.

Leadership for Coherence: A Systems Perspective

![Diagram](graphic)

**Important Principles of the Instructional Core:**
1. Increases in student learning occur only as a consequence of improvements in the level of content, teachers’ knowledge and skill, and student engagement.
2. If you change any single element of the instructional core, you have to change the other two.

in a growing number of educational settings across the state and nation.

MSU graduate students learn about the same framework and principles in the k–12 administration master’s degree program.

“With coherence and leadership, I think you can get anywhere,” Petersen said. “This program pushed us to another level.”

Encouraging a New Dynamic

As in most states, the Michigan Department of Education has shouldered new responsibilities for school reform since the passage of No Child Left Behind. State staffing cuts, however, have forced the agency to find key partners who can help provide professional services to schools identified for improvement under the law.

Donald Peurach, assistant professor of education administration, said the land-grant mission and high-caliber education expertise at MSU make the university a good match to support that work in Michigan, which has largely chosen a “do-it-yourself” strategy for turning around troubled schools.

MAISA, or the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators, collaborates with various contractors to oversee the components of the Statewide System of Support, which includes school improvement audits and visits from teams of ‘process mentors.’

MSU receives about $2.3 million in federal Title I grants to provide the Principals Fellowship and Coaches Institute—both created to empower school-level leaders.

The program’s design was initially led by director Tom Buffett (who left the position this fall) with assistance from MSU professors, consultants and educational leaders with expertise in improving chronically underperforming schools.

“We are trying to develop capacity in schools to design their way out of problems,” said Peurach, comparing the approach to external package reforms, or “buy” options. “That requires an important step . . . developing their knowledge of what high-quality instructional practice looks like.”

And that’s where research comes in. The fellowship draws on cutting-edge scholarship from professors at MSU and across the country including Harvard University’s Richard F. Elmore, who was on the MSU College of Education faculty in the 1980s.

Principals, who attend summer institutes and one-day conferences throughout the school year, learn about a theory of action for improvement from which they can frame changes in their school.

With a small group of teachers, or team members, they are encouraged to align all decisions about curriculum and instruction in ways that support very specific goals, whether that involves fixing kids’ writing mistakes or improving formative assessment. Research has shown there is often greater variation in classroom practices within one school than among all schools in a district.

“Schools, especially in urban areas, get many opportunities to bring in new programs and they can get overwhelmed with reform,” Markle said. “We really ask people to list their initiatives and then focus on what has the most leverage for improving student achievement.”

Instructional coherence comes from having a strong professional community, and vice versa.

So, with regular support from their coaches, principals try out strategies to get staff members talking to one another, building relationships and examining student issues together. Just as the fellowship pushes teachers to leave their districts and learn new perspectives in campus conference rooms, it also encourages them to visit fellow teachers’ classrooms and observe colleagues in action.

“It gives them language, process and practices to talk with each other in a different way than they ever have before,” said Susan Printy, associate professor of

Jaronique Benjamin, principal of Roosevelt Elementary School in Muskegon Heights, Mich., spoke about her staff and their improvement strategies at a summer session of the Michigan Principals Fellowship.
educational administration. “We’re trying to encourage a new cultural dynamic in the schools.”

Success and Perseverance

Buena Vista High School still hasn’t made AYP. Students there struggle to achieve graduation rates and proficiency levels expected under NCLB.

But, Principal Rita Cheek says, the environment—the feeling in the building—has changed dramatically. Student suspensions are down and attendance is up.

“The Principals Fellowship provided a basis for me to share how we would work together,” said Cheek, an MSU College of Education graduate who started her third year in the position this fall. She has been working with leadership coach Pete Ingvarsson all along.

“It had to start with building a climate of trust and fixing the morale of staff and students. We can have honest dialogue now.”

And she says that will help the staff, even in a large high school, focus more on the instructional core.

“Principals can receive all kinds of professional development, but very rarely do they have something that focuses so intently on what happens in the classroom and how they can change the building’s culture,” said MaryAlice Galloway, director of the Office of Education Improvement and Innovation in the Michigan Department of Education.

“Principals can receive all kinds of professional development, but very rarely do they have something that focuses so intently on what happens in the classroom and how they can change the building’s culture,” said MaryAlice Galloway, director of the Office of Education Improvement and Innovation in the Michigan Department of Education.

Participants from schools that break free of the sanctions often say they would like to keep coming if they could, and most worry about the threat of staff turnover in today’s shaky budget times. Achieving success in the program is largely dependent on keeping the same principal for more than one year.

However, the potential limitations of the program—including the looming reauthorization of No Child Left Behind—haven’t stopped the Office of K–12 Outreach from sharing the best known practices for improving student achievement with the schools that need them most.

Diane Jackson, who succeeded Buffett as director of the Michigan Principals Fellowship and Coaches Institute this fall, has deep expertise in supporting students as a national consultant for The Efficacy Institute in Waltham, Mass. and has served as the efficacy coordinator for Detroit Public Schools.

She and her team are ready to tackle the unique issues facing a new cohort of 21 principals leading high schools recently designated under Title I.

They have received a grant extension from the state education department to continue operating the programs for at least another year.

“It’s what makes us distinctly MSU,” Printy said. “We are really dedicated to the people of this state. We want schools to be good places for kids to learn and for adults to work.”

“(MSU has) provided a complete program that we are really proud of because we can see that it’s actually making a difference.”

Roosevelt Elementary School is among more than 40 percent, or 16 out of the 39 schools participating in the second year of the fellowship that made AYP for two consecutive years and will no longer be required to attend the program.
America’s increasing reliance on standardized testing as a yardstick for educational success is a flawed policy that threatens to undermine the nation’s strengths of creativity and innovation, according to a provocative new book from University Distinguished Professor Yong Zhao.

By grading student success on government-set standards in a limited number of subjects such as math, reading and science, Zhao argues the United States is eager to “throw away” one of its global advantages—an education that respects individual talents and does not dictate what students learn or how teachers teach.

The book, published this fall by ASCD, is called Catching Up or Leading the Way: American Education in the Age of Globalization. He acknowledges his thesis is “diametrically opposed to the more popular view of what American education should be like in the 21st century.”

“Right now we seem to be stuck with the idea of standards as the panacea to fix all of America’s education problems,” said Zhao, a professor of educational technology and educational psychology. “I don’t deny that the U.S. education system has problems, but I don’t feel the problems can be solved by standards and high-stakes testing. Rather, standards and high-stakes testing run the risk of ruining the advantages and great tradition of the system.”

Ironically, Zhao set out to write a book about the “repeated failures” of testing and standardization in his native China. But while Chinese officials are trying to “undo the damages” of that system, the Obama administration seems inclined to continue the limited standards-focused policy established by George W. Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act, Zhao said.

“I realized that what China wants is what America is eager to throw away,” he writes in the book’s preface.

Zhao has secured millions of dollars in grant funding from U.S. and Chinese organizations to study and implement educational technology and reform. He travels frequently around the United States to speak to educational groups about the need for diverse, globally focused education. But while most educators agree with him about the need for change, Zhao said they often complain they’re stuck “teaching to the test” to meet state-mandated requirements in select subjects.

Zhao has seen the effects of national standards firsthand. Five years ago he pulled his son out of the 10th grade at a mid-Michigan public school and sent him to a New Jersey boarding school after the youngster failed to post a top writing score on a standardized test and dwelled over how to do better.

“My heart sank as he was explaining to me how he would improve,” Zhao writes of his son, who graduated from the boarding school and is now attending the University of Chicago. “The essence of his strategy was to stop being creative and imaginative.”

Zhao believes the federal government should stop endorsing standardized testing and instead reward schools for offering a diverse set of opportunities—from art to auto shop. He said accountability should be “input-based”
The United States must define more rigorous and uniform academic standards in order to compete internationally and provide equal opportunities to students, according to a recent paper by College of Education professors William Schmidt, Sharif Shakrani and Richard Houang.

The authors of International Lessons about National Standards, which was commissioned by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, examined the educational systems and histories of 10 countries that have or are in the process of developing national standards. From that analysis, they argue the U.S. federal government should encourage and provide resources for the standards-setting process while an independent organization oversees the actual development of national standards and assessments—with input from scholars, educators and professionals representing each content area. States would choose whether to adopt the standards, starting only with English, mathematics and science.

“The consequence of not adopting standards is a lower quality education from an international point of view and disparities that leave children behind within our own country,” Schmidt said. “It does not require losing local control; it only means that for these important content areas, there is a common expectation for all.”

The full Fordham Institute report was released not long after the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association initiated a state-led effort to develop common K–12 academic standards in math and language arts. At least 49 states and territories including Michigan signed on as of last spring, with work expected to be completed by December 2009.

Schmidt was selected to serve on the mathematics Feedback Group created to provide expert guidance as the standards are developed by a separate Work Group. Similar groups exist for English-language arts. He was also named to a 25-member Validation Committee charged with reviewing initial standards for college- and career-readiness.

Unless we have common standards, our children will not be able to compete well internationally and, within the U.S., some children will be left behind.

Yong Zhao (left) and William Schmidt (far right) recently debated the role that national standards can play in school reform while Sharif Shakrani moderated. A video from the event is posted under Podcasts/Videos on www.education.msu.edu.
At the center of our modern technological society lies an unacknowledged paradox. Although the United States is increasingly defined by and dependent on technology, and is creating and using new technology at a breathtaking pace, its citizens are not equipped to make well-considered decisions or to think critically about technology. As a society, we are not even fully aware of or conversant with the technologies we use everyday. In short, most of us are not "technologically literate."1

Technology has become so user friendly we hardly understand how or why it works or the implications of its use. We drive high-tech cars but know little more than how to operate the steering wheel, gas and break pedals. We fill shopping carts with highly processed food but are largely ignorant of their content, or how they are developed, grown, processed, packaged and delivered. We click on a mechanical mouse and transmit data over thousands of miles without understanding how it is possible or who might have access to the information.

Available evidence shows that most adults have a limited understanding of the essential characteristics of technology, how it influences society and how society influences its development. Until recently, neither our educational system nor our policymakers have recognized the importance of technological literacy. Thus the paradox: Even as technology has become increasingly important in our lives, it has receded from view.

We are poorly equipped to recognize, let alone ponder or address, the challenges technology poses or the problems it could solve. Although our use of technology is increasing at a fast pace, there is no sign of a corresponding improvement in our ability to deal with issues relating to technology.

To take full advantage of the benefits and to recognize, address or even avoid some of the pitfalls of technology use, we must become better managers of technological innovations. We must become more technologically literate.2

The Technologically Literate Person

A technologically literate person recognizes that technology shapes society and has done so throughout history. In fact, many historical eras are identified by their dominant technological innovations—the Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Industrial Age and Information Age. Technology-driven change has been particularly evident in the 20th century. Automobiles have created a more mobile, spread-out society, aircraft and improved communication have led to a "smaller" world and eventual globalization, and improved sanitation, agriculture and medicine have extended life expectancy. A technologically literate person recognizes the role of technology in these changes and accepts the reality that the future will be different from the present largely because of technologies now coming into existence, from Internet-based activities to genetic engineering.

The technologically literate person must also recognize that society shapes technology as much as technology shapes society. There is nothing inevitable about the changes influenced by technology—they are the results of human decisions and not of impersonal historical forces. New technologies must meet the needs of consumers, business people, environmentalists and governments. A huge gas-guzzling SUV that consumers no longer buy might just as well never have been built. A genetically engineered crop that is banned by the government is of no value to society. Many factors shape technology, and technologically literate persons acting alone or in groups determine the direction of technological development.3

Technologically literate people are problem-solvers who consider technological issues from different points of view and relate them to a variety of contexts. They understand technological impacts and consequences, acknowledging that solutions often involve trade-offs and accepting less of one quality in order to gain more of another. They appreciate the interrelationships between technology and individuals, society and environment.

What Is Technology?

In its broadest sense, technology is the process by which humans modify nature to meet their needs and wants. However, most people think of technology only in terms of its artifacts: computers and software, aircraft, pesticides, water-treatment plants and microwave ovens, to name a few. But technology is more than its tangible parts. Equally important aspects of technology are the knowledge and processes necessary to create and operate those products, such as engineering know-how and design,
What Is Technological Literacy?

Technological literacy encompasses three interdependent dimensions—knowledge, ways of thinking and acting, and capabilities. Like literacy in reading, mathematics, science or history, the goal of technological literacy is to provide people with the tools to participate intelligently and thoughtfully in the world around them. The kinds of things a technologically literate person must know can vary from society to society and from era to era.

Individuals and the country as a whole would benefit greatly from a higher level of technological literacy. For one thing, people at all levels of society would be better prepared to make well-informed decisions on matters that affect, or are affected by, technology. For example, consumers must routinely decide whether to use particular products and, if so, how to use them. Technologically literate consumers would be able to make more critical assessments of technologies and, therefore, more informed decisions.

The Computer and Technological Literacy

Over the past 20 years, the computer has brought about the most profound changes in communication, and the exchange, storage, retrieval and dissemination of information. The effects of the computer on the workplace, global economic markets and education are incalculable. Not only have our ways of manufacturing expertise, various technical skills and the design, manufacture, operation and repair of technological artifacts.

RESEARCH & ADVOCACY: SHAKRANI PLAYS ROLE IN NATIONAL PROCESS

I have been a strong supporter of making technological literacy an integral part of education in our schools. More specifically, over the past six years I have advocated the need to evaluate the knowledge, skills and attitudes of our students toward technology.

In 2004, I participated in the development of a national Gallup Poll to shed light on Americans’ conceptual and practical understanding of technology as well as their attitudes and opinions about technology and its pervasive use in society. The poll’s findings indicated there is a consensus that technological literacy is an important goal for people at all levels and that schools should include the study of technology in the curriculum.

Also in 2004, I was appointed by the National Academy of Engineering and the National Research Council (NRC) to a 16-person international study panel to examine the status of technological literacy in our schools and the prospect of assessing it. The panel spent two years defining aspects of technology and technological literacy and making a strong case for raising the level of technological literacy in our schools. The panel concluded that, until technological literacy is assessed in a rigorous, systematic way, it is not likely to be considered a priority by policymakers, educators or the average citizen. In July 2006, the NRC published our panel’s findings and recommendations in a report, Technically Speaking: Approaches to assessing technological literacy.

Between 2006 and 2008, I worked with congressional staff, state educational agencies and national associations on advancing the cause of technological literate students who will become informed and productive adults in tomorrow’s technologically-based society and workplace. In 2008, at the request of the National Assessment Governing Board, I prepared an issue paper on a technological literacy assessment to serve as a springboard to guide the development of the first-ever national assessment in that subject, which will be administered in 2012.

Presently, I am a member of a national planning committee that is defining the assessment framework for technological literacy. This framework will articulate what students should know and be able to do in technology and will form the basis for the development of assessment instruments at grades 4, 8 or 12. I strongly believe that the study of technology should be accepted as not just a useful adjunct to other courses in our schools, but as a crucial component of a complete modern education for all.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A TECHNOLOGICALLY LITERATE PERSON

Knowledge

- Recognizes the pervasiveness of technology in everyday life
- Knows some of the ways technology shapes human history and people shape technology
- Knows that all technologies entail risk, some that can be anticipated and some that cannot
- Appreciates that the development and use of technology involve trade-offs and a balance of costs and benefits
- Understands that technology reflects the values and culture of society

Ways of Thinking and Acting

- Asks pertinent questions, of self and others, regarding the benefits and risks of technologies
- Seeks information about new technologies
- Participates, when appropriate, in decisions about the development and use of technology

Capabilities

- Has a range of hands-on skills, such as using a computer for word processing and surfing the Internet and operating a variety of home and office appliances
- Can identify and fix simple mechanical or technological problems at home or at work
- Can apply basic mathematical concepts related to probability, scale and estimation to make informed judgments about technological risks and benefits

“Technology has become so user friendly we hardly understand how or why it works or the implications of its use.”

**Assessing Technological Literacy**

Because of the pervasiveness of technology, an understanding of what technology is, how it works, how it is created, how it shapes society and how humans and society influence technological development is critical to informed citizenship. Technological choices influence our health and economic well-being, the types of jobs and recreational opportunities available—even our means of self-expression. How well citizens are prepared to make those choices depends in the larger part on their level of technological literacy.

Starting about 15 years ago, international and national organizations such as the International Technology Education Association (ITEA), the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) started calling on Americans to become savvier about technology. A case for technological literacy has also been spelled out in the National Research Council report, *Technically speaking: Why all Americans need to know more about technology*, which details the need for knowledge, understanding and capabilities related to technology among K–12 students.

No one really knows the level of technological literacy among people in this country—or, for that matter, in other countries. Although many concerns have been raised that American students or adults are not as technologically literate as they should be, these statements are based on general impressions with little hard data to back them up. In 2008, U.S. Congress, at the request of education and business leaders, decided that the starting point for
improving technological literacy in the United States must be to assess the current level of technological knowledge, understanding and capabilities among our students and how technological literacy varies among different populations of students.

The role of science and technology education for future generations is important for the future economic and social well-being of the nation. Educators must find new methods and approaches to make scientific and technological literacy a part of the education of all students so they can be better prepared to participate effectively in the changing workplace of the future. Yet today technological literacy is not part of the educational practices and policies of most elementary and secondary schools in America. Researchers and educators argue that present practices could leave our next generation ill-prepared for the technology-based workplace. This could happen if educational practices focus too heavily on the knowledge and skills our parents needed in the past rather than on the skills our children will need in the future. While it is still essential to ensure that their students are competent in the basic skill areas of mathematics and reading, it is equally important to ensure that these students are also ready to meet the demands of an increasingly technological and information-based society and workplace.

So, at the request of Congress, the U.S. Department of Education funded a project to develop the content framework and test specifications for the first-ever technological literacy assessment at the K–12 level. In 2009, a national committee of experts from across the nation worked on defining what students should know and be able to do in order to be technologically literate. In 2010 and 2011, these statements will be translated into appropriate grade-level assessments. In the spring of 2012, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which generates the biennial Nation’s Report Card in mathematics, science, reading and writing, is planning to administer an assessment of technological literacy. This would be the first time in the 40-year history of NAEP that technological literacy is tested. It will be delivered entirely via computer, which offers the potential to use assessment approaches not possible with traditional paper-and-pencil tests, such as audio, video and simulation to measure problem-solving and critical thinking skills (see figure).

The goal of NAEP in assessing technological literacy in grades 4, 8 and 12 is to provide policymakers, educators and the public with reliable and accurate baseline information about the level of technological literacy our students have achieved. The assessment results should provide a rich and accurate measure of the technological literacy that students need both for their schooling and for their future.

Preparing the Next Generation

It is essential that our students be technologically literate. The case for technological literacy must be made consistently in light of the pace of technological developments. As Americans gradually become more sophisticated with regard to technological issues, they will be more willing to support measures in the schools and in the informal educational arena to raise the level of technological literacy of the next generation.

In all its forms—computers, communications, energy, agriculture, medicine and transportation—technology affects everything we hear, see, touch and use. Using the technological literacy assessment results as a guide, we will discover how well our students are learning to understand and use these immensely powerful tools in the future.

NOTES
3. Ibid.
Say you’re 4 years old, ready to play a “trading game” beside another child you don’t know.

An adult starts by giving both of you a piece of paper called a “token.”

She says, “If you give me your paper token, then I will give this,” and places a fun-looking football sticker in front of you.

Cool, you think.

But wait. The other kid received more stickers than you did . . .

Will you accept the adult’s offer and—just as importantly—how do you feel about it?
Assistant professor of educational psychology Cary Roseth set out to explore the foundations of fairness by observing how more than 150 children, ages 3 through 8, reacted in scenarios like this last school year.

Developmental theory suggests that fairness, or how much we care about other people’s experiences in relation to our own, is a social concept that young children don’t really grasp until 5 or 6 years old. Or is it?

Roseth’s experiment showed that 3- and 4-year-olds also report “feeling sad” when they were offered fewer stickers than another child, even as they were still willing to trade their token for the sticker.

In contrast, the 7- to 8-year-olds refused to trade—much as most adults would if they were offered the same job as someone else for half the pay.

“Historically, young children were thought to be mostly selfish, either unaware or uninterested in other people’s experiences,” he said. “More recent work suggests the opposite—that young children are especially sensitive to social experience.

“For fairness, the developmental question is how children move from ‘feeling sad’ to caring enough about fairness to sacrifice personal gain? How does fairness become something so important that it guides how we think, feel and behave towards others?”

It’s the kind of question that keeps Roseth focused on peer conflicts in early childhood, searching for knowledge that may help parents and educators capitalize on the sometimes unpleasant but potentially important social experiences.

He argues many of the “negative” behaviors we try to help kids avoid, such as not sharing, being aggressive or leaving peers out, are inevitable situations that may actually help kids develop important social (and academic) competencies.

“We can’t assume they are all bad,” Roseth said. “In fact, they may represent the very experiences children need to develop fairness, cooperation and constructive conflict resolution.”

Therefore, his research raises some startling and even counterintuitive implications for how schools should—or shouldn’t—intervene when young children don’t get along.

**The Call to Question Nature, Nurture**

Roseth, who joined the MSU College of Education faculty in 2007, began his career in educational psychology by way of a private boarding school in Meriden, N.H.

He planned to spend just a year there after college while preparing to attend medical school. However, teaching Spanish, coaching three sports and the chance to influence positive change in teens got a hold of him, and he stayed for 9 years.

It was one moment with one student that eventually rekindled Roseth’s passion for science and, with it, a profound interest in psychology.

He was assistant headmaster, moderating a panel discussion about the school’s student leadership program when he asked “Carl,” one of the school’s best students, to explain what makes him a model leader. Dismayed, Roseth heard comments about being on time, following the dress code and so forth.

“He went through this list of very superficial requirements,” Roseth said. “I thought, what are we doing as a school when one of our best students equates the purpose of schools, by definition, is to help children reach their full potential. It can’t be a place where we get in the way of their natural tendencies.”

Assistant Professor Cary Roseth instructs his research team.
Cary Roseth’s latest study on youth peer relations began with undergraduate research participants this fall. He needs to test the experiment on college students before exposing younger students to the sensitive but all-too-common social dynamic in focus: rejection.

Cyberball, a computer game designed for psychological research, engages players in a virtual game of catch when, suddenly, the other players stop “throwing” the ball to the research participant. This allows researchers to document how young people might respond to feeling left out in the real world.

Undergraduate research assistants played an important role in the first phase of data collection, to which Roseth hopes to add elementary and early-childhood age groups starting in January. The research could generate powerful knowledge about the effects of social ostracism, and therefore constructive ways to address the issue—another form of conflict—in early childhood.

‘following the rules’ with model citizenship? Where was kindness, compassion, caring . . .?”

So Roseth pursued a master’s degree in educational psychology at University of Minnesota. He focused on issues of social development and peer relations in schools and received his Ph.D. from the same institution just three years later.

Research To Inform, Challenge Schools

Since then, Roseth has been leading a massive meta-analysis covering 100 years worth of studies on the effects of cooperative, competitive and individualistic goal structures.

Findings released in 2008 showed that 12- to 15-year-old students are more likely to have higher grades when they study in cooperative learning environments, or classrooms that promote positive peer friendships by encouraging students to work together toward common goals. Competitive environments, by contrast, can disrupt children’s ability to form positive peer relationships, which in turn may hurt their academic potential.

The research, conducted with colleagues at Minnesota, has since expanded to analyze data for preschool-

age through adult populations, including students with disabilities.

Meanwhile, Roseth has been no stranger to the classrooms where peer relations first develop. This past spring, he and his team of graduate and undergraduate researchers finished collecting video footage capturing more than 300 conflicts between children during free play in local Head Start programs.

With data analysis now underway, Roseth plans to compare the findings against a similar study he conducted with a more affluent, homogeneous population of 3- through 5-year-olds in Minnesota. And those results raised interesting questions for teachers.

If a teacher intervened, children were less likely to remain playing together immediately after a conflict (ranging from a disagreement over toys to a hitting match). If the children separated after a conflict, they were equally likely to reconcile with one another regardless of whether an adult attempted to remedy the problem.

“Not only are the children coming back together, they are doing so more frequently than if the conflict never occurred,” said Roseth, who has two sons in elementary school. “Rather than avoiding conflict, it may be the very mechanism by which preschoolers grow closer together.”

Along with video observation, the study also includes teacher questionnaires and interviews with kids to test theories about how their behaviors shift over time. Roseth said the most aggressive children in class at the beginning of the year often become the most well-liked by year’s end.

He urges educators to be open-minded—and perhaps more hands-off—in their approach to behavior problems.

“The purpose of schools, by definition, is to help children reach their full potential,” he said. “It can’t be a place where we get in the way of their natural tendencies.”
development coordination disorder (DCD) need to see themselves miss the target by larger margins in order to successfully modify their next attempts.

Coming to MSU will allow Kagerer to continue studying sensory-motor integration in school-age populations, relating his behavioral findings to brain mechanisms and their development.

“Before we design interventions, we need to better understand the interaction between motor behavior and control mechanisms,” he said. Konstantopoulos, who comes from Boston College’s Lynch School of Education, is also interested in teacher and school effects and the social distribution of academic achievement.

Spyros Konstantopoulos
Associate professor, Measurement and Quantitative Methods; Ph.D., University of Chicago
Originally from Greece, Konstantopoulos became passionate about designing effective research studies as an educational psychology student at Purdue University. “I really appreciated the importance of knowing the right tools to analyze your data, so I decided to continue in research methodology.”

He now applies his expertise in educational statistics to issues of experimental design and major questions of educational policy. One of his recent studies on the effects of small class size showed that high-achieving students may benefit more from the condition than peers struggling academically.

“I think people rush into making quick decisions about what works in education. But they don’t actually know, in some cases, what works or for whom,” he said. Konstantopoulos, who comes from Boston College’s Lynch School of Education, is also interested in teacher and school effects and the social distribution of academic achievement.

Kristin D. Phillips
Assistant professor, Teacher Education; Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison
Phillips comes to the college as an anthropologist eager to help teacher education students think more deeply about the role of schools in society.

With Assistant Dean John (Jack) Schwille, she is also leading the educational component of an MSU outreach project to address health, education and agricultural issues in rural Tanzania. Phillips’ background made her a strong fit. She spent two years in the African country’s Singida region for her dissertation, exploring how villagers participate in building new schools.

That work, supported by Fulbright-Hays and Spencer Foundation fellowships, illustrates Phillips’ interest in educational development in resource-scarce areas of the world. The best programs, she says, integrate efforts across areas such as education, health and food security. The MSU Partnership for Sustainable Community Development program in Tanzania takes a similar approach.

“It’s a unique opportunity to build on different skill sets, and that’s really exciting,” Phillips said.

Donna Scanlon
Professor, Teacher Education; Ph.D., University at Albany
Scanlon spent more than three decades at the University at Albany, where she became a leading expert on children’s reading difficulties and served as associate director of the Child Research and Study Center.

However, she says the time was right to move to an institution highly regarded for teacher preparation. Her research focus has shifted in recent years from the effects of early intervention and professional development to strategies for enhancing the knowledge and skills of pre-service teachers.

“Teachers often feel unprepared in regard to early literacy instruction,” she said. “This is a more exciting environment to work in because of the national reach.”

Scanlon, who is now affiliated with the MSU Literacy Achievement Research Center, co-developed the Interactive Strategies Approach (ISA) for teaching young students struggling to read based on years of longitudinal research with colleagues at Albany. She is now testing the ISA among aspiring teachers and hopes to make it more widely used.

Scanlon’s current projects also focus on improving the reading abilities of older children identified as learning disabled. She serves on an International Reading Association panel on response to intervention.
Counseling Professor Wins NAEd Research Fellowship

Matthew Diemer, an assistant professor of counseling, was selected as a National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow for the 2009–10 academic year. The program is intended to support scholars who are working on critical areas of education research early in their careers.

Diemer will use the two-year, $55,000 grant to continue his research on critical consciousness, which has suggested that a greater awareness of and motivation to change social inequalities helps marginalized youth overcome barriers to career preparation and obtain higher-paying, higher-status jobs in adulthood. Diemer now plans to conduct two longitudinal studies that will explore how critical consciousness affects marginalized youths’ engagement in politics and social movements.

The National Academy of Education (NAEd) is committed to supporting high-quality education research and its impact on policy and practice. The NAEd fellowship program was established with a grant from the Spencer Foundation. Visit www.naeducation.org and www.spencer.org.

Pivarnik Leads World’s Largest Exercise Medicine Organization

Kinesiology and epidemiology Professor James Pivarnik became president of the American College of Sports Medicine, the largest exercise medicine organization in the world, during the group’s annual conference in Seattle last May.

Pivarnik, who came to MSU in 1994, studies the exercise responses of females—particularly during pregnancy—and children, both healthy and those with chronic diseases. He recently helped the federal government create the first-ever physical activity guidelines, focusing on how much exercise women should get during pregnancy.

“Passing the gavel to Dr. Pivarnik is a privilege for me, because it’s placing the association in hands capable of sustaining our leadership in sports and exercise science while also building on the momentum we have on public health programs,” said outgoing ACSM president Mindy Millard-Stafford of Georgia Tech University. “Jim is a visionary, and he is fiercely dedicated and loyal to students, whom he sees as the future of these disciplines.”

ACSM has more than 20,000 members committed to the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of sports-related injuries and the advancement of the science of exercise. Visit www.acsm.org.

BOOKS

Department of Educational Administration Chairperson Marilyn J. Amey is co-editor, with Lori M. Reesor, of Beginning Your Journey: A Guide for New Professionals in Student Affairs (Third Edition), published in 2009 by the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA).

Roger Baldwin, professor of higher, adult and lifelong education, is editor of Improving the Climate for Undergraduate Teaching and Learning in STEM Fields, published in 2009 as No. 117 in the New Directions for Teaching and Learning series (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass).


Hale Professor John Dirkx is editor of Adult Learning and the Emotional Self, published in late 2008 as No. 120 in the New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education series (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass).

Associate professor of teacher education Guofang Li is editor of Multicultural Families, Home Literacies, and Mainstream Schooling, published in 2009 and including a chapter co-authored by College of Education Professor Patricia A. Edwards. Li also co-edited, with Liuhshing Wang, Model Minority Myth Revisited: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Demystifying Asian American Education Experiences. Both books were published by Information Age Publishing in Greenwich, Conn.

Melinda Mangin, assistant professor of K–12 educational administration, is co-author, with Sara Ray Stoebling, of Examining Effective Teacher Leadership: A Case Study Approach, published in late 2009 (New York: Teachers College Press).

Gary Sykes, professor of teacher education, and Barbara Schneider, John A. Hannah Distinguished Professor of Education, are co-editors, with David N. Plank, of the Handbook of Education Policy Research, published in spring 2009 (New York: Routledge and aera). Eighteen other MSU faculty members and graduate students contributed as chapter and commentary writers or reviewers, including Timothy G. Ford as lead graduate student editor.

KUDOS

The CEP 810: Teaching for Understanding with Computers course, created by outreach coordinator Carrie Albin and fellow faculty and staff from the Educational Technology Certificate Program, received first place among fully online courses in the 2009 Awards Competition in Instructional Technology, an MSU-based competition funded by AT&T. Visit attawards.msu.edu to learn more.

Sara Bolt, assistant professor of school psychology, currently serves as chair of the Diversity Issues and Testing Committee for the National Council on Measurement in Education. She also
IN MEMORIAM

William K. Durr, professor emeritus of elementary and special education, died March 13, 2009 at age 85. Durr came to the College of Education in 1955, after completing his doctorate at University of Illinois. At MSU, Durr contributed to revising the elementary education program and built his career as a noted reading expert. He was senior author of the Houghton Mifflin Reading Series, a widely adopted reading instruction program for grades K–8. One of the original organizers of the Michigan Reading Association, he also spoke about methods for teaching reading all over the world and was elected president of the International Reading Association. He retired in 1981.

Vandel C. Johnson, professor emeritus of administration and curriculum, died May 6, 2009 at age 95. A former teacher and superintendent, Johnson received his Ph.D. from MSU and served as dean of student affairs at University of South Dakota before returning to join the College of Education faculty in 1967. He stayed until his retirement in 1982, becoming one of the nation’s leading student affairs scholars during a time of tremendous growth for universities. Johnson was instrumental in developing the college’s doctoral program in higher education from its early years and later served as chairman of the Department of Administration and Higher Education.

William J. Walsh, professor emeritus of teacher education, died June 7, 2009 at age 86. Walsh specialized in science education, focusing on teachers’ methods and students’ motivation for learning the subject area over 30 years with the College of Education. He arrived from the Northern Iowa University faculty in 1956 and retired in 1986. An exemplary instructor, Walsh put great efforts into teaching elementary science methods courses and served as a science consultant to many school districts and organizations across the U.S. and abroad. He was named a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1965.

PROMOTIONS

TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
Mary Juzwik (Department of Teacher Education–language and literacy)
Christina Schwarz (Department of Teacher Education–science and technology)
Matthew Wawrzynski (Department of Educational Administration–HALE)

TO PROFESSOR
Angela Calabrese Barton (Department of Teacher Education–science and urban education)
Nell K. Duke (Teacher Education and Educational Psychology–literacy)

is an associate editor of the Journal of School Psychology.

College of Education graphic artist Emily Brozovic and communications manager Nicole Geary received a National Silver ADDY Award for the college’s 2007–08 Annual Report. The pair, along with Millbrook Printing of Grand Ledge, Mich., also earned ADDY awards for the publication at the regional and local levels of annual creative competition.

Cynthia Carver, assistant professor of teacher education, was elected to the Board of Directors for the Michigan Staff Development Council in spring 2009. The council works to improve the quality of professional learning for educators across the state.

Amita Chudgar, assistant professor of educational administration and educational psychology, serves as founding chair of the South Asia Special Interest Group, which became one of more than 15 such groups representing members of the Comparative & International Education Society in 2008.

The American Association of Adult and Continuing Education named HALE Professor John Dirkx as editor of the Journal of Transformative Education beginning in July 2009.

Assistant professor of K–12 educational administration Donald Peurach was an invited speaker at the Van Leer Education Conference in Jerusalem last spring. The workshop brought together international experts and ministry of education representatives from a dozen nations to discuss issues in education policy.

University Distinguished Professor Mark Reckase was elected to the Board of Trustees of the Psychometric Society, an international organization focused on advancing quantitative measurement practices in psychology, education and social science. His term expires in 2011.

Sharif Shakrani, professor of measurement and quantitative methods, is serving as chairman of a National Assessment Governing Board task force asked to recommend new, more uniform standards for testing English-language learners with the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) at the state and national levels.

BetsAnn Smith, associate professor of K–12 educational administration, has been a member of the Editorial Board for Education Administration Quarterly since fall 2008.

The College of Education sent eight doctoral students to China last spring. There was no official coursework involved, and the group did not conduct any research during the three-week stay.

Instead, they went to learn firsthand about the Asian superpower’s culture and education systems. More importantly, they came to recognize the importance of embracing international perspectives as scholars in education.

The new Doctoral Fellowship for Enhancing Global Understanding was created by Dean Carole Ames to immerse early-career researchers in the unique challenges of another country’s education policies and practices—an opportunity available to all College of Education doctoral students regardless of discipline.

The participants were able to gain insights relevant to their individual research interests, however, while interacting with faculty and graduate students at one of two partnering universities: East China Normal University in Shanghai and Southwest University in Chongqing. The University of Delaware and the University of Washington also were partners, with both institutions sending four of their doctoral students.

“We have made a commitment to internationalize our curriculum and programs in the College of Education,” Ames said. “It is very important that graduate, as well as undergraduate, students have opportunities to learn directly about the schooling, curriculum, policies, and traditions of other cultures.

The new fellowship was led by Dan Schultz, who has extensive experience directing study trips to China for Michigan educators and scholars.

After the successful first trip for doctoral students, Ames plans to continue developing long-term student exchange opportunities with the Chinese universities.

Two faculty members and ten students from Southwest University, including many who already formed strong bonds with peers in the College of Education, traveled to Michigan State University’s campus this fall and will stay until June.

These visiting scholars, whose expenses are covered by their institution, will be able to meet and share their expertise with a larger number of MSU students as they are immersed in learning about U.S. culture, educational systems and research approaches tied to their interests.

Meanwhile, Schultz said up to 10 College of Education doctoral students are being selected for a second study trip to China this spring. Fellows, who
receive a stipend for travel and housing from the college, will again tour Chinese cultural sites, visit school settings and interact with students, faculty members and leaders of Chongqing’s Southwest University.

Like the students who share their reflections on these pages, the next group of fellows can expect to experience more than a few eye-openers during the short journey—about their place in the world of education research and the world itself.

“This is a huge opportunity for these students,” Schultz said. “It’s the kind of thing that really changes people’s perspectives and their lives.”

I describe myself as a professional nomad. I have spent the last 10 years living, studying and working in different parts of the United States and abroad. My journey has been inspired by interests in cultural anthropology, Islamic studies and education. As an undergraduate, I spent time as a teaching assistant in India and later as a visiting student in Lebanon. Since coming to MSU in fall 2008, I have developed a focus in international education (Muslims and French schooling) and social studies/global education in K–12 American classrooms. When I first learned of the China trip, I knew I could not pass up the opportunity.

China offered the chance to glimpse a world I had come across only in passing. On a personal level, the experience allowed me to observe and participate in an emerging superpower at a local level. I felt privileged to develop warm friendships with graduate students and faculty alike. I learned about their lives, their country and their studies in education. I learned that educational trips (however short or long) have the potential to change an individual’s outlook on the world for the better.

As an educational anthropologist, the trip enhanced my thinking about the challenges of doing field research. I had the opportunity to observe an interview with Muslim students on campus, which revealed the politicized nature of working with ethnic minorities who don’t necessarily see eye-to-eye with the national government. On top of this, the interviewer ran into trouble with a different university that refused to allow him to work with Chinese Muslim students, preferring he interact with Muslim exchange students only. The challenges he faced required him to tailor his research project to fit cultural and institutional norms. Thus, sensitivity to culture and flexibility are important traits for travelers and researchers alike, something that has influenced my plans for researching Muslims in the French education system.

I see the study trip as an experience that helps bridge my past experiences with my future goals. My time in China provided me with the ideas necessary for conducting international research—a different dynamic than traveling, studying or working abroad. It highlighted the value of developing good relationships with faculty and graduate students who served as cultural and educational guides and with whom we shared our own culture. The value of studying abroad as a graduate student can’t be overstated, for it helped to foster my own intellectual growth as well as, I believe, the growth of my friends and colleagues in China.

“I have stayed in contact with several new Chinese friends since the comple-
tion of the program, which also offered opportunities for us to explore individual interests. My mentor arranged for me to visit the site of the annual “Gao Kao” (Chinese university entrance exam) in order to meet with testing organizers and representatives of the Ministry of Education. “Gao Kao” results have tremendous social and economic implications for all secondary school graduates in China. One of my research interests is the impact of high stakes testing on instruction, so this experience definitely stimulated ideas and questions for future research projects.

I am also interested in comparative education and the study of education systems in Eurasia. This trip gave us an opportunity to learn about how Chinese educators are coping with tremendous economic growth and social change occurring in China in recent years. I would say the eager engagement with the outside world displayed by our Chinese counterparts—the desire to learn how other countries cope with such challenges—is something to be emulated by us.

I now have a more realistic understanding of the potential challenges to conducting educational research in China, but I am also motivated by the vast opportunities. I am looking forward to hosting our Chinese colleagues here at MSU during fall 2009. They have set the bar high in terms of program quality and we will need to mobilize all our resources to make their experience in the U.S. as educational and enjoyable as our experience in China.

Wei Qiu (circled) with colleagues from MSU, Washington, Delaware, and China.

This trip was an amazing experience. Right from the start, leaders and faculty members from all five institutions showed extremely generous support and a deep commitment to global understanding. I must stress that without their support and commitment this exchange program wouldn’t have been possible (much less so successful!). This inspired all the doctoral students from the U.S. to work very hard to establish collaborative relationships with their American cohorts, Chinese peers and professors. I, too, was fortunate to make friends with students from Delaware and East China Normal University (ECNU), and to work closely with them on a research project about the development of students’ cultural competency.

As a native Chinese student, the trip back to China had special meaning for me. The neon lights in Shanghai are brighter; the paces are faster; the contrast between modern high-rises and colonial architecture along the banks of the Huangpu River has become starker. Discussing all these changes in China with American peers allowed me to see China and know China again. It made me realize that China is not a single country, but a country with many faces. The juxtaposition of old traditions and “fresh air” penetrates everything from architecture to food and is especially true in the terms of education. For example, our ECNU colleagues reminded us that education in China is not only shaped by Confucianism and Keju (the imperial exam system), but also interestingly tied with Western scholars such as John Dewey and movements like progressive education. What astounds me the most from this trip is the reminder that we must increase our efforts to promote global understanding in education, to respect differences and dispel misunderstandings, and to celebrate diversity.

Wei Qiu, on-site coordinator at East China Normal University; Ph.D. student, Educational Psychology and Educational Technology

“I now have a more realistic understanding of the potential challenges to conducting educational research in China, but I am also motivated by the vast opportunities.”

Todd Drummond, fellow at Southwest University; Fourth-year Ph.D. student, Educational Policy

“... we must increase our efforts to promote global understanding in education, to respect differences and dispel misunderstandings, and to celebrate diversity.”

Wei Qiu, on-site coordinator at East China Normal University; Ph.D. student, Educational Psychology and Educational Technology
Kinesiology doctoral student Lori Dithurbide is the recipient of a Fondation Baxter & Alma Ricard scholarship, which is renewable over three years and can amount to $50,000 (Canadian) each year depending on financial need. Students are selected based on academic excellence, leadership, civic pride and a commitment to the community.

Shannon Duvall, a Ph.D. candidate in higher, adult and lifelong education (HALE), was appointed associate vice president for development at Albion College in May 2009. She previously worked in University Development at MSU.

Emily Hill, a kinesiology Ph.D. student, received a student grant from the North American Society for Pediatric Exercise Medicine (NASPEM) to support her research on the relationship between cortisol levels and metabolic syndrome in obese adolescents.

D’Andrea Jacobs, a Ph.D. student in school psychology, was one of about 25 graduate students nationwide invited to attend the Quantitative Training for Under-represented Groups conference in Toronto last August. The conference was supported by the National Science Foundation and the American Psychological Association.

Damaris Mayenga, a K–12 educational administration doctoral student from Kenya, has received her second P.E.O. (Philanthropic Educational Organization) International Peace Scholarship for international women pursuing graduate studies in the U.S. or Canada. The award provides $10,000 for the 2009–10 year.

Tae Seob Shin, an educational psychology and educational technology doctoral student, received the Outstanding Paper Award as first author on a paper presented at the annual Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education (SITE) conference in March 2009. The co-authors of “Changing Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) though Course Experiences” include College of Education associate professors Matthew Koehler and Punya Mishra.

HALE doctoral student Julie Sinclair is serving as 2009 chair of the Recruitment, Admissions, and Preparation Knowledge Community for NAFSA: Association of International Educators. HALE doctoral student Katie Stolz received the Ally Award from the American College Personnel Association’s Standing Committee On Disability during the ACPA annual convention in spring 2009.

The Department of Kinesiology presented Ryan Flett with the 2008–09 Outstanding Doctoral Student Award and Marissa Siebel with the Outstanding Master Student Award during an awards ceremony last spring. In addition, the department’s Outstanding Senior Awards went to Maria Feldpausch and Kelly Matttran. Jillian Kwiecien, who will be a senior during the 2009–10 year, received the Community Service Award.
Evans was a first-generation college student studying social relations in the James Madison College at Michigan State University when she truly began learning about privilege, discrimination and the ways society can sidetrack people’s dreams.

“After that, I was really interested in figuring out what I could do, personally, to affect change. That was always something that was important to me,” she said. “But at the same time, I was really interested in doing research as well.”

In a dozen years since, Evans has accomplished both of those ambitions through a career in education.

Torn between academia and field work, she first returned to Detroit to teach in the public school system—one of the most important ways to liberate young people, she says. Then she became a scholar. Four years into her doctoral program, Evans has received the prestigious Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad fellowship to fund her study of education-related social inclusion policies taking shape in Brazil.

**A Productive Policy Climate**

Evans, whose advisor is associate professor of higher education Reitumetse Mabokele, collected initial data for her dissertation during a three-month trip to Brazil last summer.

The Fulbright award will allow her to spend an extended amount of time analyzing documents, observing
programs and talking to officials that are developing affirmative action and multicultural curriculum policies in Salvador, Bahia—a Brazilian city where more than 80 percent of the population has African ancestry. Afro-Brazilians are predominantly part of the nation’s lower class and, as a result, often lack opportunities for quality education.

The current policy climate is generating productive debates about how to increase Afro-Brazilians’ access to higher education and to implement school curriculum that more accurately reflects the population’s culture and heritage. But that hasn’t always been the case, Evans says.

“Brazil for so long has been seen by its own people and also people throughout the world as a racial democracy; that blacks, whites and indigenous peoples all get along—particularly in comparison to the U.S.,” she said. “And now we see the government acknowledging that there are problems and new policies are needed.”

As an early Ph.D. student concerned with the United States’ approach to inclusive educational programs and policies, Evans said she was especially intrigued once she started reading about the challenges in Brazil.

“The fact that they are taking it seriously was something I found very encouraging.”

She had also briefly studied issues of religious and cultural retention among Afro-Brazilians—and others in the African diaspora—as an undergraduate while participating in the McNair/SROP research program at MSU. “Back then, I just thought Brazil was a fascinating place—although not a place I actually thought I would get to.”

She leaves for the Fulbright fellowship, her fourth trip to Brazil, in December and returns in August 2010.

A Promising Career

After completing her B.A. in 1997, Evans received her teaching certification from the MSU College of Education and taught in Detroit elementary classrooms for four years. She also received a master’s degree in library information science from Wayne State University and spent two more years as a school librarian and middle school teacher.

Working in Detroit Public Schools gave Evans, a graduate of Detroit’s Renaissance High School, an opportunity to help students in her home community see past barriers to their own success—like others did for her. She didn’t grasp the possibilities of post-graduate education until she arrived at MSU.

“Once I got to college and I saw the professors studying injustices in the world, I loved what I saw,” she said. “One of the things I have learned about working in education is that you can always be connected with people, even when you are doing research.

“Now, I really want to reach people who are the decision-makers.”

When she’s not working on her dissertation, Evans has been actively contributing to a new U.S.-Brazil Joint Action Plan to Eliminate Racial Discrimination. The landmark agreement involves government agencies from both nations, as well as organizations, businesses and researchers committed to addressing issues faced by Afro-Brazilians and African Americans. Evans is developing a social networking site on Ning.com to help participants stay connected.

And Brazil is just the beginning. She is interested in studying the educational experiences of socially excluded Afro-descendants and indigenous people throughout many parts of the Western Hemisphere.
It is a privilege and an honor to serve you as the new president of the College of Education Alumni Association Board of Directors. I look forward to working with the Board of Directors and the many professionals in the College of Education who support the work of the COEAA. I would like to thank our immediate past president, Kathryn Rodgers, for her service and dedication. An enthusiastic Spartan, Kathy continues to serve on the Board of Directors.

Fall 2009 brought many changes to the COEAA Board. A big hearty thank-you goes out to Carol Arens and Margaret Weber. Both have fulfilled the two-term limit of service and will be greatly missed. Replacing them are Sabrina Smith-Campbell, educational consultant, and Dale Anne Hopkins, technology program consultant with the Rochester Community Schools. Don Patten, a teacher at Coopersville High School, has also joined the board to replace Kelli Sweet—thank you Kelli for your work with the COEAA. Finally, I would like to thank our undergraduate student representative, Annie Dalby, for her service and welcome Katie Cefaratti in her place.

As the first decade of the 21st century comes to a close, we face many challenges. Three “E’s”—economy, environment and education—dominate the news. In 2005, Thomas Friedman published *The World is Flat*; three years later, our world is not only flat, but hot and crowded as well! Among Friedman’s many observations is one very telling for us as educators. Education, innovation and technology are driving the economy and determining success. It’s easy to be overwhelmed and even paralyzed by the sheer volume of information that technology puts at our fingertips, but as global citizens, we can’t be. Each of us needs to carve out a way to make a small difference so that, collectively, we make a big difference.

The College of Education has been a leader in carving out ways to make a difference—both home and abroad. This fall, the college will enhance its partner programs with Detroit schools in a new facility on Woodward Avenue, the Urban Educators and Global Educators Cohort Programs continue to grow and succeed and the international outreach programs are too many to describe. (Check out http://ed-web3.educ.msu.edu/international/ for more information). Our College of Education has a long history of reaching out to build relationships to advance its mission of leadership, scholarship and service.

The role of the COEAA is to support the college in these endeavors as well as serve the needs of our alumni. In addition to awarding scholarships and recognizing distinguished alumni, the COEAA co-sponsors the Teaching and Technology Conference and sponsors the Mock Interview/Get a Job Conference. We also have the best Homecoming Tent on campus each fall and it was wonderful to see and visit with many of you back in October.

We do much, but we can do more. Joining the MSU Alumni Association and naming the College of Education as your constituent group is the beginning. Write to us. Send us your ideas. Apply to the COEAA board. Join the COEAA group at www.linkedin.com. If you are already an association member, please send us the name of a Spartan you know who isn’t. We will send that lonely Spartan a copy of the *New Educator* and a personal invitation to join us.

*To nourish or be nourished* is the Latin origin for “alumni.” It’s fitting to think of our role as alums of MSU and the College of Education in this way. We were all nourished by MSU and the College of Education as students and now as alumni. We can use our talents to reciprocate in some way.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Wendy Darga
Class of 1989 and 1992
Alumnus Kainnon D. Vilminot helped MSU advance in the NCAA basketball championship tournament this spring—even though he wasn’t on the court. Vilminot, who received his BS in kinesiology in 2008, helped keep Raymar Morgan in the game.

Morgan, MSU’s junior forward, was injured early in the second half of the game against Kansas after MSU teammate Delvon Roe went up for a block, accidentally elbowing Morgan when he came down. Morgan played the remainder of the game with a broken nose.

When Vilminot was at home watching the MSU-Louisville game, he noticed that Morgan was using an off-the-shelf protective facemask; but it appeared to be bothering him, so by halftime Morgan had taken the mask off and was playing without it. That prompted Vilminot, who is completing his prosthetics residency with Hanger Orthopedic Group in Lansing, Mich., to send MSU basketball’s certified athletic trainer Tom Mackowiak an e-mail at 11:00 that night, inquiring whether he wanted a custom-made mask for Morgan. By 8:30 the next morning, Mackowiak had consulted Tom Izzo and was calling Vilminot on the phone to take him up on the offer. At 4:00 that afternoon, Vilminot arrived at the Breslin Center to begin the process.

Vilminot cast, custom fabricated and custom fit Morgan’s facemask. First, a negative plaster mold was taken of Morgan’s face and used to create a positive plaster model. The anatomical facial structure of the model was sculpted to provide protection without compromising vision or function. Thermoplastic was then heated and vacuum-formed over the model. The shape and contours were finalized during the fitting process. Vilminot created three different masks using different polymers, which the basketball player could use interchangeably, so he’d be assured of the most comfortable fit and be able to give 100 percent to the game.

“Proper anatomical loading with total contact, total surface bearing, proper dispersion of forces kept our guy in the game,” says Vilminot. “And who better to help a Spartan than a fellow Spartan? It was awesome for me to be able to give back to MSU.”

Vilminot also created a facemask for Kelly Confer, pitcher for MSU’s softball team, after she broke her maxilla last spring. He earned an MS in prosthetics from Northwestern University in spring 2009 and will receive his MS in orthotics from Northwestern in October 2010.

Laura Luptowski Seeley
Orphanage Update

College of Education alumnus John Shinsky raised about $150,000 to support the Ciudad de los Niños orphanage during an amazing 18-day bike ride from East Lansing to Matamoros, Mexico last spring. You can learn how to help and read more about his journey with two fellow former MSU football players by visiting www.orphanagefundraiser.com. The orphanage, which was built to serve up to 120 children from the Matamoros community, officially opened in September.

Kara Daunt, BA ’96 (elementary education), was named elementary teacher of the year for 2008–09 in the Royal Oak, Mich. schools, where she teaches fourth grade at Helen Keller Elementary School.

Marguerite (Peg) Demmer, BA ’73 (elementary education), and members of the Demmer family received the 2009 Philanthropist Award from the MSU Alumni Association during the Grand Awards Ceremony on Oct. 15, 2009. Peg Demmer recently retired from teaching first grade at Keystone School in San Antonio, Texas.

Kelly Flynn, BA ’81 (secondary education—English and journalism), wrote a new book reflecting her experiences as a teacher, Kids, Classrooms, and Capitol Hill: A Peek Inside the Walls of America’s Public Schools. Flynn taught journalism in the Carman-Ainsworth school district in Flint, Mich. for almost 20 years. She spent seven years as an education columnist for The Flint Journal.

Gail Ganakas, BS ’71 (physical education), MA ’75 (educational administration), received the 2008–09 Women In Sports Leadership Award from the Michigan High School Athletic Association, Representative Council. Ganakas is executive director of community education and recreation for Flint Community Schools in Flint, Mich., where she has worked for 36 years.

S. G. Grant, Ph.D. ’94 (curriculum, teaching and educational policy) became dean of the School of Education at Binghamton University in Binghamton, N.Y. in July 2009. Grant previously served as associate dean of teacher education at the University at Buffalo.

Alana (Vaughan) Hallman, BA ’05 (elementary education), received the Distinguished Teacher Award for the 2008–09 year at Del Webb Middle School in Henderson, Nev., which employs about 85 teachers. Hallman teaches eighth grade science.

Cynthia S. Johnson, Ph.D. ’83 (college student personnel), received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) during its national conference last spring. Johnson was a faculty member at the University of Maryland, Teachers College Columbia University and California State University, Long Beach. She also held many leadership positions with ACPA and has contributed significantly to the student affairs literature and profession.

Gary L. Jones, MA ’68, Ph.D. ’75 (education administration), received the 2009 Friend of Education Award from the Virginia Education Association—becoming the first State Board of Education member to receive the high honor. Jones was appointed to the Virginia Board of Education in 2001 and served for eight years. A member of the College of Education Dean’s Advisory Board, Jones also previously served as Acting Secretary of Education in the Reagan administration and as Undersecretary of Education from 1982–85. He is now chief executive officer of Youth for Tomorrow, a private residential school and counseling center serving at-risk youth from the Washington, D.C. area.

Michael Maksud, Ph.D. ’65 (health and physical education), received the Alumni Professional Achievement Award from the MSU Department of Kinesiology during spring 2009. Maksud is dean emeritus at Oregon State University, where he led the College of Health
and Human Performance for 15 years. He also oversaw the Department of Physical Education at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee and has received many honors for his scholarly work.

**Stephen H. Marsden**, Ph.D. ’07 (K–12 educational administration), was named Assistant Principal of the Year for 2008–09 by the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals. Marsden is the assistant principal at Kettering High School in Waterford, Mich. and has more than 35 years of experience in education.

**Patricia Oldt**, Ph.D. ’86 (college and university administration), was inducted into the Michigan Association of School Administrators Hall of Fame (for Region 3), which recognizes retired superintendents who have shown outstanding leadership throughout their careers. Oldt, now a professor in Grand Valley State University’s College of Education, was superintendent of Northview Public Schools from 1993 to 2000.

**Amy Noelle Parks**, Ph.D. ’07 (curriculum, teaching and educational policy), has received a career grant worth more than $500,000 from the National Science Foundation to support her research on the role of cultural context in young children’s mathematical learning. Parks is an assistant professor of early childhood at University of Georgia.

**Vito Perrone**, BA ’54, MA ’58, Ph.D. ’63 (educational administration), (photo, right) was named to the Greater Lansing Sports Hall of Fame on June 25, 2009. Perrone was an All-American wrestler for MSU and a state championship–winning wrestling coach at Lansing’s Eastern High School before going on to hold faculty positions at Princeton and Harvard.

**Kevin A. Pollock**, Ph.D. ’01 (higher, adult and lifelong education), became president of St. Clair County Community College in Port Huron, Mich. as of April 1, 2009.

**Mike Radke**, MA ’74, Ph.D. ’81 (educational psychology) was named director of the new Office of Field Services in the Michigan Department of Education during summer 2009. Radke was assistant director for the department’s Field Services Unit in the Office of School Improvement since 2006.

**Steve Sharra**, Ph.D. ’07 (curriculum, teaching and educational policy), was invited to participate in the ASMSU Last Lecture Series for the 2008–09 academic year. Sharra, who spoke about the centrality of peace research in the university curriculum, focused on an African ethical concept called umunthu as a form of peace pedagogy. He is an educator and writer from Malawi who returned to MSU as a visiting assistant professor in the Peace and Justice Studies Specialization, Department of Philosophy.

**Bob Wood**, BA ’80 (secondary education–history), has received a national James Madison Fellowship, which will fund up to $24,000 toward a master’s degree supporting his work as a government teacher at Oakridge High School in Muskegon, Mich. Committed to making history and activism real for students, Wood has led several trips to the sites of major civil rights events in Selma, Birmingham and Montgomery, Ala.

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**Alumni Event in Chicago**

INTERESTED IN COMPARATIVE and international education? Want a chance to reconnect with or meet colleagues from MSU?

The College of Education will hold a special reception for alumni on Sunday, Feb. 28 to help kick-off the 54th Annual Meeting of the Comparative & International Education Society (CIES). MSU associate professor of teacher education Maria Teresa Tato currently serves as president-elect of CIES and is organizing the 2010 conference, which will take place March 1–5 at the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago, Ill.

CIES is the foremost professional organization in comparative and international education in the U.S. and abroad. The MSU College of Education’s involvement illustrates a continuing commitment to internationalization and active participation in the global economy.

Organizers are still finalizing activities for the MSU Alumni Day event. Visit www.cies2010.msu.edu for more information and registration, including a chance to provide input.
It was “Show-and-Tell” Day in Emily Stone’s fifth-grade class.

Brimming with excitement, one of her students performed magic tricks while his classmates watched. He finished his routine, and the class applauded while Stone marked her grade book.

The scene played out as in any other elementary school classroom, except for one key difference: neither Stone nor any of her students were in the same room.

In fact, they were all communicating live through the Internet, using webcams and microphones to see and hear each other from miles away.
Stone’s class was one of many offered by Commonwealth Connections Academy, a K–12 virtual school that connects teachers and students through online software, all free of charge. Stone, who worked from a Philadelphia teaching center from 2007 to 2009, used teaching programs to instruct and test her students participating from their homes all over Pennsylvania.

Instead of waking up to catch the bus, Stone's fifth-graders reported to their computer monitors every morning and connected with about a dozen other students and their teacher using Adobe Connect. Then, using microphones to chat and a virtual blackboard that both the students and Stone could control, they did warm-up problems, took pop quizzes and had discussions about the subject matter.

Using other programs, Stone was able to check e-mail from her students, make lesson plans and assignments, and mark each student’s attendance and grades. This information was also immediately available to her students’ parents, who could easily check their child’s progress with a few mouse clicks.

“I was always interested in using technology in teaching,” said Stone, who received her B.A. in elementary education from Michigan State University in 2005. As a student, she focused her studies on understanding and implementing technology as a tool for the learning process.

Patrick Dickson, a professor of educational psychology and educational technology in the College of Education, remembers teaching Stone during her senior year at MSU. He said “she stood out from the start.”

“Emily was ahead of the curve in realizing how important technology is becoming to teaching,” Dickson said. “She was always looking to the future.”

**Beyond Bricks and Mortar**

Technology’s impact on teaching is definitely growing. According to iNACOL, the International Association for K–12 Online Learning, 18 states now offer fully virtual charter schools serving 92,235 students, and that number is expected to rise.

The overall number of K–12 students engaged in online courses of some kind has increased 47 percent since 2006 to an estimated 1,030,000 students. Many districts are incorporating online learning as a way of offering classes that would otherwise be unavailable at the traditional “brick-and-mortar” schools, usually due to budgeting or staffing issues.

Since some of Stone’s students had emotional or behavior problems, they benefited from the uniquely personal and secure learning environment that she can provide. Stone conducted bi-weekly virtual conferences with each student and his or her parents as a way to continually monitor their development.

“You develop good relationships with the kids,” she said. “In a normal classroom, you don’t necessarily have a set time with each student where he or she can say whatever they want.”

Although Stone’s students had less social interaction with each other than in a traditional class, their computers did not limit their learning experience. Her class went on field trips and took standardized tests at hotels, which is where Stone was able to see her pupils face-to-face for the first time. There is an annual science fair, and her class even used a yoga DVD as a substitute for physical education.

Stone says that, despite the social limitations of online learning, her students become more self-motivated and technology oriented through her program.

But like with any cutting-edge technology, online learning has met resistance. Some claim that it takes kids away from districts and can put traditional teachers out of jobs.

“Teachers shouldn’t be afraid of being replaced,” said Stone, who recently completed her master’s degree in education with a concentration in technology and learning from the College of Education—online.

“The teaching role is just changing. You don’t have to be perfect, but you do need to be an expert at matching resources to kids, and the Internet is great for that.”

**A Frontier for the Future**

Stone no longer works for Commonwealth Connections Academy. She is currently looking to expand her passion for both technology and teaching in the Chicago area, where her family recently relocated.

She says a traditional classroom environment wouldn’t work for her.

“I feel like I would be frustrated because I wouldn’t be able to implement the things I want, like online tools and resources,” Stone said. “Online learning gives me more time to just be a teacher.”

Already an expert in teaching online and Web design, Stone says that she owes much of her success to the superior instruction she received at Michigan State.

“Students in the College of Education are very fortunate because MSU is a leader in teaching with technology,” said Dickson. “Her education and hard work opened many doors for her.

“Emily represents the kind of cutting-edge teachers needed to prepare students for a future of learning and working online. Her experiences teaching online show the power of the Internet to connect teachers and students outside the traditional classroom walls.”
Endowed Funds: Providing Financial Support of Students, Faculty, Programs

Each year, thousands of alumni and friends support MSU and the College of Education by contributing their time, talents, and money, in support of our students, faculty, and programs. Indeed, private philanthropy represents an enormous resource that has enabled the college’s outstanding faculty and student body to excel at teaching, learning, research and outreach.

Many donors to the College of Education have chosen to make a significant investment in the college by establishing a named endowed fund. This can be accomplished through gifts of current assets (cash, stock, etc.) or through future gifts incorporated into an estate plan or simply by way of bequest. An endowed fund is typically named for the donor or a loved one. Working with the development office, guidelines for the use of funds—an endowment agreement—is established with the college.

Endowed funds generate income for the college in perpetuity providing a stable source of funding for our students, faculty, and programs. At MSU, a named endowed fund can be initiated with a gift of $30,000 for undergraduate scholarships and $50,000 for graduate fellowships. The gift is invested by MSU, along with other endowed funds, and is never expended. The income from an endowed fund, in the form of interest, is a percentage of the principal, currently 5 percent, and is expended in support of the stated purpose of the endowment.

Many donors choose to use their endowed funds to support students at the graduate or undergraduate level. The Marian A. Dammon Scholarship established by Elanore Thompson and other friends was established to honor the life of its namesake who graduated from Michigan State College in 1929 and spent her life devoted to teaching English in Manchester, Farmington, and Lansing, Michigan. This scholarship provides financial support for student’s interested in teaching English and Creative Writing at the secondary level.

The Dr. Jacqueline D. Taylor and Family Graduate Research Grant was established by Dr. Taylor to provide up to two years of funding for doctoral students in the College of Education Higher Education Ph.D. program whose research focuses on global perspectives or issues of international education.

Faculty and program support may also be provided through endowed funds. The primary purpose of The Richard Stiggins Award in Classroom Assessment is to advance the college and the nation’s understanding of how to assure and how to provide high-quality pre-service preparation in classroom assessment for teacher candidates. Annual funding supports faculty research, field testing and conferences.

Other funds such as the Robert L. Ewigleben Endowment in Educational Administration provide students with the opportunity to participate in cutting-edge conversations on issues of policy and decision making with high-profile professionals in the field.

If you wish to explore the idea of establishing a named endowed fund or contributing to an existing endowed fund, feel free to contact me at (517) 432-1983.

Michelle Mertz
The College of Education gratefully expresses appreciation to the following donors who made gifts to the college between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009, 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 2008–09 College of Education Leadership Circle is made up of individuals who supported the efforts of the college in one of two ways: annual members who made a gift of $1,500 or more, and lifetime members who have provided significant support to an endowed fund. Lifetime members are denoted below in italics.

Carole Ames
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne J. Albers
Sally M. Atkins-Burnett
Roger & Nancy Bandeen
Joe L. Byers & Lucy Bates-Byers
John P. Beck & Ann E. Austin-Beck
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Languages: Conflicting Priorities?

Schools in the United States face a particularly acute paradox. On the one hand, our schools are the most linguistically and culturally diverse they have been since the turn of the 20th century. At last count, some 5.12 million children—around 10.5% of the total P–12 population—were officially classified as English language learners. This figure by definition excludes students who are already fluent in English and other languages, suggesting an even more multilingual student population. Additionally, 50 years’ worth of research on language acquisition, teaching and policy has enriched our understanding of how children learn languages, what teachers and schools can—and should—do to support the learning process, and the cognitive and social benefits of multilingualism. On the other hand, however, assumptions and myths about English and the role it should play in U.S. society and its schools are as dominant as ever.

Ofelia García of the City University of New York Graduate Center has labeled the policy responses to this paradox as a “schizophrenic double-bind.” A series of language education policies exist that restrict the use of non-English community languages. These policies ensure that acquiring English language and literacy comes at the expense of the home language. Meanwhile, a parallel set of policies exists to promote foreign languages, often in the name of economic competitiveness and national security. Schizophrenia results not only from these contradictory policy aims, but also from the fact that the community language to be displaced by English and the “foreign” language to be taught are often the very same.

These contradictions have only deepened since 2001. No Child Left Behind abolished the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 and effectively silenced any mention of bilingual education in federal education policy. Moreover, the figurative “war on terror” and the literal war in Afghanistan (and later in Iraq) rekindled longstanding anxieties about U.S. capacity in what the federal government calls “critical” languages—Arabic, Farsi, Hindi/Urdu, etc. This concern was illustrated by the response of the media, politicians and applied linguists in December 2006, to an Iraq Study Group finding that only six of 1,000 employees in the U.S. embassy in Baghdad were fluent in Arabic. Former President Bush attempted to address this anxiety with his National Security Language Initiative (NSLI) of 2006. NSLI serves primarily to re-organize many federal policies that support “foreign language” education. One example is the National Security Education Program (NSEP) and its Language Flagship initiative, which supports the Arabic Language Instruction Flagship at MSU. NSLI has received a good deal of criticism. One strand questions the effectiveness of policies formed in response to crises as opposed to long-term, methodical planning. Certainly, NSLI came under scrutiny because a deeply controversial president proposed it. However, these criticisms often forget that federal support for language education to bolster U.S. “soft power” has been a staple of Democratic Party policy stretching from Title VI of the 1958 National Defense Education Act to NSEP, which was legislated in the wake of the first Gulf War.

In fact, the U.S. has a long history of subordinating language education and use to national security. Jill Lepore of Harvard University has told the story of Abd al-Rahman Ibrahima, brought to the U.S. as a slave in 1788, but emancipated in 1807 in part for his Arabic literacy skills and sent to Liberia as a diplomat. “...the community language to be displaced by English and the “foreign” language to be taught are often the very same.”

This history extends into the early 20th century, as the U.S. exerted its influence over Latin America. One segment of the Spanish teaching community saw an opportunity and positioned Spanish language education as “patriotic” and part of U.S. hemispheric influence.

By contrast, the historical moments in which multilingual practice has in fact expanded in the U.S. have coincided with mass social struggles at the grassroots level. The Chicano, American Indian and African American civil rights struggles in the 1960s and 1970s, for example, ushered in a 30-year period of education policy and school-based practice that respected and fostered multilingualism. Much is known about the history of these struggles, less about the relationship between them and language education policy. But the lessons of those moments have much to offer in resolving the linguistic paradox of schooling in the U.S.
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