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PROVIDING CALM IN TURBULENT TIMES

Groundbreaking research and
scholarship in mental health

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Dear friends,



OUR NAME—THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT—was intentionally crafted to reflect the breadth of programs and research within our walls. Programs in human development and in education mutually support and complement one another. At the same time, a growing commitment to interdisciplinary scholarship is exploring commonalities across these areas.

Human development strives for healthy growth at all stages of life and in all aspects of life—physical, emotional, and psychological. Mental health professionals play a critical role in this process, and all but one of the preparation programs for mental health licensures at the University are housed within our college. These include counseling psychology, marriage and family therapy, and social work. In fact, social workers provide the majority of mental health services in the United States.

A number of licensures lead to careers in K–12 schools. These professionals—school psychologists, school counselors, and school social workers—provide the mental health supports that allow children to learn and develop to their fullest. As with teachers and educational administrators, licensure requires extensive fieldwork under the supervision of an experienced practitioner. In this issue of *Connect*, a number of our students share their observations from school-based practicums, as do students from marriage and family therapy and social work. As you will read, these hands-on experiences are building their confidence to succeed after graduation.

We also check in with a number of alumni who have taken what they learned at the college into K–12 schools and across the University. We also profile alumnus Howard Agee, who graduated with a teaching degree and went on to shape the way social work is delivered and funded in Minnesota. Our graduates never fail to make me proud.

I am also excited to share the groundbreaking work of our faculty, including scholarship related to childhood resilience. Our college is uniquely positioned to examine the ways in which children and families develop coping and decision-making skills at an early age that will serve them well throughout their lives. By bringing together the work of faculty from the School of Social Work, the Institute of Child Development, and the Department of Family Social Science, this research is a prime example of how the College of Education and Human Development is greater than the sum of its parts.

With pride in our faculty, staff, students, and alumni,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean K. Quam". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jean K. Quam, *interim dean*

connect

Vol. 3, No. 1 • Spring 2009

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cehd.umn.edu/pubs/connect

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Photo of Jean Quam by Greg Helgeson.

Connect magazine is published three times a year by the University of Minnesota College of Education and Human Development for alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the college. Send correspondence to the editor, 105 Burton Hall, 178 Pillsbury Drive S.E., University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455. For address corrections, call 612-625-1310.

This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. Contact the editor at 612-626-5650 for more information.

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
+ HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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The College of Education and Human Development is a world leader in discovering, creating, sharing, and applying principles and practices of multiculturalism and multidisciplinary scholarship to advance teaching and learning and to enhance the psychological, physical, and social development of children, youth, and adults across the lifespan in families, organizations, and communities.

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The feeding tube?

BY DEANE MORRISON

A KINESIOLOGY PROFESSOR has discovered a link between TV viewing and future eating habits in older adolescents.

Teens who watched much more television than their peers were likely to have worse eating habits in young adulthood, according to a study led by assistant professor **Daheia Barr-Anderson**, published online in the *Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*. The findings garnered widespread interest, including stories in the *Washington Post* and multiple television appearances.

Barr-Anderson and colleagues in the School of Public Health surveyed 1,366 Twin Cities adolescents on their TV viewing habits at the average age of 15.9 and on their eating habits five years later. They discovered that the quality of diet decreased as TV watching increased. For example, the total daily servings of fruits and vegetables ranged from 3.41 among limited viewers (less than two hours of TV per day) to 2.53

for heavy viewers (five or more hours of screen time), as opposed to the nine servings that are generally recommended.

“There are lots of individual, social, and environmental variables at work,” says Barr-Anderson. “But even though the intake of fruits and vegetables was suboptimal [for study participants] to start with, they were even lower for those watching a lot of TV.”

Study participants were getting more of what they didn’t need, though. Weekly visits to fast food outlets increased from 2.03 to 2.33 over the five years; daily servings of snack foods rose from 1.93 to 2.20, and daily servings of sugar-sweetened beverages grew from 1.14 to 1.33.

Several possibilities may exist for



the correlation between TV watching and future diet. For example, repeated exposure to advertising for unhealthy foods may have an impact, Barr-Anderson speculates. She cautions that more investigation is needed to pinpoint a culprit, however.

Parents who want to guide their children toward healthier habits should limit TV viewing and monitor the types of food they eat, says Barr-Anderson, while watching their own habits. “Until it becomes the norm in the family not to sit in front of the TV for hours or eat junk food, it’s not going to change.”

Shout outs for justice

THIS FALL, UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS in the social justice minor broadcast their take on the social and cultural norms that create inequities in society. In 35- to 60-minute podcasts, student teams wrestled with complex topics such as the values of whiteness, barriers created by religion, access to water as a matter of justice, and public subsidies for commercial development.

Teams of five students recorded individual podcasts, with one member serving as a director and editor, adding music, sound effects,

narration, and other elements to create a cohesive whole. The students played their recordings for University community members, with the goal of collaborating with listeners on possible response actions.

[Listen to student **Brittany Libra’s** podcast, “They’re Not Talking About Me.”]

Lisa Arrastia, a community instructor in the School of Social Work, designed the assignment—entitled The Cultural Biography of a Thing—to be an act of critical

learning. “I believe ‘social change’ comes out of producing great shifts in attitude, belief, and imagination,” she explains. “Students need opportunities to dream differently while using social theory and the experiential to understand the kind of work that’s needed in various communities.”

Besides the recordings, Arrastia’s students created new media and public art installations that prompted them to contend with their own social conditions. The projects help satisfy the service learning requirement embedded in each of the social justice minor’s courses.

Legislative challenges in 2009

BY RICHARD WASSEN

THE 2009 SESSION is hardly business as usual for the Minnesota State Legislature. The severe state budget deficit and uncertainties related to the federal stimulus create major challenges for legislators. Targets are moving, and the complexity of the task is increasing. Predictions of the need for a special session—beyond the scheduled adjournment of May 18—are growing given these challenges and the different approaches of our executive and legislative branches.

The potential impact on our college from policies related to K–12 and higher education, as well as human services, require us to be involved. We do this by communicating the value of the work we do in education and human development disciplines.

Our efforts seem to be paying off for legislators who frequently use research in their decision-making. (The chair of a legislative committee referred to a college faculty member as a “treasure” after his testimony during a public hearing.) This presence has also improved recognition of the college’s value.

To date in the 2009 session, faculty and staff have testified at legislative hearings or participated in work groups on topics including:

- + school accountability
- + struggling readers
- + revising the state assessment system
- + finding ways for schools to share services
- + improving college readiness for high school students
- + expanding early childhood education

- + improving the effectiveness of teaching
- + linking social services to schools
- + creating new opportunities for learning in science, math, and technology
- + articulating the value of school counseling
- + solving educational disparities
- + addressing the problem of childhood obesity
- + reforming school finance

A grassroots group of community stakeholders is advocating with legislators for a research center in the college that would provide even greater access to faculty/staff expertise. The college is promoting an interdisciplinary institute to meet this need. Many policy issues cross disciplines, and linking them through a shared research center will assist decision makers in addressing complex challenges in education and human development.

As the session progresses, the college’s Office of Research and Policy will continue to articulate the value and needs of the college, where appropriate, and to advocate for the use of our research and expertise. Friends and alumni may wish to contact their legislators to express their support for the college and the University. Legislative information is available at: www.leg.state.mn.us. Contact Richard Wassen, r-wass@umn.edu, external relations liaison in the Office of Research and Policy, with any questions about the college’s interaction with policymakers.

Deno tops AERA research

AN ARTICLE PUBLISHED in 1984 by educational psychology professor **Stan Deno**, co-authored with former students Lynn Fuchs and Phyllis Mirkin, is the most frequently cited article in the field of educational research in more than 50 years, according to the American Educational Research Association. Deno’s article, “The Effects of Frequent Curriculum-Based Measurement and Evaluation on Pedagogy, Student Achievement, and Student Awareness of Learning,” is considered seminal in the field of special education.

Curriculum-based measurement provides those who teach children with learning disabilities with a simple set of evaluation procedures that allow them to track a child’s academic progress. Research and testing have shown this approach to be among the most reliable tools for accurate measurement and evaluation of academic development, both to compare students to one another and to chart individual student progress. Curriculum-based measurement enjoys support from the U.S. Department of Education and has been the measurement and assessment tool of choice in numerous federally funded studies.

A detailed description of this research was featured in the college’s publication *Research Works*, most recently updated in 2005 and archived online.

IMAGINE BEING A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT, getting handed an iPod Touch, and told to go do your homework. Such was the assignment for students in Roosevelt High School's Digital Media Studies program, who used Google Maps and a built-in GPS to map their Minneapolis neighborhood.

Known as DigME, the new learning community gives students a chance to work with the kind of audio, video, and computer technologies that are shaping society. The program, which was the brainchild of Roosevelt English teacher Delainia Haug and Dean of Students Damien Poling, tapped the expertise of faculty and students from the College of Education and Human Development.

The DigME curriculum emphasizes using critical thinking and hands-on technical skills across subjects. For example, while students mapped their neighborhood for teacher John Wood's 9th-grade geography class, they also worked with artist Wing Young Huie to document the area via digital photography. In social studies, they evaluated data about neighborhood crime and used digital tools to evaluate neighborhood water quality for science class.

DigME students also create audio, video, blogs, and wikis—essentially online collaborative communities. In the process, students learn essential group work skills, along with organizational, management, and communication abilities, Haug explains. Teaching students to use the Internet responsibly and critically also develops creative and independent thought, she adds.

Research shows that people will need critical media literacy to succeed in 21st-century society, says Haug, who has discovered a significant gap in digital literacy among the students in DigME. At the start of the school year, the skill level ranged from those who knew how



Educating for the 21st-century

BY DIANE L. CORMANY

to write html to some who didn't know how to send an attachment with e-mail.

"Our kids come from backgrounds where they don't have access [to digital technology] outside of school," Haug explains. "It's our obligation to provide them with access."

Roosevelt's student body comprises many lower income students and English language learners. About one-third of DigME's 150-plus students do not have a computer in the home. The program recently acquired 30 laptops, along with the iPod Touches.

"There is a social justice aspect to the program," says curriculum and instruction professor **Cynthia Lewis**, who helped Haug shape DigME's goals and leads the partnership with the University. Lewis and her colleagues intend to research how the digital media curriculum helps drive achievement, persistence, and postsecondary plans.

Students faced a steep learning curve during the fall term but are starting to make the media their own, says DigME program coordinator Poling, who is pursuing his M.Ed. at the college. "They're engaged when they're working with the technology. It's been huge leaps for them as far as what they're used to." Roosevelt

Principal Bruce Gilman and Executive Director of Technology Coleen Kosloski have likewise been critical to getting DigME off the ground, says Lewis.

DigME also helps students realize that college attendance is possible. In October students visited campus and attended seminars related to digital media in the classroom, in the arts, and in the workplace. The visit helped fulfill the University's commitment to connecting with diverse potential students, as well as Minneapolis Public Schools' goal to prepare every student for college.

In addition to Lewis's ongoing work, Rick Beach, Aaron Doering, and Cassie Scharber from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Shayla Thiel-Stern from the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, along with doctoral students Jessica Dockter and Candance Doerr, have offered ongoing professional development.

"[University of Minnesota faculty and students] have been absolutely a huge part from the ground level," says Haug. "If we need something we can call them, and they'll help us find it, or they'll come in and help us hash things out."

Forum blends reading research with policy

ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS IN JANUARY, a group of about 100 hearty representatives from Minnesota's K–12, policymaking, and University communities gathered for the third CEHD Policy Breakfast, which covered the topic of reading, teaching, and learning. Cathy Roller (Ph.D. '79), director of research and policy at the International Reading Association, provided the keynote address, *Reading as a Gateway: Success in Work and Postsecondary Readiness*. For a Minnesota perspective, **Deborah Dillon**, Guy Bond Chair in Reading and a co-organizer of the breakfast, presented reading research and initiatives in the state.

Roller, who is one of the college's 100 Distinguished Alumni, focused on the necessity of informing policy with research to help define outcomes and ensure success. However, she cautioned that research must be structured correctly and coordinated or else proven approaches won't work. To illustrate her point, Roller reviewed the findings of a number of recent large-scale interventions that each had their upsides but suffered from inconsistencies in implementation and results.

"You can know what needs to be done; you can try to do it, but it really comes down to what the teacher does in the classroom," Roller said, emphasizing the importance of professional development.

Roller also cautioned against looking for one solution for all readers. Coaching was shown to be effective with average level and upper level readers, for instance, but did not have an impact on the lowest performing students, she said. "This is a warning,"

Roller said. "An intervention can only do what an intervention can do." Some students need additional support, such as one-on-one tutoring, she added.

Finally, Roller reviewed two separate studies on teacher preparation, including findings that explicit teaching at the university level translates directly to classroom practice. She emphasized the need for early and ongoing practicums tied directly to reading. Giving future educators direct experience with how children learn can have a powerful effect, she explained.

Dillon's presentation reinforced Roller's conclusions about teacher preparation. She reviewed work happening across Minnesota in regards to reading research and teaching and learning, including the Minnesota Reading Teacher Standards recommended by the Board of Teaching Task Force, workshops for higher education, and professional development in the K–12 community.

She and Roller then joined other

reading experts from across the college—**Lori Helman** (curriculum and instruction), **Jeanne Higbee** (postsecondary teaching and learning), **David O'Brien** (curriculum and instruction), **Kristen McMaster** (educational psychology), and **Ross Moen** (Institute on Community Integration)—to respond to questions. **Deb Peterson**, acting co-director of the Minnesota Center for Reading Research and co-organizer of the breakfast, served as moderator. Topics included effective approaches in other states, dedicated reading coaches, professional development, and the role of diversity in teaching standards.

The Policy Breakfast Series, sponsored by the CEHD Office for Research and Policy, focuses on data and new knowledge derived from research to inform policy in education and human service. Full audio of the January breakfast and copies of Roller and Dillon's presentations are available online at cehd.umn.edu/policy.

[Watch a slideshow of the exhibit]



Changing Landscapes, sponsored by the Institute on Community Integration, features a revolving display of artwork by visiting artists with disabilities. The current exhibit by artists from Interact Center for the Visual and Performing Arts will be on display in Pattee Hall through the end of April. Look for a new exhibit by VSA Arts of Minnesota later this spring. Details at <http://ici.umn.edu/news/art/default.html>
Untitled, by Nymeh Tuazama

Ask and you shall receive

COGNITIVE ENGAGEMENT BOOSTS READING ACHIEVEMENT

BY SARAH ASKARI

ENGAGED LEARNERS are successful learners. But how do teachers ensure that a classroom filled with beginning readers becomes one filled with enthusiastic, proficient readers? It may be a matter of asking the right questions.

At the *Minnesota Center for Reading Research (MCRR)*, director **Barbara Taylor** and **Deb Peterson**, her frequent co-author, discovered a critical difference in outcomes between teachers who use primarily lower-level questioning and those whose questions elicited higher-level cognitive responses. The cognitive engagement model, a framework for reading instruction, encourages teachers to stimulate discussions with high-level questions; to coach and model rather than lecture; to explicitly teach strategies for reading comprehension; and to encourage every child to read, write, and share their work.

In a 2003 study of reading instruction at nine high-poverty schools across the United States, students of teachers who practiced the cognitive engagement model showed more growth in reading fluency and comprehension from fall to spring than those in other classrooms.

“The more [cognitive engagement] occurs, the more achievement students have in reading, and that’s true for all students—the English language learners, the special ed students, the gifted and talented students,” says Peterson. “K–6, the more we see higher-order talk about text,

the more growth and achievement students have in reading.”

Even more promising, the use of a cognitive engagement model has helped students who are not reading at grade level to catch up. “In many of the schools we’re working in, children are coming in significantly below national norms. We try to accelerate their growth so they’re making more than a year’s growth in a year’s time,” says Peterson.

Prompting thinking

Low-level questions involve factual recall, explains Peterson, who, along with educational psychology associate professor Matthew Burns, is MCRR acting co-director while Taylor is on sabbatical. When students answer with recitations of fact, only minimal thought or engagement is required. To reach early readers, classroom instruction must also engage higher-level thinking.

“Higher-level questions look at a bigger theme and make connections between what the students are reading and their real lives,” Peterson says. “For instance, friendship might be a story’s theme. Some higher-order questions might be, ‘Have you and your friends been in a situation like the one in the story? How did you resolve it? If you were this character, what would you do, and why?’”

Of course if you surprise children with sophisticated questions, you might get blank stares. Teachers can guide

their students by modeling possible responses. By thinking out loud, they demonstrate the process that takes place in the critical mind. For example, Peterson says, “You can tell your students, ‘If someone were to ask me that question, I might answer it this way. Now you think about it, and write about it, and we’ll come back and talk.’”

The goal is for all students in the classroom to be occupied in reading, writing, or talking in small groups. But to build up their own ideas, they need direction and encouragement. By prompting students to elaborate on their responses and to take the next creative step by making connections to what they have read, teachers can keep their students’ immersed in the learning experience. Eventually, focused students will write their own engaging questions that can be used in student-led discussions or book clubs.

Research in action

Many teachers in Minnesota learned to use the cognitive engagement model in the past eight years through Reading First, a federally funded, reading-reform initiative. As part of their training, they were taught to reflect upon their own classroom instruction, compare their actions to the approach supported by the cognitive engagement model, and make changes accordingly.

Jenny Mortimore, St. Paul’s Reading First district literacy coordinator, observes that students in classrooms where the teacher uses the cognitive



engagement model grow at measurable levels in their vocabulary knowledge and comprehension skills. “English language learners also benefit from focused modeling and discussion, expanding their vocabularies and their capabilities to articulate their thinking,” she says. “It is an avenue to the development of life-long critical thinkers.”

At one of the Reading First schools—Woodcrest Elementary School in Fridley—educators have studied higher-level questioning over the past four years. Now the teachers use the method not just in reading instruction, but throughout the day, says Judi Kahoun, Woodcrest’s principal. “We have seen

that all students benefit, leading to deeper thinking about the text and an increase in comprehension scores.”

Deepening connections

Schools that have spent the last few years working with MCRR to adopt the Reading First reformation are now in a “sustaining” mode in which they undertake such reflection, comparison, and change on their own, as an ongoing practice.

The MCRR continues to spread the word about its discoveries through professional development workshops for teachers, school teams, and reading coaches. Through its studies

on schoolwide reading reform, the MCRR staff can provide schools with information on effective reading instruction and school-wide reading reform that is validated by research and proven in local schools.

“Our mission is to bridge research with practice,” says Peterson. ●

For more information

Deb Peterson, 612-626-9360, peter328@umn.edu; <http://cehd.umn.edu/Reading/>

A stylized illustration in shades of green and yellow. It depicts a woman in a dress holding an umbrella, standing in the rain. The rain is represented by numerous diagonal lines falling from the top left towards the bottom right. The woman is on the left side of the page, and the umbrella is open over her. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

Success stories

FACULTY ACROSS THE COLLEGE
PLUMB CHILDHOOD RESILIENCE

BY SUZY FRISCH

IT'S A QUESTION that has puzzled child development experts for years: Why do some children in stressful situations manage to cope—and even thrive—while others lag emotionally and academically?

Homelessness, domestic violence, and exposure to trauma are all too frequent for some children. These situations, whether temporary or chronic, can compromise a child's development and lead to struggles in school or in life.

But that's not always the case. Several researchers at the College of Education and Human Development have been studying why some youth can withstand and overcome stress or trauma. They want to know which factors and supports contribute to childhood resilience. The answers, they hope, will help other children develop the same hardiness.

Child-development experts agree that the support of parents or other caring adults is the key factor that helps children thrive even during tough times. "It's extremely reassuring if these people are present and kids can depend on them, if they are setting a good role model of being calm and carrying on," says **Ann Masten**, Distinguished McKnight University professor in the Institute of Child Development. "It's crucial for children to be around people they feel closely connected to. It gives them a sense of security."

Masten has also determined that executive function skills—self-regulation abilities such as following rules, ignoring distractions, and controlling impulses—can

help homeless and other high-risk children succeed.

She has teamed with Minneapolis Public Schools and two emergency shelters in the Twin Cities to study homeless and highly mobile children. Last year the district served nearly 5,500 such children, a number that has climbed steadily upward since 2003 and is expected to rise more steeply in the coming year.

Overcoming homelessness

In one study Masten and fellow researchers found striking achievement gaps between a group of homeless and highly mobile children when compared to a group of advantaged youth and a group from low income backgrounds. That wasn't unexpected. But what surprised Masten and Elizabeth Hinz, Minneapolis Public Schools liaison for homeless and highly mobile children, was how well some of these vulnerable children performed.

The results provide a teaching moment for school officials. "It's really critical that people working with these kids see the incredible variability of how they do in school," says Hinz. "It's so easy to stereotype them. But it's important to take a step closer to look at the detail of the individual kids."

In a study to be published in the *Journal of Development and Psychopathology*, Masten and her team reported that children with advanced executive function skills performed better academically and behaviorally. "These kinds of self-control skills appear to be very important, particularly for children in a crisis situation, because their world is already difficult," Masten explains. "These skills really make a difference for these kids."

The good news is that executive function skills can be taught, offering children with varied life experiences a strong foundation for success in school. Kindergarten and first grade serve as important windows for intervention, proving once again that resources spent early in a child's life provide a high return on investment, Masten says.

School as security

The school setting can provide an important sense of stability for homeless and highly mobile students. To be successful, it's critical that children feel they have a safe haven where they can be with trusted grown-ups—whether that's school, home, or a friend or relative's house, explains **Jane Gilgun**, a professor in the School of Social Work. When children feel safe and secure,

they will function quite well despite the stress they are experiencing.

The daily school routine can be comforting, and children can garner support and nurturing from teachers, friends, and other educators, including counselors and coaches. The continuity of these relationships and routines can bring order to the chaos of a child's life and sustain her spirit.



JESSIE EVERTS



JESSIE EVERTS *Ph.D. candidate, marriage and family therapy, Department of Family Social Science*

“You can’t help children without helping their families,” says Jessie Everts, a third-year doctoral candidate in the marriage and family therapy program.

Everts is a school therapist for the Mental Health Collective in North Minneapolis, where she provides preventative mental health services to children ranging from kindergarten to eighth grade. Her work has helped her clients improve school behavior, grades, and attendance.

“I also have contact with their parents and even their siblings,” she says. “Schools are often a good access point for families.”

The work is part of a practicum required for Everts’ degree. Like all doctoral candidates in her program, she is already a licensed marriage and family therapist. She previously worked as a family therapist in what is now called the Emily Program (which provides comprehensive psychological, nutritional, and medical care for individuals with eating disorders) and at Broadway Family Medicine Clinic in Minneapolis.

Everts says many of the children she works with have witnessed or experienced family violence, and many experience homelessness and high mobility. She worries that her clients may not get the ongoing support they need as the economy worsens.

“Even the future of school-based services relies on government grants and funding and may disappear with the economic downturn,” she explains.

Everts, hopes to continue working with children and their families after she graduates in 2010.

“I knew I wanted to work with kids, it was just a matter of choosing the route,” she notes, explaining that working primarily with children via marriage and family therapy is atypical.

—Brigitt Martin



Being supportive doesn’t mean lowering standards because of a student’s life circumstances, however. “We emphasize that kids need emotional support and understanding, but the one thing they really, really need from teachers is to keep expectations for them high,” explains Hinz. “It’s the teacher’s role to help students figure out a way to put [their troubles] aside.”

Parents can supercharge their children’s resilience—psychologically and academically—by getting involved in their education, according to Masten’s findings. They can do so, for example, by stressing the importance of school, staying in touch with teachers, and helping children with their homework.

They can take these steps even if they were poor students or they don’t speak English, Masten says. “Parents can make a huge difference in the success of their children at school even in the middle of a crisis,” she adds. “The value they convey to their children that school is important and the quality of the relationships they have with their children really matters.”

Outlasting abuse

For children who have witnessed violence at home or who have experienced it personally, supportive adults are similarly essential.

“Parents are the single most powerful protection for children,” says **Abi Gewirtz**, assistant professor of family social science, citing a study she conducted with social work professor **Jeff Edleson** on resilience in children who had been exposed to domestic violence. “Parents who can remain effective even under conditions of extreme stress have children who are protected significantly more.”

At the Ambit Network (formerly the Minnesota Child Response Center) Gewirtz trains school social workers, mental health professionals, and community organizations



on how to help parents assist their children. She suggests five powerful parenting tools: teaching kids to solve problems, being positively involved in their lives, spending enjoyable time with them, using effective discipline, and monitoring what your children are doing and with whom.

In addition, parents should encourage and discipline their children with positive reinforcement. “Catch them being good,” Gewirtz says, advising parents to make five positive comments for every negative statement.

Shelter in the storm

How domestic violence affects children depends on the frequency of their exposure and the severity of the event(s). But in all cases, parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents, teachers, or neighbors can lessen the impact, says Edleson, director of the Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse.

Other protective layers come from the absence of certain elements in a home, such as alcohol abuse or firearms.

With older children, it’s important to find out directly how domestic violence is shaping them. That’s why Edleson and some of his students created the Child Exposure to Domestic Violence Scale, a downloadable tool for 10- to 16-year olds. The youths can self-report what they experienced and its aftershocks, giving the professionals who work with them more insight on how to best help them cope.

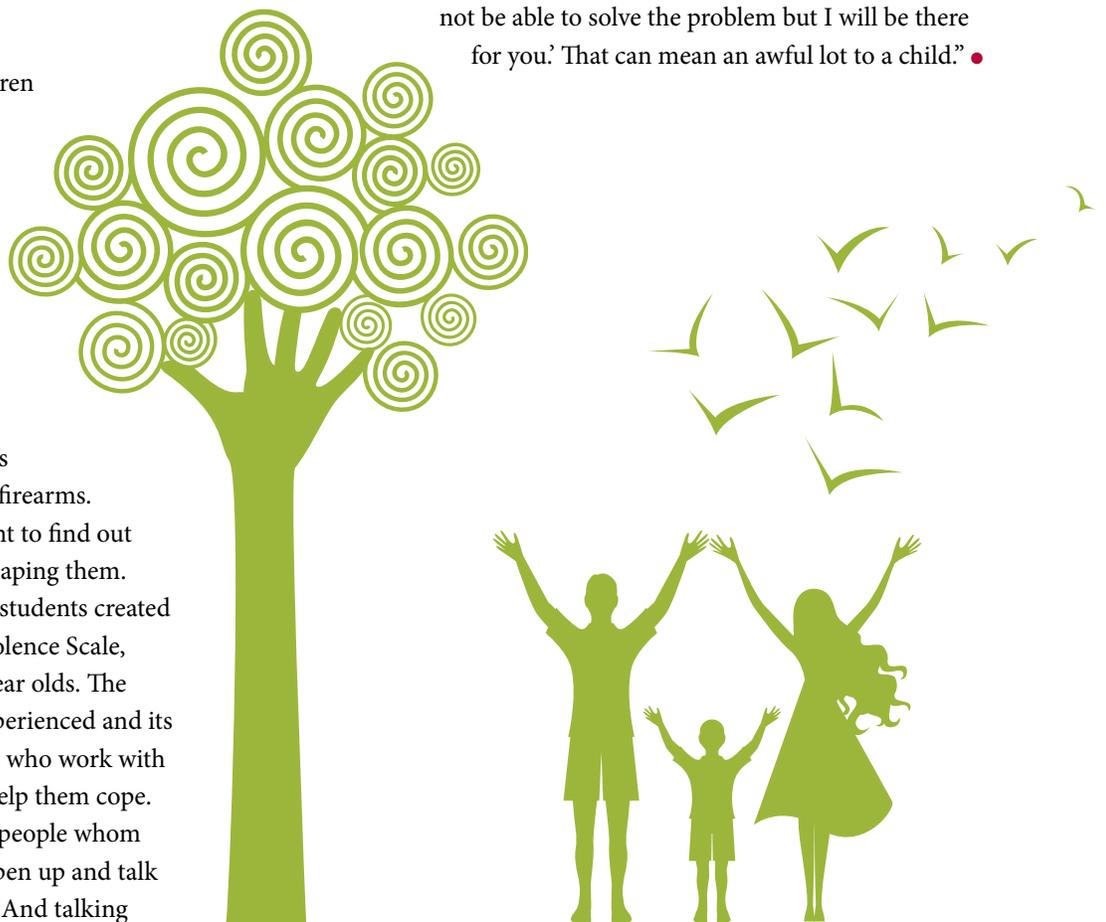
Creating a safe atmosphere with people whom they trust can prompt children to open up and talk about the trauma they experienced. And talking

is critical to their healing, notes Gilgun, who researches assessments and counseling for children who have experienced trauma, adversity, or high levels of stress in their lives.

“Research has shown again and again, when children feel safe and that they can trust other people, with little encouragement they will talk about what’s on their mind—and that’s really essential,” Gilgun says. “They need an opportunity to express what’s going on in their lives. They’ll do it one way or another, but this way they can do it constructively.”

When working with homeless and highly mobile children or with youth who have experienced violence, one of the best things a teacher, parent, or professional can do is offer simple kindness. This can go a long way toward strengthening their resilience.

Acknowledge their situation, says Gilgun, and tell them, “I’m here for you. I know it’s a tough time for you. You have these wonderful qualities, and I hope that if something is really bothering you, you feel like you can come and tell me. I might not be able to solve the problem but I will be there for you.” That can mean an awful lot to a child. ●



Rising above

PROGRAM COMBINES COUNSELING, ACADEMICS TO BOOST PROMISING STUDENTS

BY DIANE ROSE

RE'AL, AN EIGHTH-GRADER at Hopkins West Jr. High, rarely finished her homework in the past. She usually earned Cs in her classes—sometimes below. When she was invited to join an after-school academic program, she wasn't interested. That is until she found out that a number of other African-American students, who are in the minority at the school, would be participating too. Today she consistently finishes her schoolwork and brings home As and Bs.

Re'al's improvement is representative of her fellow students—20 in all—in the SOAR (Students on Academic Rise) program at Hopkins West, which combines academic tutoring and counseling. In a single semester, their grade point averages increased an average of more than 0.4, and their behavior improved in demonstrable ways.

After joining SOAR, eighth-grader Re'al improved her grades by significant margins.

PHOTOS: Leo Kim





Kim Campbell founded SOAR to give high potential students an extra achievement boost.

Geography teacher Kim Campbell founded SOAR after a “defining moment” when an African-American boy said to her, “I’ve been thinking, why do all the white kids do so much better than we do? We need a place.” Campbell decided to create that place for students with potential who lack the support and resources they need to succeed.

Campbell expanded and formalized the program in 2007, enlisting the help of associate professor **Kay Herting Wahl**, director of school counseling and clinical training in the Department of Educational Psychology. Herting Wahl helped secure a grant used to hire academic coaches, each of whom works with four or five SOAR students. The SOAR coaches include teachers and community members who offer one-on-one tutoring and work with school counselor Sarah Coffey to plan leadership and social skill-building activities. The counselor alerts coaches to issues that might affect behavior and schoolwork, and coaches can ask the counselor to meet with a student who is showing signs of personal problems.

“The fact that SOAR addresses so many areas—academics, leadership, community building, and culture—makes it

unique among after-school programs,” Herting Wahl explains. “One of SOAR’s main goals is to help students see how their attitudes, work ethic, and motivation about school will impact their college and career opportunities.” The low student-to-coach ratio is also unique and helps promote the idea that relationships are key to student success.

Teachers nominate the SOAR participants from seventh- and eighth-grade students who qualify for free or reduced lunch and who demonstrate academic and leadership potential but need additional help. Participants must give up other after-school activities, maintain a “C” average, steer clear of disciplinary problems, attend SOAR regularly, and complete homework. In exchange, the students can earn rewards and attend field trips to Gopher basketball games, The Children’s Theatre Company, and arcades. Re’al says she particularly enjoys trips to GameWorks and having pizza and other treats.

The SOAR students also educate others by speaking to Herting Wahl’s class on child and adolescent counseling. They offer real-world perspectives on peer pressure, the stress of schoolwork, dating, bullying, drugs and alcohol, sexual activity,

JULI CELENE MONTGOMERY



JULI CELENE MONTGOMERY *M.A. student, counseling and school personnel psychology, Department of Educational Psychology*

As she prepares to become a school counselor, Juli Celene Montgomery is sharpening her skills by working with a range of students, ages, and settings. Her practicums involve a suburban elementary school, an urban middle school, and a rural high school.

"I've had a terrific breadth of experience," she says. "The kids from all three schools are really open to working with me; they make my practicum experience very rich."

At the elementary school Montgomery conducts in-class presentations for diverse groups of students, helping them articulate their feelings, problem-solve, and learn to empathize with others.

"The presentations are meant to reduce violence and increase the kids' ability to communicate," she explains.

At the middle school Montgomery works one-on-one with children referred to her for peer mediation, failing grades, or emotional support. She also runs a grief support group.

"I've been impressed with what the kids are reading, and the fact that they do read [by choice]," she comments. "The grief group is learning to express their feelings, understand their reactions to death, and take responsibility for their actions."

At the high school Montgomery works on an individual basis with kids who have mental health issues and academic challenges. She is also creating transition groups for kids going to four-year colleges, two-year colleges, or choosing to work after graduation.

Changes in the economy highlight some differences in the more rural community, where both the students and their parents are having a difficult time finding work as small local businesses close.

"At the rural school I see fewer readers, fewer truly engaged kids," Montgomery comments. "There's a general malaise."

The practicums are required for Montgomery to qualify for licensure to be a school counselor. She plans to graduate with a master's degree in May and says the counseling and student personnel psychology program has "absolutely prepared" her to work in the field.

—B.M.



Alicia went from not caring about her grades to aiming for straight As and a future career as an attorney.

and discrimination. Herting Wahl's graduate students indicated that the SOAR visit was the most valuable session of her course, and the Hopkins students cited it as their favorite field trip. One of the adolescents commented: "We sure taught them a lot."

Herting Wahl measured the results of SOAR for 2007–08, tracking grades, attendance, and disciplinary referrals. She describes the increase in the students' mean grade point average from 2.246 to 2.660 in one semester as "very significant." Herting Wahl also asked students, parents, and teachers to complete questionnaires about SOAR. Parents reported that they saw improvements in their children's attitudes about school, homework completion, cooperation at home, and planning for college and careers. Teachers also noted that the students' attitudes and behavior improved.

Herting Wahl credits the students' improvement to Campbell, the coaches' enthusiasm, and the students' "willingness to attempt a new way of thinking about themselves and school." She recalls that when one student was asked why she worked so hard, she said, "I didn't want to disappoint my coach."

Campbell says SOAR's success is based on direct and assertive communication with the students, high expectations, and adults who demonstrate that they care. She hears daily from students who want to participate. However, securing additional grants to supplement state targeted-services funding is an ongoing need. She hopes SOAR can become a model used in schools with demographics similar to those of Hopkins West. She and Herting Wahl are also writing a book about the program.

Hopkins West Jr. High Principal Terry Wolfson calls SOAR "the best after-school support program I've ever seen for kids. They are getting a picture of what their lives can be." ●

Keeping kids in class

CHECK & CONNECT DEMONSTRABLY LOWERS DROPOUT RATES

BY VICKI GAYLORD



EACH YEAR ROUGHLY 1.23 MILLION STUDENTS in the United States do not graduate from high school with their peers—an issue that has both societal and individual implications. Students who drop out are more likely to become unemployed, incarcerated, and/or dependent on social programs than those with a high school diploma.

In response, educational psychology professor **Sandra Christenson**, in partnership with the Institute for Community Integration (ICI), researched and developed Check & Connect. This comprehensive, targeted intervention is designed to enhance student engagement at school and with learning through relationship building and problem solving.

“Dropout statistics are particularly alarming because jobs that pay living wages have virtually disappeared for youth without a high school diploma,” says Christenson.

Disparities in high school completion are also alarming. Students living in low-income families were approximately four times more likely to drop out of high school than were students living in high-income families, according to National Center for Education Statistics data from 2006. Latino students dropped out at a rate 2.4 times that of white students and 1.8 times as frequently as African-American students.

Check & Connect is the only program out of 22 dropout prevention interventions rated by the U.S. Department of Education’s What Works Clearinghouse that has strong evidence of positive effects on student persistence. In one study, 91 percent of Check & Connect students remained in school at the end of ninth grade vs. 70 percent of the control group, and 68 percent of the research subjects were on track to complete high school within five years vs. 29 percent of the control group.

Now, ICI has begun expanding the Check & Connect model into postsecondary education for use with students from 18 to 30 years of age who are at risk of dropping out of community college.

The new project, Making the Connection: Engaging and Retaining Young Adults in Postsecondary Education, is funded by a two-year, \$727,237 grant from the Institute for Education Sciences and will involve partnerships with Minneapolis



KARA EROLIN *Ph.D. candidate, marriage and family therapy, Department of Family Social Science*

While Kara Erolin's interest in developing culturally appropriate assessments and interventions for families has taken her to Monterrey, Mexico, many times, she says there is plenty of work to be done right here in the Twin Cities.

Erolin's dissertation focuses on the impact of child maltreatment on relationships between mothers and children in Monterrey. Her research is being developed jointly with her adviser, associate professor **Elizabeth Wieling**, and will be used in an implementation study comparing treatments for use worldwide.

"One of our goals is to cut across trauma and cultural contexts both in the U.S. and internationally," Erolin explains. "Existing assessments or interventions tend to focus on the individual person, but this protocol assesses the impacts on family relationships."

Back at home, Erolin's clinical work at the Walk-In Counseling Center in Minneapolis has brought her face-to-face with a culturally mixed clientele of individuals and couples experiencing stress, depression, and chemical addiction. The center offers no-fee, anonymous counseling, which attracts marginalized and underserved populations, she explains.

Previously, she provided counseling at Phalen Village Clinic in St. Paul. "At every one of my placement sites I've been able to work with diverse clients with traumatic stress issues," Erolin comments.

Erolin is licensed as an associate level marriage and family therapist and is hoping to receive her doctorate this year as she works towards full licensure.

—B.M.

Community and Technical College and Jefferson Community and Technical College in Louisville, Kentucky, to modify the intervention for postsecondary students at risk of disengaging from school.

"President Obama has publicly stated that dropout prevention is a key component in improving America's education system," says Christenson. "Check & Connect has a long track record of proven success in this area, and we are excited to be expanding and improving upon the program."

Check & Connect researchers believe solving the dropout problem requires a multifaceted effort of home, school, community, and youth. As a result, schools must be designed to reach out to families in partnership with the community, and students must be empowered to take control of their own behavior. The model comprises four essential components:

- A mentor who provides persistent support and keeps education salient for students
- Systematic monitoring of disciplinary action, grades, and credits accrued
- Timely and individualized intervention based on the monitoring information
- Enhanced home-school communication and home support for learning.

Christenson points to a number of lessons she and her team have learned in the 18 years since they designed Check & Connect. "We have learned the power, value, and importance of individualized interventions—those that create a person-environment fit," she says. "We've also found that relationships are essential for students' behavior change, commitment to learning, and academic progress. And we've learned the necessity to engage students on multiple levels: academically, behaviorally, cognitively, and affectively."

In December, Check & Connect launched a new implementation manual and training course for school districts, community organizations, and others to replicate the program in their communities. Information is available at <http://ici.umn.edu/checkandconnect/> ●

THE NEED of support

SCHOOL COUNSELORS JUGGLE LARGE CLIENT LOADS, MULTIPLE DUTIES

BY ANDREW TELLIJOHNN

SCHOOL COUNSELOR HERB CROWELL (M.S. '99) starts his day at Minneapolis Washburn Senior High School at 7:45 a.m. From then on he juggles tasks such as sorting standardized tests or visiting classrooms to talk about career development. When he returns to his office, he may find a sobbing kid, worried about where to sleep that night or how to help a friend who is talking about suicide.

After calming those fears, Crowell may get called into an administrator's office to discuss next year's master schedule. Then, don't forget about lunchroom duty.

"There's never enough time in the day," Crowell says. "I look up, and it's 3 o'clock."

Crowell is one of three counselors for the nearly 1,000 students at Washburn, and he admits it can be overwhelming. Grants and other financial assistance have helped Minneapolis Public Schools reduce the counselor-to-student ratio to about 300-to-1 districtwide. Statewide, however, the ratio is 799-to-1, meaning Minnesota has the second highest number of students assigned to each counselor in the country, according to the American School Counselors Association (ASCA). The organization suggests a ratio of 250-to-1.

But Minnesota doesn't require schools to have counselors. They're expensive, with the cost almost always borne by general funds, making them expendable if budget shortfalls arise. That means many schools go without, and students, counselors, and other educators pay the price.

It's difficult to meet with students on a regular basis or even to meet them at all when ratios get too high, says **Kay Herting Wahl**, associate professor of counseling and student personnel psychology in the Department of Educational Psychology. As a result, students don't get the help they need coping with problems or improving their study habits. "It's going to have an impact all the way around," she says.

Despite tough working conditions and limited positions, students still flock to the college's programs that prepare school counselors. Herting Wahl says they are inspired by a strong commitment to children. "Most school counselors say they are overwhelmed with the demands of the job, [yet] they love working with the kids and see the need, so they keep at it," she explains.



PHOTOS: Dawn Villella



Ratios hurting students

With so many students to help, counselors can't do as much as they would like—ideally guiding students to develop academic skills, plan for a career or college, and deal with social interactions.

“It doesn't allow us to work with the kids in the depth you'd like to be able to work with them,” Crowell says. “At best we're working with kids in very brief spurts of time and sporadically.”

Counselors may be stretched too thin to follow up with students' parents to establish a plan that could help students

improve their academic performance, says **Jim Bierma**, lead counselor in Minneapolis Public Schools, adjunct professor in the Department of Educational Psychology, and ASCA president. They also have a harder time connecting with students who are harming themselves, he says, or with those who need skills for dealing with conflicts, bullies, and other situations that come up in school and again later in life.

Students who go through the college's school counseling program—a master's degree or a licensure program for those who already have a relevant master's—take specific classes that ready them for the challenges of this environment. These

from the field:

LINDSEY FRITSCH



LINDSEY FRITSCH *master's student, School of Social Work*

When Lindsey Fritsch began working toward her master of social work degree in 2008, she planned to study women's mental health. But her internship experience at the Minneapolis-based Tubman Family Alliance shelter for abused women and children sparked a fascination with family dynamics.

At Tubman, Fritsch acts as an advocate, helping her clients—who are urban, mostly low income, and ethnically diverse—find services and secure housing so they can leave the shelter. Many also need help dealing with joblessness, poor language skills, and mental health issues.

"I see the children one-on-one to determine how community living is going," she says. "But we also do goal-planning with the women, and provide parent groups and a holistic program for the abusers, who are often men."

Fritsch notes that the economic downturn has made it significantly more difficult for the women to find affordable housing. Jobs have become equally scarce, she says.

"What we're now seeing in domestic violence shelters is chronic homelessness," she says. "Women who were raised in shelters are returning with their kids. To them, it's a safe haven."

Fritsch says the social work program has directly prepared her for the individual client interventions and the group/family support she provides at Tubman. Now the internship is building her confidence and skills to work on her own. "You have the opportunity, through supervision with a licensed clinical social worker at your organization, to try new things, make mistakes, reflect with your supervisor, and then try again," she explains. "It is a wonderful learning experience that I wish more people had the opportunity within their professions to take advantage of the [kind of] support that is provided."

Fritsch, who is also a graduate research assistant at the School of Social Work's Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse, expects to graduate next year and earn her license as a general social worker.

—B.M.

include general counseling strategies as well as in-depth courses related to typical issues for youth in the K–12 age range.

"It's a wide spectrum of issues and strategies we teach as far as getting ready to work in the schools," says Herting Wahl. Students also must gain field experience at the elementary, the middle-school, and the high-school levels before being eligible for licensure.

Impact on counselors

Many schools require counselors to handle a variety of duties, often unrelated to counseling. Administering discipline, monitoring hallways, and handling schedule changes all can be part of the job—a situation that Herting Wahl calls a misuse of resources.

"Schools hire trained counselors who have master's degrees to take care of mental health and emotional help issues with children, and then they assign them tasks that a clerical person could do," she says. "In these days of budget cuts and budget scrutiny that should be looked at very carefully, I would think."

The time requirements and job juggling also lead to burnout and often cause counselors to quit their jobs or to quit trying to do the job the way they were trained, says Herting Wahl. She believes school districts lose as well because cutting counselors leaves schools without trained professionals to handle students' problems.

Adele Munsterman (M.Ed. '99), who teaches Spanish at Fridley High School, has felt the impact in her classroom. She has found that when she needs a counselor to help with an unruly student or to discuss a concern, they are not always available. "The staff we have is great," she says. "In my opinion, they are being asked to do a lot of things, which means they are not available 100 percent of the time to counsel students."

Numbers thin in elementary schools

The lack of counseling resources is even more acute in elementary schools. "Most districts have junior high and senior high counselors," says Sheryl Kuznia (B.A. '88), who has stepped out of the classroom for two years to coordinate an elementary-school counseling grant for St. Paul Public Schools. "Having elementary school counselors is a luxury most districts can't afford."



Counselors are especially vital for this age group because they can watch students develop and observe family situations for up to seven years. Seventy percent of the students at St. Paul Public Schools are living at or below the poverty level, Kuznia notes.

St. Paul has counselors at 18 of its 50 elementary schools. Some schools receive funding through Title I, a program aimed at improving the academic achievements of disadvantaged students. But that typically funds social workers or school psychologists, who primarily work with special education students. Counselors are often the third most expensive staff members in a school's budget.

TOP A love of children draws counselors to schools despite tough field conditions, says professor Kay Herting Wahl. **RIGHT** Jim Bierma worries that the Minneapolis school counselors he leads may be missing some students who need them.





Minnetonka counselor Jill Walker advises students on postsecondary options and offers personal support.

Perfect scenario

Jill Walker (M.A., '06), a counselor at Minnetonka High School, doesn't have to monitor the lunchroom or the halls. She meets with students about academic, social, and postsecondary topics. As spring semester begins, she is focused on helping students register for next year's classes.

Walker is part of a counseling team that doubled to eight counselors and one college counselor—five of whom are alumni of the college—after the Minnetonka Public Schools board urged the district to review its guidance services. With the assistance of associate principal Joyce Rief, who has a background in counseling, the guidance staff sought input from students, parents, teachers, and other community stakeholders during the yearlong process.

The resulting expansion means that counselors are available to meet with every student at least once a year. The guidance department regularly publicizes its services through postcards to students, e-mails to parents, and other efforts. The counselors also offer seminars targeted to each grade level, which they plan as a group.

“We know our students better, and they may be more aware of what the counseling program can do.”

—KATHY ZENK, MINNETONKA HIGH SCHOOL GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Minnetonka High School's Guidance Department—considered a model for others—includes five alumni. Among them is Kathy Zenk (second from right), department chair.



Licensed student support

School counselors, psychologists, and social workers each play a unique and vital role in the K-12 system and each have stringent requirements for licensure. The preparation programs for these professions are housed within the College of Education and Human Development.

- >> School psychologist:** Consults with teachers, parents, and external agencies regarding systemic ways to improve academic progress and overall wellness for students. Designs and interprets assessments of student status and effective interventions, including grading and disciplinary aspects. Provides limited direct counseling to students. Licensure requires an educational specialist degree, which includes preparation in academic and social-emotional interventions from an individual and systemic perspective, and a 1,200-hour internship.
- >> School counselor:** Practice includes K-12 counseling in academic, career, and social/emotional areas, using individual, group, and classroom skills and programs. Preparation entails individual and group counseling theory and skills, classes in behavioral prevention and intervention, crisis management and consultation in schools, and a 700-hour practicum in K-12 settings. Licensure requires a master's in a state-accredited program.
- >> School social worker:** Supports students' academic and social success through assessment of student needs; treatment of mental and emotional disorders; individual and group therapeutic services; crisis prevention and intervention; advocacy for students, parents, and the school district; education and training for parents and guardians, and connecting students and families with community services and other professionals. Provides a link between home, school, and community. Preparation at the college is offered at the M.S.W. level. Candidates who do not have a bachelor's degree in social work need to do two internships of 480 hours each; those with a bachelor's degree in social work complete one internship of 480 hours. To practice as a school social worker in Minnesota requires licensure by the Minnesota Board of Social Work and licensure by the Minnesota Department of Education as a school social worker.

“We work as a team,” says Guidance Department Chair Kathy Zenk (B.S. '69, counseling certificate '98). She describes the mission of the department as personalization and planning, explaining that the counselors meet with each student on a scheduled, regular basis.

They continue to offer responsive services as well, addressing social and mental health issues as they arise. Walker has noted an increase in concerns related to the economy, for example. “[For] a lot of our parents, the financial needs haven't been there in the past,” she says. “A lot more students have come to us in the counseling department.”

Zenk has been at Minnetonka High School since 1992 and chaired the committee that designed the expanded program. She has noted a resulting difference in both students and counselors. “I feel we know our students better, and they also may be more aware of what the counseling program can do for them,” Zenk says.

The redoubled effort didn't cost the district much either. The school found some counselors with less career experience but a strong ability to connect with students. The district had also set aside the funds when it restructured its budget a couple years earlier, says Superintendent Dennis Peterson. This means that the counseling positions don't depend on grant money, as they do in some other districts.

“Universally, people in our community feel like it's been a successful model,” Peterson says.

Now other school districts are taking notice. “There's some interest in learning about what we've been doing,” Zenk says “I think it needs to come from the districts locally to really look at what each community might need.”

Local commitment may be the only way to increase the number of counselors in each district. Bierma has seen efforts to pass legislation that would make school counselors mandatory fail several times, and he's not optimistic such a measure will get through this year either. ●







Students under STRESS

ALUMNI AND CURRENT STUDENTS LEAD THE CHARGE
TO ADDRESS CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

BY J. TROUT LOWEN

The fatal shootings at Virginia Tech in 2007 and Northern Illinois University (NIU) in 2008 focused public attention on the issue of mental health and college students. Concern at the nation's colleges and universities had been growing for some time, however.

The shootings—each by students with a history of mental illness—represented extreme examples of a larger trend: An increasing number of students have been diagnosed with mental health issues before they even enroll. A 2007 Boynton Health Services survey found that more than one in four students at the University of Minnesota's Twin Cities campus had been diagnosed with a mental illness during their lifetime; almost one in seven had been diagnosed within the past 12 months.

Those numbers didn't surprise University counselors. "Over the years there's just been an increasingly consistent trend that more and more students are experiencing significant mental health conditions," says Robert Seybold, senior psychologist at University Counseling and Consulting Services (UCCS).

Seybold (Ph.D. '80), who has been counseling students for more than three decades, says the severity of students' diagnoses has been growing, too. When he was fresh out of the counseling and personnel psychology program (CSPP) and first working at what was called the Student Counseling Bureau, counselors would only broach the topic of suicide if there were some hint of concern, he explains. "Now that's an automatic question that we ask every student in the initial interview," he says.

Alumna Salina Renninger, senior psychologist with University Counseling and Consulting Services, says conditions are more stressful for today's students than for their parents' generation.

Seybold is one of five alumni from the Department of Educational Psychology who make up the UCCS clinical staff. They provide academic and career counseling, as well as mental health and crisis counseling. UCCS also works closely with the Boynton Health Service Mental Health Clinic, which focuses primarily on psychological and psychiatric counseling. Boynton's mental health providers include five alumni from the College of Education and Human Development, four of whom graduated from the School of Social Work, as well as a current doctoral student in the CSPP program.

Not their parents' college experience

College students today face significantly greater levels of stress than their parents, says Salina Renninger (Ph.D. 1998), a senior psychologist at UCCS. The sources of that stress include



relationships, pressure to graduate sooner and take more credits each term, rising tuition and dwindling financial aid, and family conflicts—sometimes around money. As a result, more students show signs of depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and even post-traumatic stress disorder.

“Life is just much more complicated for the majority of students that I see relative to what my experience as an undergraduate was,” Seybold agrees. As an example, he shares the story of a freshman he counseled who was distressed over a conflict with her roommate. “The crux of the issue was they both had 25-inch TVs and there wasn’t room for both of the TVs in a dorm residence,” he says.

While the issue may seem frivolous, Seybold says it’s just another example of “how we have higher expectations of life, how much stuff we’re going to have, how fast we accumulate it.”

As part of the doctorate in counseling psychology, which prepares counselors and advisers for higher education and other settings, the college has also augmented coursework on psychological disorders and their assessment. Students and faculty also discuss how to prevent the kind of tragedies that occurred at Virginia Tech and NIU, says professor Michael Goh, who leads the Ph.D. program. “No incident passes without discussion.”

At least half of the CEHD counseling track students undertake their practicums at the University, where they benefit from the placement of so many alumni in campus counseling settings, adds Goh. All of the advanced practicum students currently placed at UCCS are students in the counseling and student personnel psychology program, as are the majority of the staff in the Student and Academic Support Service Center

“There’s been a consistent trend that more students are experiencing significant mental health conditions.”

—ROBERT SEYBOLD, SENIOR PSYCHOLOGIST,
UNIVERSITY COUNSELING AND CONSULTING SERVICES

“We’ve helped some who needed assistance get it. That’s the bottom line.”

—AMELIIOUS WHYTE, CHIEF OF STAFF,
OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

there, which helps students improve learning skills. In Boynton, one MSW student is pursuing her practicum, as well.

A national trend

Demand for student mental health counseling at Boynton Health Center and UCCS rose by 9 percent last year alone, from approximately 1,300 students to 1,450. To address the trend, the University added counseling positions and expanded outreach to students and to the faculty and staff who may be able to help. The Office for Student Affairs also created a Provost Committee on Student Mental Health to develop a coordinated, cross-campus approach to the problem.

One outcome of the committee’s work was the launch of a portal for student mental health. The site allows students to do self-assessment online for depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, eating disorders, and alcohol abuse, and consolidates information about campus resources in one location.

“That was probably one of our biggest achievements over the last couple of years,” says Amelious Whyte, chief of staff for the vice provost for student affairs, a member of the committee, and a doctoral candidate in the Department of Educational Policy and Administration. “Now we’re looking at what we can do about training for faculty and staff around these issues.”

The Stamp Out Stigma campaign is one way the University is encouraging faculty, staff, and other students to intervene if they see a student in trouble. The initiative was created to reduce the stigma and myths around mental health issues that might prevent students from seeking assistance, or faculty from approaching a student who needs help. Counselors are also training faculty and staff to spot and respond to students’ mental health issues.

“My experience is that faculty are hungry for information because, even if they’re not noticing and approaching a student, students are telling them things when they come to talk to them,” Renninger says.



Amelious Whyte helped design a portal for self-assessment and student mental health services.

After the Virginia Tech shooting, the University also created a Behavioral Consultation Team made up of health care professionals and representatives from other University departments to advise faculty or staff on students who might be a danger to themselves or to others, as in the case of one student who wrote “This is when I kill myself” in response to an exam question.

“We haven’t had someone who was, say, at the level of Virginia Tech that we’ve kind of averted,” says Whyte. “But the other side is I think we’ve helped some people who needed some assistance get it. I think that’s the bottom line.” ●

Howard Agee: changing the outlook for mental illness

BY PETER S. SCHOLTES

WHEN HOWARD AGEE LEARNED that one of his grown children had a mental illness, he looked for help. But in Minnesota, in the 1970s, there were no public supports that helped those with serious mental illness to find medication, jobs, or housing. Before 1977, when a small group of advocates formed what is now the Minnesota branch of NAMI (the National Alliance on Mental Illness), state funding for community mental health programs was zero.

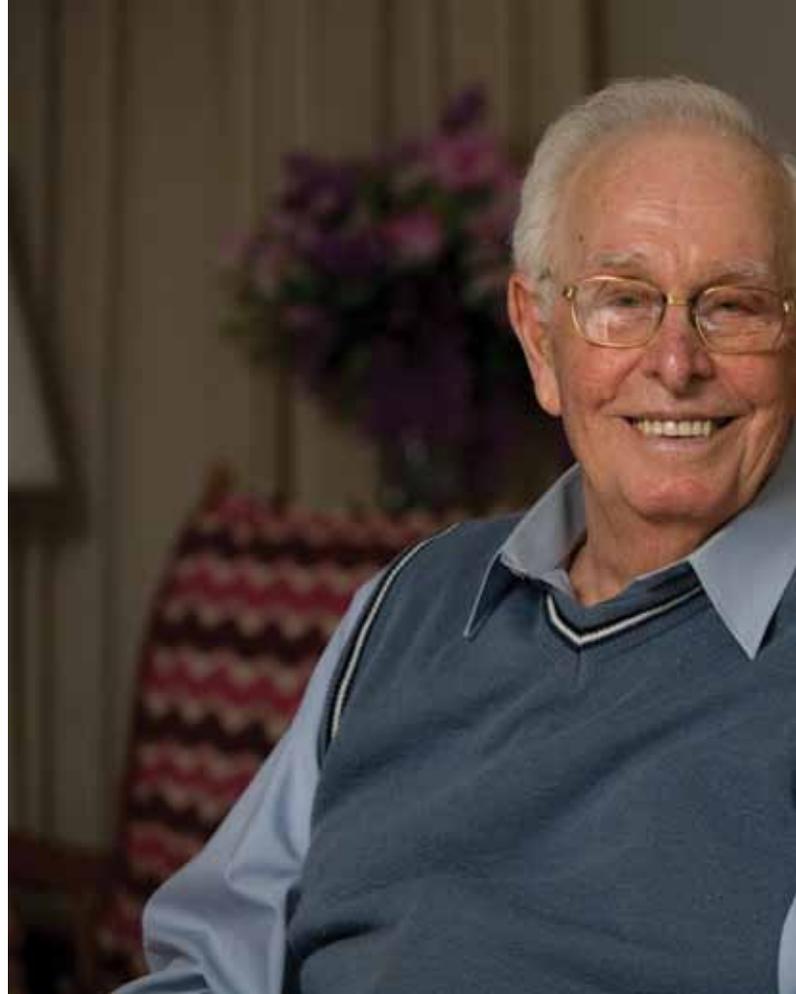
“You had a choice,” says NAMI-MN communications director Chuck Krueger. “Live with your family, live in the streets, or live in an institution.”

Agee (B.S. '49) was part of the coalition that changed that. He joined NAMI-MN's board in 1986 after retiring from Prudential Life Insurance, where he'd been a marketing manager, and became a lobbying force—an educator of legislators. “He really could get people to do stuff,” says Krueger. “He became the board president, and through his leadership we were able to get more support groups, more residential programs, more case workers.”

Agee says his proudest moment remains the 1987 passage of the Minnesota Comprehensive Mental Health Act, which became a template for similar legislation around the country. The law finally gave mental illness the status of, well, an illness—“not poor parenting, not being lazy,” explains Agee. In 1989, he also played a significant role in convincing lawmakers to pass a bill that funded mental-illness services.

Today Agee is chairman emeritus for NAMI-MN—“that means I'm over the hill,” he jokes—and has the same infectious, wide smile as the photos in his old newspaper clippings. His wife, Lorraine Agee, first encountered his persuasiveness outside a dance at Coffman Memorial Union in 1943. They recall the story with good-humored frankness, while sitting in their Columbia Heights home.

“I had just broken up with someone else, so I thought I'd go pick up a sailor,” says Lorraine.



“So I'm the one she picked up,” says Howard.

Born in 1925, in Independence, Kansas, and raised in Missouri, Howard Agee had joined the Navy in San Francisco after high school and was sent to the University for electrician's training. He had been quarantined to campus the night he met Lorraine—there'd been a notice of spinal meningitis. So he went to check out the dance and never made it inside.

“She gave me her phone number, ‘Cherry 2888,’ ” he recalls. “I remembered it: ‘Two people sat down and ate cherries.’ ”

They married in California 65 years ago this June. They returned to the Twin Cities while expecting their first baby, and Howard attended the University on the GI Bill. He was studying engineering until an interest test showed he would do better working with people than with things. He switched to what is now the College of Education and Human Development and graduated in 1949.

Howard taught high-school math and physics for two years before going into sales to support a growing family. He and



Lorraine raised five children and now have eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Howard put his education background to use in insurance, giving seminars in seven states, as well as managing a sales force 50 strong.

He retired at the age of 59 and brought just as much energy to a life of volunteerism, often with Lorraine at his side, until health issues slowed them both. Howard might have made his biggest mark educating the public about an illness that had been stigmatized for too long.

“It’s not popular to be mentally ill,” he says. “Now we’re fearful that with the cutback in financing that this is an area that will be cut, because it’s still not popular. It’s a long battle.” ●

PHOTO: Bethany Dick

from the field:

BROOKE RAFDAL



BROOKE RAFDAL *Ph.D. candidate, school psychology, Department of Educational Psychology*

Brooke Rafdal, a third-year doctoral student in the school psychology program, has a special interest in early childhood education and language development. She works to ensure that families have resources to adequately prepare their children for kindergarten through the Center for Early Education and Development’s 500 Under 5 project, based in North Minneapolis.

Twice each year, she evaluates preschoolers to ensure they’re on track for kindergarten. “If they deviate from that trajectory, I make referrals within the district or county to ensure that they have access to needed resources,” she explains.

Rafdal will be teaching language-promotion techniques, including more frequent and inquisitive verbal interaction, to parents of at-risk children in the program. For her dissertation she plans to study early childhood language development interventions within a sample of participants.

Rafdal also worked in the Mounds View Early Childhood Special Education program, where she assessed preschool children to determine what district services they needed.

She has found these hands-on experiences valuable. “For me, practicum experiences have helped to solidify what I have learned in the classroom,” Rafdal explains. “I feel much more confident about my ability to provide school psychological services given that I have had the opportunity to work in several settings with many different children, parents, and teachers.”

Upon graduation, Rafdal plans to continue community-based research work as an early childhood school psychologist focusing on at-risk populations.

— B.M.

APPOINTED

Kendall King, associate professor, curriculum and instruction; second language learning, bilingualism, language ideology; Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania

Charles Miller, assistant professor, curriculum and instruction; learning technologies, aesthetics design; Ph.D., University of Minnesota

Keisha Varma, assistant professor, educational psychology; learning and cognition, learning technologies, science education; Ph.D., Vanderbilt University

Sashank Varma, assistant professor, educational psychology; learning and cognition, sentence comprehension, mathematical reasoning; Ph.D., Vanderbilt University

Daheia Barr-Anderson, assistant professor, kinesiology; childhood and adolescent obesity, physical activity epidemiology; Ph.D., University of Maryland, College Park

Michael Stebleton, assistant professor, postsecondary teaching and learning; career development, student retention and persistence; Ph.D., University of Minnesota

RETIRED

Judith Lambrecht, *professor and director of undergraduate studies, work and human resource education; 35 years*

Lambrecht served as the national vice president and then president of Delta Pi Epsilon, a national graduate honorary society for business education professionals. In 2005 she received the John Robert Gregg Award in Business Education, awarded by the National Business Education Association Conference.

HONORED

The **Institute on Community Integration** awarded its 2008 annual awards in recognition of students and employees affiliated with the center who have demonstrated commitment to carrying out its mission and that of the college and of the community. **Matthew Bogenschutz** received the Future Leader Award. The Excellence and Community Building Award went to members of the Changing Landscapes: Visiting Artists with Disabilities project committee: **Megan Dushin, Cliff Poetz, Pat Salmi, Derek Nord, and Melissa Critchley-Rodriquez.**

David R. Johnson and **Martha Thurlow** (Institute on Community Integration) are among the 14 selected researchers featured in the new national report, *Special Education in America: The State of Students with Disabilities in the Nation's High Schools*, published by *Education Week*.

Three professors from the college received the University's Outstanding Contributions to Postbaccalaureate, Graduate, and Professional Education Award: **Jean King** (educational policy and administration); **Michael Rodriguez** (educational psychology); and **Jennifer York-Barr** (educational policy and administration).

J. B. Mayo, Jr. (curriculum and instruction) has been awarded a 2009 President's Faculty Multicultural Research Award for his project, *Seeking the Spirit(s) Among Minnesota's Ojibwe Nation*.

The Council for Exceptional Children has awarded professor **Scott McConnell** (educational psychology, Center for Early Education and Development) the 2008 Mary McEvoy Service to the Field Award in recognition of contributions to the fields of early intervention and early childhood special education.

The University of Minnesota - Morris Alumni Association honored associate professor **Michael Rodriguez** (educational psychology) with its 2008 Distinguished Alumni Award.

Education specialist **Elizabeth Spletzer** (kinesiology) was awarded the Eloise M. Jaeger Award by the University of Minnesota Women's Physical Education Alumnae Association.

Richard Weinberg (child development) was presented with the University's Tom H. Swain Campus Recognition Award in recognition of his nine years as faculty athletics representative.

Associate professor **Diane Wiese-Bjornstal** (kinesiology) was elected to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Science Board for 2009-2012. The board's activities include review and input on the long-standing President's Challenge program.

Jim Ysseldyke (educational psychology) received the 2009 Wallace Wallin Lifetime Achievement Award from the Council for Exceptional Children. Previous faculty recipients of this award include Maynard Reynolds, Evelyn Deno, and Frank Wood.

IN MEMORIAM

Keith McFarland (*Ph.D. '55*), *former dean, General College, died Dec. 27, 2008, at age 87.*

McFarland was an administrator at the University for more than 44 years, beginning in the office of the director of resident instruction in the College of Forestry, Agriculture, and Home Economics in 1946. He later became dean of the former College of Home Economics. He went on to serve as deputy chancellor of the Waseca campus before returning to the Twin Cities campus to lead General College. McFarland was a Regents Award recipient and a strong supporter of University programs and activities throughout his years.



Marty Rossmann: promoting proficient parenting

BY ROXI REJALI

A PARENT AND CHILD

playing with a set of colorful building blocks may seem like an ordinary slice of family life. But to Marty (Marilyn) Rossmann (Ph.D. '77), professor emeritus of family education,

programs in the mid-'70s by lobbying legislators and other public officials. Today, the programs are offered by many of the state's school districts.

By linking research to practice, Rossmann's work is a great example of the University's public service mission, says Ted Bowman, family education adjunct professor. Like Rossmann, many ECFE advocates believed that the programs should be available to all families. "It wasn't tied to income or to special needs or to particular locations. They were trying to make it accessible to all the citizens of Minnesota," he says.

Rossmann taught secondary home economics for a few years, then went on to earn an M.A. in home economics education and a Ph.D. in education from the University of Minnesota. In 2006, Rossmann was honored as one of CEHD's 100 Distinguished Alumni. That title honors her work as researcher, teacher, and student adviser in the family education program, which has prepared many of the state's licensed parent educators.

Retirement has allowed Rossmann, 72, to pursue other interests, including spending more time with her three grown children and four grandchildren. Her recent travels include an Alaskan cruise, during which she and her husband Jack celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

But she's found her niche as part-time volunteer coordinator for Parent Warmline, a free telephone consultation service at Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota. Parents call with questions on a wide range of parenting issues, such as toilet training or sleep problems, and trained volunteers offer practical advice, encouragement, and referrals to community resources.

Rossmann thinks of her Warmline work as a natural extension of her work as a teacher educator, allowing her to share the knowledge earned during a career of teaching, mentoring, and research. She reflects back upon her career and says she hopes she enhanced the lives of many families. ●

that scene is an ideal testing ground for theories about parent education. During a 28-year career at the College of Education and Human Development, Rossmann specialized in translating knowledge distilled from research and classroom teaching into practical techniques that parents could use at the kitchen table and in the family living room.

Children thrive in an environment of love, encouragement, and consistent discipline, Rossmann believes. "Helping people to be better parents just has to be something that is valuable. If nothing more, the parent is going to enjoy parenting more if they are able to keep their kids from climbing on the furniture," says Rossmann, who retired in 2004.

Family education programs examine nutrition, clothing, housing, child development, and family life. Convinced that hard data could prove such programs' effectiveness, Rossmann advocated for research to back up theory. One example was her study showing that young children who complete simple household chores are likely to develop into responsible, well-adjusted adults—research that earned attention in the consumer press as well as at academic conferences.

Rossmann also played a major role in establishing Minnesota's Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)



THIS SPRING WILL MARK the 41st occasion that the College of Education and Human Development Alumni Society has presented awards to the college community. At this annual event we celebrate the fantastic achievements

of five alumni, one faculty member, and the people who represent the future of our alumni society—10 student scholarship recipients. We are proud of this year's honorees, who were chosen from a slate of worthy nominees and applicants. Look for their names in the next issue of *Connect*.

Recognizing our student scholarship recipients is one of my favorite elements of the awards celebration. It represents one of our major goals as an alumni society board: to connect with students and improve their academic experiences at the University. The CEHD Alumni Society-sponsored scholarships are a tangible way to honor and better the college experience of some of our best and brightest students. It is my pleasure to say "hats off" to this new generation of leaders.

I would also like to thank alumni and friends for their continued backing of scholarships through annual giving. Your loyal and generous gifts directly support our students.

It is a privilege to serve as your president. Feel free to contact me directly if you have any comments or suggestions on how the CEHD Alumni Society can better serve you and our community.

My best to you and yours,

Tex Ostvig, B.A. '96
 president, College of Education and
 Human Development Alumni Society
 ostvigwt@umn.edu

1940s

Mildred Templin (Ph.D. '47) died October 22, 2008, in Minneapolis. She was known as a scholar, speech clinician, educator, adviser, and friend to students and colleagues. She created the Templin-Darley Tests of Articulation with Frederick Darley, and her work is considered foundational within psycholinguistics.

1950s

Thomas Charles Burgess (Ph.D. '54) passed away on January 29, in Lake Oswego, Ore. He was a professor emeritus at the University of Minnesota and held positions at the University of Missouri, Oregon State University, and the University of Montana before settling at Portland State for 18 years until his retirement in 1981.

Ida Davies (M.S.W. '55) died November 27, 2008, at the age of 96. She was a pioneer in the care of the mentally ill and established programs, supervised graduate social work interns, and served as a clinical assistant professor at the University. She and her husband Jack supported the School of Social Work by establishing annual scholarships for many graduate students.

Myer "Whitey" Skoog, (M.A. '58), a former Gopher Men's Basketball player and Minneapolis Lakers guard, had his jersey retired February 22 in Williams Arena. Skoog was an All-American who developed and perfected the jump



Interim Dean Jean Guam and Alumni Society President Tex Ostvig spread CEHD spirit during Homecoming.



Saturday Scholars attendees learned about autism, links between T.V. and obesity, education law, and more.

shot. He was head basketball coach at Gustavus Adolphus College, where he now serves as head golf coach. He ranks 32nd on *Sports Illustrated's* 50 Greatest Minnesota Sports Figures.

1960s

Mary Hall (Ph.D. '63) died on October 12, 2008, in Wabasha. She was a University of Minnesota pediatric psychologist and adjunct professor, and she helped found Children's Hospital of Minneapolis.

Jack Thommen (M.S. '67) passed away on October 22, 2008, in Edina. He was captain of the University of Minnesota tennis team and went on to found the Urban Tennis Program for Children. He also worked as an elementary and junior-high teacher and administrator in Minneapolis Public Schools.

1970s

Bennett "Ross" Taylor (Ph.D. '73) passed away peacefully at the age of 81 on February 7. Ross started his career as a math teacher and later served as the mathematics supervisor for Minneapolis Public Schools. He retired in 1990 and served on the Minneapolis School Board from 1994 to 2004. He was a visiting professor at St. Cloud State and Macalester College and also wrote math textbooks.

Randy Johnson (M.S. '75), parks and recreation director for the City of Apple Valley, received the Minnesota Recreation and Parks Association's highest professional honor, the Clifton E. French Distinguished Service Award. Johnson is past president of the CEHD Alumni Society.

1990s

Peg Lonquist (Ph.D. '95) has been selected as the director of the University of Minnesota Women's Center, where she has served as interim director since 2007.

Gail Swor (Ed.D. '98) has been named the 2008 National Distinguished Elementary Principal of the Year by the National Association of Elementary School Principals. She is principal at Poplar Bridge Elementary School in Bloomington.

2000s

Sandra Simar (M.A. '06) has been appointed to the Minnesota State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. She serves as head start director at the Minnesota Child Care Resource & Referral Network in Rochester.

Rich Wagner (Ph.D. '06) has been named to succeed C. Ben Wright, who is retiring as president of Dunwoody College of Technology on July 1, 2009. Wagner has been vice president of academic affairs since 2005.



Winemaker Paul Quast shows alumni the secret of the grape during the Second Annual CEHD Alumni Wine Tasting in Stillwater.



CEHD Alumni President Tex Ostvig welcomes Saturday Scholars back to campus for a day of learning.



Professor John Romano and alumna Jane Rauenhorst catch up at the CSPP Alumni Reception in October.

JOIN US!

School Psychology 50th Anniversary Celebration

April 30, 4:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m.
Eastcliff

Join fellow school psychology alumni as we celebrate 50 years of developing leaders in the profession. Please RSVP to Anjie Graham 612-624-4156, or e-mail graha069@umn.edu.

University of Minnesota Alumni Association 105th Annual Celebration

May 1

Dinner and reception at 5:30 p.m.,
University Recreation Center
Concert at 8:00 p.m., Northrop
Memorial Auditorium

Dinner and a reception followed by a performance of Ludwig von Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, presented by the School of Music, Northrop Auditorium, and the Alumni Association. To register, call the Northrop ticket office at 612-624-2345.

St. Paul Campus Reunion

June 25, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

Join fellow alumni from the colleges of Education and Human Development; Food, Agricultural and Natural Resources Sciences; and Design, whose academic programs were based on the St. Paul campus. The program will include tours and lunch, and the Class of '59 will be honored. Watch for more details at cehd.umn.edu/alumni/news

SAVE THE DATE

The Ultimate Homecoming October 4-October 10

Welcome Gopher football back to campus with a week of events, including public tours of the new TCF Bank Stadium and a Friday evening parade. Watch for details at alumni.umn.edu.

SHARE YOUR NEWS

Just like your mom or your favorite cousin, we'd love to hear from you more often. Do you have a new job? Received an award? Given a speech? Let us know. Call 612-626-8782 or e-mail hpena@umn.edu.

3rd Annual Scramble for Scholarships

July 24, 7:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Les Bolstad Golf Course

A best-ball golf tournament featuring contests, prizes, breakfast, lunch, and more. Create a foursome on your own, or be matched with a group. The proceeds benefit the CEHD Alumni Society Study Abroad Scholarship Fund. Last year, we raised nearly \$8,000 for student scholarships. We are seeking breakfast, lunch, beverage cart, photography, giveaway, and hole sponsors, and we are collecting gift certificates and merchandise for prizes and our silent auction. Contact Heather Peña at 612-626-8782, or e-mail hpena@umn.edu.

Saturday Scholars

September 26, 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Coffman Memorial Union

Come back to campus this fall for a day of learning—no tests required—and a chance to connect with faculty, students, alumni, and friends of the college. Watch the Web site for announcements about faculty presenters and topics, as they are confirmed. Registration begins in August and will include breakfast, classes taught by faculty, lunch at the Campus Club, and a docent led tour at the Weisman Art Museum.

DEVELOPMENT TEAM



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Don't Give Up on Giving Back

DURING THE LAST FEW MONTHS, the national and state economic news has been relentlessly depressing, as one business after another announces layoffs, bankruptcy, or closure. The University of Minnesota and the College of Education and Human Development have not been immune from the downturn. We have been challenged to reduce staff, programs, and expenses. Our students are facing possible tuition increases and rising costs for books and living expenses.

Despite these challenges, the college is uniquely positioned to respond to community needs in stressful times. Our faculty members have expertise in areas such as family economics, counseling, social work, family violence, and childhood resilience. In the next few months we will provide more detailed information about resources that may prove useful to you or others you know.

In the meantime, be assured that your gifts—of whatever size—matter more than ever.

- + Your **ANNUAL GIFT** provides flexible funding to support the college's highest priorities: student support, critical programs, and outreach.
- + **BEQUESTS** through your estate provide future gifts and do not affect your current assets or income. (See bequest language below.)
- + You can have a guaranteed income for life with a **CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY**. In this time of decreased returns on securities investments, you may want to consider whether a gift annuity might benefit you and meet your philanthropic goals. For example, an individual 65 years of age would receive an income for life of 5.3%; a 75-year old would receive a return of 6.3%. You can designate how you want the remainder of the annuity used.

If you would like more information on ways to make a gift, please contact the development office at 612-625-1310 or e-mail Lynn Slifer, director of external relations, at slife001@umn.edu.



Lynn Slifer, *director of external relations*

SAMPLE LANGUAGE FOR WILL BEQUESTS: *"I give, devise, and bequeath to the University of Minnesota Foundation, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455, [percentage of residue, sum, or description of property], the principal and income of which shall be distributed by the Board of Trustees [to name of program or purpose] in the College of Education and Human Development."*

New gifts and commitments

The McKnight Foundation has provided \$450,000 to the Center for Early Education and Development to support capacity building in early childhood education.

The **Best Buy Children's Foundation** has made a grant of \$169,000 to support the Adventure Learning Fund.

Donna Carnes has made a gift of \$35,000 through the Gray Family Fund to support the Boss MN-NY Ambiguous Loss Endowment.

Nancy Lersch has made an estate commitment of \$100,000 and established an endowed scholarship fund in teacher education with a gift of \$25,000.

Mary McConnon has made a pledge of \$25,000 to establish the Henry K. McConnon Fellowship in learning disabilities.

Sidney Page has made a gift of \$25,000 to be added to the Sidney and Bernice Page Scholarship Fund.

Jean Hosterman has made a \$10,000 bequest commitment to support the Women's Philanthropic Leadership Circle Fund.

Richard E. Karmuth gave \$10,000 to the Rev. Dr. Robert and Pauline Olson-Koenig Scholarship Fund.

A gift of \$151,725 was received from the estate of **Eva Donelson Wilson**; \$50,000 is directed to the Department of Family Social Science, and the remainder is to be used at the dean's discretion.

A gift of \$150,000 was received from the estate of **Laura G. Gaskins** to support the School of Social Work.

A gift of \$104,000 was received from the estate of **Eleanor V. Thorne** to establish the Carlus Selvig Scholarship Fund for teacher education.

A gift of \$65,774 was received from the estate of **Alpha Marie Gustafson** to be added to an endowed scholarship in her name for students studying secondary education.

CE+HD

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
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Search Could the top of the world be the ultimate classroom?



Search Results Learning technologies bring the Arctic to students.



So this is my classroom.

Aaron Doering, Bonnie Westby Huebner Chair of Education and Technology, and his team are taking steps to truly understand climate change in the Arctic. Through his adventure learning program, GoNorth!, K-12 students around the world join their expeditions via an online curriculum. By experiencing the natural world firsthand, students gain a real understanding of global climate change and collaborate on what we all can do to help.

Watch Aaron Doering describe adventure learning at <http://www.discover.umn.edu/featuredDiscoveries/subzeroClassroom.php> and see his Driven to Discover television ad at <http://www.discover.umn.edu/featuredDiscoveries/ads/subzeroClassroom.php>.

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