A SIGN for the community

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On the cover:
Robin Johnson and Christina Skahen, classmates in the deaf and hard-of-hearing master’s program, conversed in Bruininks Hall. Read the story on page 10.

Photo by Erica Loeks
from the dean: It seems like commencement, with all its joy and excitement, is barely over, and now we are already starting another school year, jumping back into the important work of our college. In the cover story of this issue beginning on page 10, you can read about students in our deaf and hard-of-hearing master's program who are meeting a critical need and inspiring us all. Lifelong learning is another theme of the stories you’ll find here.

This summer I had fun with our CEHD ‘road scholars.’ Our trip was a great way to get to know each other and learn more about higher education and communities in northern Minnesota—see page 4.

With this issue, we bid farewell to our editor of Connect. Eight years ago we hired Gayla Marty, whom you may have met because she is often at events learning more about our faculty, staff, students, and alumni. She has done an outstanding job of sharing our college’s stories and making sure all aspects of our research, teaching, and outreach are well represented, including our history. I always look forward to our meetings when she talks about the next issue and then enjoy looking at the drafts. She is retiring from the University but calling it her next commencement. I will miss her, her creativity, and her passion for CEHD.

Thank you for your dedication to education and learning and for your support of the college. Wishing you a happy new year of learning and discovery ahead.

Dean Quam congratulated a new graduate and her son at commencement on May 8.
CEHD CELEBRATED the achievements of more than 2,360 students at commencement ceremonies on May 8. Dean Quam kicked off each ceremony at 3M Arena at Mariucci by encouraging the graduates to always keep learning and to use their education for the greater good.

Speakers at the undergraduate ceremony came from family social science—Kania Johnson, BS ’19, was the student speaker, and faculty member Jill Trites gave the commencement address. The graduate ceremony speaker was educational psychology professor Michael Rodriguez, who later in the ceremony hooded Kory Vue, PhD ’19, making history as the first Hmong psychometrician.

Also among the graduates were Paul Ramseth, PhD ’18, and Amy Hamborg, EdD ’18, whose adviser Neal Nickerson, 91, presided as they received their hoods.

Hats off to our graduates!

Counterclockwise from top left: Paul Ramseth, PhD, with advisers Katie Pekel and Neal Nickerson; class of 2019; one of the day’s happy dances; undergraduate class speaker Kania Johnson; grads waved to thank family and friends; Kory Vue received his doctoral hood from professors Na’im Madyun and Michael Rodriguez.
Coaches convene

Well over 300 women coaches got a big welcome at TCF Bank Stadium in April. The sixth annual Women Coaches Symposium (WCS) sold out, drawing coaches from all over the country. This year the theme was self-care for coaches.

The program included breakout sessions and presentations by 23 leaders in coaching and sport science research. Cheryl Reeve, general manager and head coach for the WNBA’s Minnesota Lynx, pictured below right, gave the Jean K. Freeman Keynote and was on hand to congratulate WCS Coaches of the Year Jennifer Weber (youth), center, and Gretchen Hunt (college).

The symposium was founded by Nicole LaVoi, director of the Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport, pictured below left, to recruit and retain women in coaching.

Detour! Construction on the historic Knoll

The shady Knoll, where many CEHD buildings are located, is also the oldest part of the U. This spring saw the beginning of a major project to bring some very old systems up to date—electrical, sewer, and roadways. That means big disruptions for everyone coming to Burton, Child Development, Education Sciences, Pattee, and Peik Halls for awhile.

Phase 1 began in May and will continue through October 31—well into fall semester, including homecoming. During this phase, Pillsbury Drive is closed between East River Road and Pleasant Street SE, and East River Road is closed from University Avenue SE to the metered parking lot behind Burton Hall. Access the lot behind Burton Hall from the south via East River Road. Pedestrians and bikes, watch for detours and signs. Locations for CEHD activities are being worked out at press time.

Phase 2 is scheduled for the summer of 2020.

Learn more at news.cehd.umn.edu/upcoming-knoll-area-improvements-to-cause-building-access-issues.
In search of the good life

While many college students flocked south on spring break in March, a class of 18 in OLPD 5080, Examining the Good Life in Denmark, took their search for the good life to Copenhagen. It’s a nation consistently ranked among the top countries for quality of life, well-being, and happiness, but the class also explored contentious current issues such as immigration trends, taxation models, and media coverage of political tensions. Building on eight weeks of study before the journey, they used a multidisciplinary lens to ask questions such as What exactly is the good life? Who has access to it and who does not? How do Danish children perform in school compared to other children? What are the guiding philosophies of the education system?

With play and creativity as a component, the itinerary included a day trip to the International School of Billund, also known as LEGO School, shown right. Funded by the LEGO Foundation, the school is popular among its K–middle school students and parents as well as teachers, policymakers, and scientists. The class also visited Lego House, there they got to play and have fun themselves before coming home to finish their projects. The class is taught by Mike Stebleton, associate professor of higher education.

Road scholars

Dean Quam hails from the Red River Valley, and she hates to hear anyone at the U say they haven’t left the Cities. “That’s not good for any of us,” she says, “and certainly not for our teaching and research.” In May she led a three-day road trip especially for faculty new to and unfamiliar with Minnesota. They visited lots of landmarks—Lake Itasca and Bemidji, for two—and educational partners including the U of M Crookston, Minnesota Extension, Leech Lake Tribal College, and U of M Duluth. They made connections and learned about the state. “I had a wonderful time getting to know our ‘CEHD Road Scholars,’” said the Dean. She’s angling for Morris and Rochester next year.
Art for hope

Plain hallways and rooms have been standard at CEHD’s Institute for Translational Research on Children’s Mental Health (ITR), a clinical setting downtown that serves children and families. But in June, the institute received a gift of art to deck those halls and walls.

It’s not just any art. Uma Oswald is a young artist who discovered her gift as a child, long before mental illness struck. She painted through her years of illness, sometimes frightening figures and colors. Now a student at the Art Institute of Chicago working in other arts media, Oswald was happy to find her paintings a home where they can provide healing to others. At ITR, researchers study the latest findings about mental illness in young people. “It’s a fitting place for the work to be displayed,” says ITR associate director Chris Bray.

CEHD Reads

Date and time to be announced

Make Your Home Among Strangers is the common book at CEHD again this fall as part of the First Year Experience curriculum. Watch for details about a public event and guest speaker.

Info: cehd.umn.edu/reads

Supporting Early Social and Emotional Development online credential

Courses begin throughout the year

Learn how to incorporate infant and early childhood mental health principles into your current role in fields that support children and families.

Info: z.umn.edu/SESEDcredential

Take a class in CEHD

If you’re not currently enrolled in an academic program at the U, learn more at onestop.umn.edu/academics/take-class-non-degreeguest-student.

Fall at CEHD

CEHD at the Minnesota State Fair
Aug. 22–Sept. 2

Learn about impressive research and be part of a study at the fair. At the Driven to Discover Research Facility, adults and children can meet researchers and participate in a fun, convenient way. Look for “No peeking! Where is your hand?” (Jürgen Konczak, kinesiology), “Where does my money go?” (Virginia Zuiker, family social science), and “Hello! My name is IGDI! Testing preschool literacy” (Scott McConnell and Alisha Wackerle-Hollman, educational psychology), and many more. Most studies take under 20 minutes. Next to the Home Improvement Building on Cosgrove.

Info: d2d.umn.edu

Book Week with Donna Jo Napoli
Nov. 7

Prominent linguist and award-winning author Donna Jo Napoli is the guest author for Book Week 2019. Napoli has written dozens of acclaimed books for children and young adults, including retellings of fairy tales and historical fiction, many translated into languages around the world. Since the 1940s, Book Week has celebrated the best of children’s literature with teachers, librarians, and others who devote themselves to literacy for young readers. 5:30 p.m. reception, 6:15 p.m. lecture, followed by discussion and book signing. Free and open to the public.

Info: cehd.umn.edu/book-week

Arts and Social Work: Many Ways of Knowing
Sept. 17

Join the School of Social Work for an evening with singer-songwriter Anne Hills and professor Helen Q. Kivnick. Experience the role and contributions of the arts in social work education and practice. 1.5 CEUs in social work available for full attendance. St. Paul Student Center. 5 p.m. reception, 6–7:30 p.m. event. Free; RSVP required.

Info: www.cehd.umn.edu/events/8485
Taking action to improve outcomes

Two new NIH grants aim to detect autism earlier

IN MAY, THE UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCED a $3.7 million five-year grant for autism research from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for autism research. It came on the heels of a $9.5 million NIH grant awarded to the Infant Brain Imaging Study (IBIS) Network, in which the University is a data collection site. The research supported by the grants could lead to earlier, more accurate diagnosis of autism and better tailored interventions.

Jed Elison, associate professor of child psychology in CEHD’s Institute of Child Development and of pediatrics in the Medical School, will co-lead both grants at the University of Minnesota.

The first grant aims to develop population-based risk profiles that could predict whether a child will develop autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or related conditions later in childhood. Researchers will collect behavioral data and brain scans from children at various points throughout early development, beginning at 18 months old and ending at age three.

According to an autism prevalence study conducted by the Minnesota Autism Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, directed by Amy Hewitt and Jennifer Hall-Lande, approximately one in 42 school-aged children in Minnesota, and one in 59 nationally, has a diagnosis of ASD. Children who have older siblings with autism are at an even higher risk of developing the condition. Using current methods, ASD is difficult to diagnose early, as behavioral signs, like social communication deficits or restricted and repetitive behaviors, aren’t usually observable until at least age two. The average age of diagnosis is about five years old in Minnesota and about four years old nationally, meaning children typically don’t receive interventions until later in their development, after the brain becomes less plastic or malleable.

“The average age of ASD diagnosis is older in Minnesota than in other parts of the country,” said Elison.

Professor Jed Elison and research associate Sooyeon Sung welcomed a baby at the MRI facility.
“We owe it to Minnesotans to do better. With this research, we’re taking action.”

The first grant will bring together researchers from multiple University units, including the Institute of Child Development, Department of Educational Psychology, and Institute on Community Integration—all in CEHD—and the Departments of Pediatrics and Psychiatry in the Medical School, the College of Liberal Arts, and the College of Science and Engineering.

“The reason why early diagnosis is so important is that earlier diagnoses lead to earlier intervention, and early intensive interventions have been shown to improve outcomes,” said Suma Jacob, associate professor of psychiatry in the Medical School and co-lead of the University-specific study.

For the $9.5 million grant awarded to the IBIS Network, Elison and Jason Wolff, McKnight Presidential Fellow and associate professor of educational psychology, will serve as co-investigators and head efforts in Minnesota. The grant is led by Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis and the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill, with data collection sites at the University of Minnesota, University of Washington, and Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. The project is recruiting families from Minnesota and across the country and aims to develop a clinical magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) test for children at high risk for autism that would be able to predict a diagnosis of the condition before age one. To develop the test, researchers will compare the predictive ability of MRI measures with behavioral measures of autism.

“We hope to move beyond a diagnosis of ASD at age two years or later to using brain imaging in infants to predict later cognition and behavior at the individual level,” said Wolff. “Our goal is to develop and implement individualized interventions for infants at the highest risk for autism.”

An expanding research scope

The new grants build on previous research conducted by Elison, Wolff, and the IBIS Network that suggested that patterns of brain activity in high-risk, six-month-old babies may accurately predict which of them will develop ASD at age two.

Autism and developmental disabilities are top research priorities for CEHD because they are aligned with its vision to increase opportunities for all individuals to have a successful start in life and to foster healthy human development. The college recently awarded Elison and Wolff a $200,000 Developmental Project Award to develop a pre-symptomatic intervention for infants at high risk for developing autism, to grow interdisciplinary partnerships, and to extend their current federally funded efforts.

Learn more about the IBIS Network and how to participate in autism-related research at the University of Minnesota at www.ibis-network.org or email ibis@umn.edu.
Technology for health
Build great apps to save lives

AFTER PROFESSOR HEE LEE lost several people close to her to cancer, she felt compelled to change her research focus in social work, from family violence to cancer prevention. She recognized that cultural attitudes were acting as a barrier to screening that can catch cancer early, in time to save lives.

“I started going for routine cancer screening after my husband died,” says Lee, “but, because I am Korean, I still believe that if I do not feel symptoms or pain, I am totally healthy and do not need to go to a clinic, even for prevention.”

Lee also recognized that technology might be put to work in her effort. When she heard about Education Technology Innovations, a new tech development unit in CEHD, she made a call. That started her on the road to a promising collaboration.

Expanding the reach
When Lee wrote a grant application, she built ETI into her proposal. With funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), she is now investigating the effectiveness of a mobile-responsive application-based intervention that aims to increase human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccination rates among Hmong young people. And ETI’s team is playing a role.

“The Hmong population has high cervical cancer rates,” says Lee. Yet the HPV vaccine, which requires a series of shots, is highly effective in its prevention.

Reaching young people—and their parents—around a topic that involves disease prevention as well as sexuality would be complex. Add the cultural dimension and limited English proficiency of many parents and the challenge was daunting.

John Behr is the chief technology officer for ETI.
He met with Lee and assembled the team to start developing the technology to support her research. That required a lot of collaboration along with education on all sides of the table and eliciting feedback from everyone involved in the project.

“A huge part of our mission is developing these technologies that expand the reach of the work,” says Behr. “We needed to learn not just about the research but about the people who will be in the study for it be successful.”

Design proved to be a major factor in the work. ETI designer Viet Do started researching options and cultural context.

“At the beginning I knew nothing about it,” says Do. “For example, with color—after we showed some early designs of the application to people like those who would be in the study, that helped us refine the color palette.”

The resulting interface is distinctive in colors and icons that connect strongly to traditional Hmong art. Even the acronym HPV took on another meaning: Hmong promoting vaccines. A frequently-asked-questions page was created to address questions simply and directly.

The ETI team also built a quiz model as a tool to increase knowledge about HPV and the vaccine.

“It’s not a phone app but a mobile-responsive app,” Behr says. “That means desktop, mobile devices, tablet. Especially with HPV, that’s important, because a lot of kids live only on their phone, but the parents don’t!”

At the same time, ETI built tools within the application so the researchers can easily access and analyze their data.

The pilot study is now in progress and will be wrapping up this fall. Lee and her team will analyze the results with the small sample and, based on the results, identify next steps. But they are already talking about writing a grant to support a larger study based on what they’ve learned.

This is just one of Lee’s research projects related to cancer health disparities among underserved minority populations. Last year she accepted a position as associate dean for research and an endowed chair on the faculty in social work at the University of Alabama. She continues to work with ETI and the research team in Minnesota, and she’s been spreading the word about ETI to colleagues.

An ecosystem of solutions

Associate professor of medicine Anne Blaes, MD, heard about ETI from Hee Lee. Now Blaes is working with ETI on a research project to help cancer survivors live longer, with Lee as a co-investigator.

Blaes has a special interest in cancer survivorship, the late effects of cancer therapy, and medical education. With cure rates approaching 90 percent, many Hodgkin lymphoma survivors are living for decades following their cancer treatment, says Blaes. That is exciting news, but they are at a greater risk of dying from second cancers and cardiovascular disease than recurrence of lymphoma, and many don’t know it.

“Sixty-five percent of Hodgkin survivors do not know they are at risk for secondary cancers, and 45 percent do not know they have an increased risk of cardiovascular disease,” Blaes says. She is leading a team to perform a randomized controlled clinical trial, enrolling 40 Hodgkin lymphoma survivors treated between 1988 and 2009 in Minnesota to find out whether a novel method of delivering survivorship information using mobile technology, called MAPS, is effective in improving their knowledge about cardiovascular disease and breast cancer.

“Given that most cancer survivors use technology and mobile platforms to learn about cancer and health, we are excited to launch our study and determine how effective it is,” says Blaes.

Blaes worked with the ETI team to build MAPS. It has a wholly different look and feel than Lee’s HPV app, yet the team was able to apply a lot of the knowledge they’d already gained. For example, the quiz model they created for the HPV app could be adapted for MAPS.

“It has taken a little while for those of us as clinicians and researchers, not in technology, to understand all the pieces of work that are necessary in building an electronic platform,” Blaes says.

She says it’s required patience and communication from both teams. Her team has needed to communicate what patients want to see, and how they need to be able to access pieces such as lists of resources, where they can get cancer screening or access to a cancer survivorship clinic.

“They have been easy to work with,” says Blaes. “I would strongly encourage anyone who is interested in using technology and mobile platforms as part of a study to consider John and his team.”

As for ETI, the whole team is energized by the mission and its ripple effect across lives.

“We’re building this ecosystem of solutions,” says Behr. “We’re able to build great apps that have a profound impact on people’s lives and increase their reach in ways they normally wouldn’t have.”

Learn more about the HPV app at hmonghpv.com and about MAPS at hodgkinlymphomasurvivors.com. Learn more about ETI at eti.umn.edu.
A sign for the community

Students prepare as role models for the deaf and hard of hearing
FROM A YOUNG AGE, Robin Johnson learned to communicate with his family in American Sign Language (ASL). He, his parents, and all but one of his siblings are deaf. With interpreters, he attended an elementary school with hearing children in his hometown of Deer River in northern Minnesota. In sixth grade, Johnson’s parents began living in Faribault during the school year so he and his three deaf siblings could attend school at Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf (MSAD).

“Growing up deaf, I came to understand the struggles kids go through,” Johnson says. “There aren’t many deaf teachers out there. I read and write well because I had ‘emergent literacy’ since birth through deaf parents who communicated in ASL. I want to further those skills and help improve literacy in my Deaf community.”

Today, Johnson is a student in the Department of Educational Psychology’s deaf education program, where he’s earning his master of education and deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) teaching licensure. Since starting graduate school last fall, Johnson says he’s been impressed with the accommodations—interpreters and note takers—the University’s Disability Resource Center has provided him to support his language needs. He’s enjoyed his DHH classes, which are taught entirely in sign language, with interpreters providing support for communication access between DHH students and hearing students who aren’t fluent in ASL.

“I love having teachers who can sign and who use the same language I do,” says Johnson. “ASL is just as equivalent as English.”

As part of his coursework, Johnson has completed two of his three practicum requirements in two different Twin Cities schools—working with deaf and hard-of-hearing children in an early childhood classroom, and with 18- to 21-year-olds in a transition program.

Johnson has been working in deaf schools in a variety of positions since he graduated in 2000 from Gallaudet University, a leading institution of

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Careers in deaf and hard-of-hearing education

- Teachers in classrooms at residential or day schools for the deaf
- Teachers in classrooms or resource rooms with DHH programming
- DHH consultants to general classroom teachers
- Itinerant teachers or early interventionists serving students and their families
- Individualized support for DHH students from birth through young adults from a variety of cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds who may have additional disabilities
learning, teaching, and research for deaf and hard-of-hearing students in Washington, DC. Before entering the University’s DHH program, Johnson and his wife were both working and raising their two children. Johnson’s childhood experiences and work with deaf and hard-of-hearing students inspired him to become a teacher. But cost was a barrier.

When Johnson heard about new funding from something called Project PACT, available to students in the DHH program, his dream of being a teacher became a reality.

“Project PACT was the biggest reason I was finally able to apply to the program,” he says.

As for what’s next, Johnson wants to inspire young deaf people to dream big.

“I’d like to be a role model for the younger generations—to see kids grow up and have successful lives,” he says. “That’s the biggest motivation for me.”

**Communication for early development**

Child development, educational psychology, and deaf-education research tell us language acquisition and social–emotional development start from birth with talking or signing to young children. Because early communication is so critical, there are many negative implications when a child is not exposed to a fully accessible language from birth. For many deaf children, sign language is the only fully accessible language.

Deafness is one of the most common findings during newborn screenings, and over 90 percent of deaf children are born to hearing parents. That means that, unlike Johnson, many deaf children are unable to fluently communicate with their parents in a fully accessible language. For many, school may be the first and only place they are able to fully express themselves.

While most special educators encourage inclusive classrooms—general-education classrooms in which students with and without disabilities learn together—DHH educators may recommend deaf and hard-of-hearing students attend specialized schools for the deaf. This helps them gain access to fluent language models and avoid developmental delays while providing a sense of community and self.

“When DHH kids are delayed in language—for example because they experience language deprivation—this affects both academic and social–emotional development,” says Debbie Golos, associate professor of educational psychology and program coordinator for the DHH program. “Having DHH teachers who are deaf or hard of hearing, and teachers who are fluent in ASL and invite deaf and hard-of-hearing role models into the classroom, provides students with both cultural and linguistic role models to help them form positive identities and develop the necessary skills for academic success.”

**Responding to a need for teachers**

The University has a long legacy of training teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing. Its DHH program started in the 1950s and was originally housed in the Speech Language Pathology Department in the College of Liberal Arts. In the 1970s, it moved to the College of Education and Human Development through the efforts of Maynard Reynolds, a professor of educational psychology. Reynolds’ interests in teaching deaf children were undoubtedly shaped by watching his father, who was deaf, overcome adversity.

Today, students in the DHH master of education and teaching licensure programs learn the skills they need to teach deaf and hard-of-hearing students from birth through age 21. The two-year
program also emphasizes working with families of children who are deaf and hard of hearing to support learning, identity development, respect and equity for ASL and English, and cultural diversity. During the school year, all classes are taught in the evening to allow students—currently employed in schools—to continue working during the day. Students gain a variety of experiences through three practicum placements at different DHH educational settings and with three different DHH age groups throughout their studies. In their final spring semester, students also complete a 15-week, full-time student-teaching practicum. Graduates of the program leave with the qualifications they need to apply for their DHH teaching licensure in Minnesota.

Access through Project PACT

While a few things have changed about the program over the years, some things remain the same. According to the Minnesota Department of Education, DHH teacher positions remain some of the most in-demand in the state. And the program continues to be committed to training more people who are deaf and hard of hearing, like Johnson, to become teachers.

Debbie Golos joined the Department of Educational Psychology and began coordinating the DHH program in 2016. She gets more requests to hire DHH program graduates from schools for the deaf and hard of hearing than she has students to fill those positions, she says.

The program also has a history of receiving and providing funding to prepare future teachers. To help continue to meet the need for DHH teachers, Golos applied for and received $1.2 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Education.

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**Inspired by American Sign Language**

A different way of seeing things

In 1987, a deaf student at the U whose first language was American Sign Language (ASL) petitioned to take an English course to fulfill his second-language requirement. After he succeeded, other students began to request ASL be offered as a second language.

The dean of the College of Liberal Arts called the dean of CEHD to enlist the help of Susan Rose. At the time, Rose was an associate professor and coordinator of the master of education and deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) teaching licensure programs. By the summer of 1990, Rose began recruiting ASL instructors from across the country to teach the University’s first sign language courses.

“I told people I thought maybe 30 or 35 students would enroll,” recalls Rose, now professor emerita in the Department of Educational Psychology. “A few days later I looked, and 350 students had registered!”

Today, ASL is a requirement of the DHH program and one of the largest languages at the U, with roughly 700 to 800 students in classes each semester.

“People are naturally fascinated with ASL because it is a visual language and a new form of modality compared to spoken languages,” says Jonathan Penny, ASL program coordinator and instructor. Modality refers to grammatical expressions that relay intentions as well as the speaker’s belief that something is true, obligatory, desirable, or actual. “It’s also learning how to communicate spatially instead of the linear-like sequence of spoken languages. A fundamental component is learning how to express and receive language in a visual and physical modality without the use of aural and oral channels.”

For Penny and most of the instructors, ASL is their first language, and all of them are native or fluent, which Rose says opens up a whole new world for students.

“Each semester, our instructors are exposing 700 to 800 students—many of whom are undergrads—to Deaf language and culture,” says Rose. “It’s pretty inspiring.”

—Sarah Jergenson

To learn more about the American Sign Language program at the U of M, visit [z.umn.edu/asl-program](http://z.umn.edu/asl-program).
of Education to support Project PACT, or Preparation About Collaborative Teaching. The project aims to encourage more students to apply to the DHH program—especially highly qualified students who are deaf or hard of hearing, children of deaf adults (CODAs), and parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing with or without disabilities. Project PACT also funds graduate students in the academic behavioral strategist (ABS) teaching licensure program who are interested in cross collaborations with the DHH program.

With the help of Project PACT, the program is growing. In 2018–19, there were two cohorts in the DHH program totaling 12 students. In 2019, another eight are expected to join the group.

From interpreter to advocate

Christina Skahen, a hearing classmate of Robin Johnson, became involved in the Twin Cities Deaf community as a child. She was close to family friends who were deaf and she attended a church with deaf ministries, where she made friends. Her experiences with the Deaf community sparked her interest in ASL.

“I just really enjoyed being connected to Deaf culture and community and was determined to learn ASL,” Skahen recalls. “This was before the internet, so I would go to the library and rent ASL books or videos. There weren’t that many—maybe four. I would rent them over and over and memorize the signs in each video.”

In high school, Skahen took postsecondary classes in ASL at North Central University. After graduation, she spent a gap year volunteering at a residential school for the deaf in Puerto Rico, working as a paraprofessional in the classrooms, staffing the kitchen, and serving as a resident adviser in the dorms.

“It was my first true immersion experience,” Skahen recalls. “My roommate was deaf, and all of the people on my floor were deaf. I was signing and not talking a lot.”

When Skahen came back to Minnesota, she majored in ASL English interpreting at North Central University in 2013. Since then, she’s been working as an interpreter, often interpreting in metro area schools. Her knowledge of ASL and Deaf culture has made it difficult for her to remain a neutral party.

“I love interpreting, but I’ve also felt really stuck in it,” she says. “As an interpreter, you try to push aside all of your biases.”

According to Skahen, a lot of the DHH teachers she’s met don’t know ASL and often haven’t had much personal life experience with deaf people. This makes it difficult for them to communicate one-on-one with students in their classroom, she explains.

“I would be interpreting and witness a student getting reprimanded for a rule that no one ever explained to him,” Skahen says. “Having to interpret those kinds of conversations was really hard. I got to a breaking point where I just knew I couldn’t keep watching it every day.”

One of Skahen’s friends, who was also an interpreter, suggested she be part of the solution by becoming a DHH teacher. She applied for the Project PACT grant and was thrilled to receive full funding for her master’s and DHH licensure.

Today, Skahen is starting the second year of her program while continuing to work as a freelance interpreter. Thanks to the funding she received from Project PACT, she’s been able to cut back her interpreting to 30 hours a week.

“I go to class in the evenings and study all weekend,” she says. “It’s a lot, but it’s worth it to know I can now do more than just watch students struggle. I can make a difference.”

Learn more about the deaf and hard-of-hearing program in the Department of Educational Psychology at z.umn.edu/dhh-info/ and Project PACT at z.umn.edu/ProjectPACT.
ANNE-MARIE KUIPER first stepped on campus in 1998 as an exchange student from the Netherlands with a dream of one day managing a five-star hotel.

“It’s amazing how life has its own journeys,” she muses.

Surrounded by stacks of labor reports, journal articles, and graphs of workforce trends, Kuiper’s office today is a far cry from the Ritz-Carlton. Her employer, Summit Academy OIC in North Minneapolis, is a vocational school that provides students with skills in high-demand fields such as construction, carpentry, information technology services, and community health, and helps them transition to the workforce.

Kuiper’s first contact with Summit Academy took place as a graduate student, a decade after she arrived at the U as an undergrad. But her major was the same: human resource development, commonly known by the acronym HRD.

“She came to interview me for her thesis,” recalls Louis King, Summit’s President and CEO.

Although Kuiper’s initial exposure to HRD stemmed from her interest in hospitality management, she holds a master’s degree in American studies.
focused on urban poverty among African Americans. A course in international HRD, taught by Gary McLean, co-founder of the program at the University, helped her see a bridge between her two areas of interest.

“The course took a much broader societal view of the role HRD can play in improving the economic, political, social, and cultural well-being of a community or a society,” Kuiper recalls. She didn’t have to look far to identify a community where she could apply those insights.

“I’m at the University of Minnesota, focusing on HRD as a way to improve the economic livelihood of communities that are struggling with persistent poverty, and I’m five minutes away from one of the poorest neighborhoods in the Twin Cities. It’s no accident that I’m here. It is paramount that work is done right here in this neighborhood to address the disparities that we face.”

As part of her dissertation research, Kuiper assisted MADDADS with their efforts to build community, address violence, and reduce crime in the neighborhood, conducting outreach on buses and listening to people’s stories.

Not one for self-promotion, Kuiper recalls that King was initially hesitant to meet with her. There’s a history of researchers reaching out to study the North Minneapolis community without working to improve things when their work is finished.

“At one point, I was able to interview him, and he asked me about HRD,” Kuiper remembers. “I explained that my focus was in vocational training; it became clear that we had a lot of overlapping interests, and there was a potential for me to make an impact at Summit Academy.”

Operating from the fundamental belief that “the best social service program in the world is a job,” the school offers programs that can be completed within 20 weeks at no cost to the students.

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HRD Programming

OLPD offers nine different programs with tracks in HRD.

UNDERGRADUATE
- BS in human resource development
- Certificate in adult education
- Certificate in human resource development

GRADUATE
- PhD in organizational leadership, policy, and development (track in human resource development)
- MA in organizational leadership, policy, and development (track in human resource development)
- MEd in human resource development
- MEd in adult education
- Certificate in adult education
- Certificate in adult literacy
- Certificate in human resource development
King’s recollection of their first meeting is more enthusiastic.

“I was struck by her skill set, her knowledge of my profession,” he says. “She was quick—she came out of an academic environment, but she was quick to grasp the practical applications and implications of the facts beyond an exercise in thought.

“When she described HRD to me,” King continues, “it was clearly related to what I had learned in the military and what I was doing at Summit. It wasn’t a stretch at all; it just gave a name to what I was doing. It was clear [speaking with Kuiper] that I was part of a bigger body of thought. I decided to hire her.”

Today, as Summit Academy’s director of strategic development, Kuiper researches workforce supply and demand at local, state, national, and international levels to identify areas where Summit’s programs can make the greatest impact. On a day-to-day basis, she spends a lot of time reading, interpreting, synthesizing, and contextualizing labor reports; developing strategies for the school in response to those data; and pitching those strategies periodically to Summit’s leadership and advisory board.

“It’s so common to view poverty as this insurmountable problem,” says Kuiper, “but when you provide people with education, marketable skills, and social networks at no cost, you will see things change pretty drastically.”

While her success and expertise speak for themselves, Kuiper often has to explain how her field relates to her day-to-day work.

“I often refer to HRD as human capital development,” she says. “It takes the conversation to a broader discussion around the education and training of people at large, not just individuals in an organization. The true strength of HRD is at this much broader, bigger scale—its relevance to the economic vitality of a region, a local setting, or even globally.”

**Discovering human resource development**

Ask a person on the street about HRD, and you’ll most likely hear a description of a benefits counselor or payroll supervisor.

“That’s human resource management,” clarifies HRD professor Ken Bartlett. “HRD, in comparison, is focused on making people and organizations better tomorrow than they were today.”

HRD is an interdisciplinary field that combines insights from psychology, sociology, economics, organizational development, and education to explore the human aspects of how organizations run. Among other things, HRD professionals design training and development programs, identify system and business process needs, forecast necessary staffing changes, and improve employee engagement and performance.

HRD is often referred to as a “discovery” major because many students either don’t know it exists until they encounter it by happenstance, or they harbor only a partial understanding of the field. According to Bartlett, it’s common that students attracted to HRD either know or have been told they’re good at teaching, but they don’t want to be a classroom teacher. HRD is a path to the many ways that education and human development play a role in people’s lives after they leave a formal school or college for the last time, helping them to have the right skills in the right places to be able to do their jobs and contribute in their communities.

Students in the HRD program study training and development, organization development, leadership development, career development, and similar topics. A common misperception—even among prospective and newly enrolled students—is that HRD is wholly focused on corporate environments. In reality, the field addresses a broad range of contexts.

“I think people in HRD sometimes feel like their only options are to be a consultant or work for a Fortune 500 company,” Kuiper says. “That’s a very limited, narrow scope.” She adds that many people aren’t aware that HRD is what she does, citing a visit to an HRD class to talk about her work.

“There were students passionate about youth development who wanted to do something in the community,” she says. “They had not thought of HRD as a vehicle that they could use to make an impact in those ways. Whether you’re interested in algebra or education or politics, you can use HRD to drive real change.”

Joshua Collins, associate professor and coordinator of the HRD program, has observed the interests of students changing during their course of study, becoming more interested in the learning part of HRD and opening to a variety of types of organizations as potential employers.

“We have that orientation to organizational life that prioritizes individual learning, career development, capacity building, [and] has an understanding that people’s lives outside of the workplace impact lives inside of the workplace,” says Collins. “We take that into account as we think about appropriate measures for their individual learning and career development.
That people-first mentality within organizations is what differentiates HRD and makes us unique.”

From a management perspective, this is precisely what makes HRD so valuable: by working to improve their employees’ knowledge, skills, and talents, organizations increase productivity and employee job satisfaction while reducing turnover. However, Collins is quick to point out that it works both ways: a people-first approach to organization development also promotes social justice.

“If you’re interested in business and management and HR functions of organizations,” he says, “and the reason that you’re interested in those things is that you really value people in terms of their stories, lives, and individuality, then HRD is a great place to explore your interests.”

**Minnesota, a place for HRD**

“This was my dream institution when I was going through my doctoral studies,” says Collins, noting that there’s not a major HRD program in the country without a U of M grad on its faculty. “We’re known as a field leader and field shaper.”

The program traces its history at the University back to the late 1940s, with the formation of the Distributive Education Department and the business education program. In 1974, business education programs were moved to the Department of Vocational and Technical Education. Changing demands in the field led to the creation in 1981 of a new program, training and development in industry and business. The name was changed to human resource development when the adult education program joined the department in 1993. HRD now resides in the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development.

Over the years, thousands of students not only from Minnesota but also from around the world have completed HRD programs at the University. McLean has retired from the faculty but continues to work as a global consultant and professor based in Minneapolis.

“All of the HRD programs in South Korea—13 the last time I counted them—are staffed primarily by graduates of the University of Minnesota’s HRD program,” he says. The same is true in Thailand, where he and Bartlett teach courses as visiting faculty.

Very few peer institutions are located in a large, vibrant metropolitan area with a research university of Minnesota’s caliber, and a big metropolitan setting means much more than business.

Both undergraduate and graduate students seeking a degree in HRD are required to complete an internship amounting to a minimum of 180 hours. These usually focus on a specific program or task that lends itself to analysis and resolution during the timeframe. Program faculty maintain relationships with a wide range of organizations in the Twin Cities and around the state to suit student interests: for-profit, non-profit, government, and consultants.

“All of the internships are practice oriented,” says Dave Christesen, who joined the program’s faculty in 2008 after more than 20 years as an executive at Travelers insurance company. “It’s a time for students to compare theory and practice, which is a very important part of all HRD coursework.”

Internships are valuable not only for HRD students but also for the organizations in which they serve and learn. Christesen cites recent student internships that span every sector: large corporations, such as Ecolab and United Health; other departments and offices within the U (agriculture, dentistry, learning abroad, TRIO); non-profits, such as community health clinics and daycare centers; the State of Minnesota; the Minnesota Organization Development Network, a consulting project; and small businesses, including family farms.

For Kuiper, the fact that the University’s HRD program is situated within a college of education instead of a business school is a key.

“If I had ended up elsewhere, it’s pretty safe to say I would not be working in this environment,” she says. “CEHD uses a much broader societal lens and allows students to work across disciplines. It provided the opportunity for me to think big.”

Bartlett agrees about the importance of location in a college of education and human development as broad as CEHD. It allows scholars to leverage shared expertise related to learning, learning across the lifespan, technology in learning, educational psychology, and measurement—across departments and programs.
“If you’re looking to hire someone with an MBA, you go to a school of management,” said Bartlett. “If you’re looking for someone who understands learning, has a deep understanding of some of the current and contextual issues in organizations, somebody who is deeply committed to diversity and equity issues, then the HRD graduate from our program can really rise to the fore. A fantastic example is Anne-Marie. She really is changing lives through the application of HRD to historically underserved and disadvantaged populations. Her research and work benefit the entire community.”

**Trends**

Two factors ensure that human resource development will continue to be a field in transition: the impact of technology, and changing social demographics.

Kuiper, who sits on multiple local and regional collaboratives, is keenly aware of how these factors intersect.

“HRD will have to be in the center of conversations concerning the impact of technology on our workforce and economy,” she says. “For example, when I look at the impact automation will have on any job that is routine and non-cognitive, low-income jobs are going to be some of the first to be eliminated. Who’s going to be most impacted by that?”

All of Minnesota’s population growth is among people of color, she notes. She sees HRD’s role in helping businesses recruit and retain them as a key state-level trend in the field.

“Hundreds of thousands of jobs are at risk,” agrees McLean. “HRD needs to keep ahead of these changes to prepare organizations and the workforce.”

As an expert in the subfield of critical HRD, Collins pushes to contextualize these factors.

“A lot of organizations are very concerned with workplace civility,” he says, “but they often use that term to refer to workplace climates where people aren’t getting into fights. The way policies are written, someone might say something racist, and the person who calls them out in a public forum gets equally punished. I would argue that’s not ‘civility’—the anti-racist should maybe even be rewarded for doing that very difficult work of calling out racist behaviors.”

Collins clarifies that, increasingly, the question of developing human resources hinges on a need to make moral or ethical arguments to promote social justice.

“Diversity and inclusion in the workplace should matter regardless of how they may or may not impact the bottom line,” he says. With racial and ethnic minorities in the United States on track to become the majority by 2040, organizations that fail to develop their workforce with these factors in mind are especially vulnerable. It’s no coincidence that Summit Academy aims to address these issues head-on.

The way theory and practice intersect in this manner is one of the aspects of HRD that Kuiper enjoys the most. She believes more people are needed with the ability to be both broad and narrow in focus.

“It’s one of the few fields that gives you the opportunity to dive into multiple disciplines and connect the dots in a way that works with your interests, where you see there is a need, with your passion,” she says.

When asked about Kuiper’s impact at Summit, King agrees.

“She’s definitely brought rigor to our analysis, to our work,” says King. “The academic environment is oftentimes separated from the world of CTE [career and technical education]. She’s absolutely incredible, the energy and integrity she brings, her strong work ethic and great ideas. She has helped take our organization to another level.”

Learn more about human resource development and the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development at [cehd.umn.edu/olpd](cehd.umn.edu/olpd).
JEANNETTE PICCARD, PhD ’42, gained fame twice in her life: in 1934 when she became the first woman to reach the stratosphere, and again in 1974 when she became the first woman ordained as a priest in the Episcopal church.

In the Discovery Gallery on the University Scholars Walk, it’s her 11-mile ascent that’s celebrated. She made it as the pilot of a seven-foot-diameter pressurized gondola carrying scientific instruments, her children’s pet turtle, and her husband, Jean Piccard—work that laid the groundwork for human space flight. When Star Trek creator Gene Roddenberry named The Next Generation captain Jean-Luc Picard, it was a nod to Jean Piccard but can be considered a nod to Jeannette, too.

“I didn’t go up with him, he went up with me,” Jeannette quipped in an interview years later. Her husband needed a pilot, and she became one.

Jeannette and Jean were partners in science, invention, and engineering. When Jean was hired at the University in 1936 to teach aeronautical engineering, the dean made clear that Jeannette was part of the deal. Bob Gilruth, ’36, the Iron Range native who went on to head the NASA Manned Spaceflight Center in the 1960s, was a graduate student then and remembered her in the classroom with her husband. After Jean’s death in 1963, Gilruth hired Jeannette as a consultant for NASA during the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo missions.

“She was very bright, had her own doctor’s degree, and was at least half the brains of that family, technical as well as otherwise,” said Gilruth. “She was something. She was good.”

Jean and Jeannette Piccard emerged from the pressurized gondola after their flight in 1934.
In fact, it was between her two periods of fame that Jeannette Piccard got that doctoral degree in education. And her dissertation wasn’t about either science or religion, but housing—specifically, housing for married graduate students at the U.

Her marks in all areas were connected by her powerful intelligence and spiritual life. Piccard was driven by a calling that guided her discovery.

An early vision

Jeannette Ridlon was only 11 when she expressed her desire to be a priest to her mother, who was shocked. It was 1906, and her family was Episcopalian but not particularly religious. Jeannette voluntarily attended confirmation classes the next year, took her first communion, and established a daily spiritual practice that would last her lifetime.

Born in 1895, Jeannette was one of nine children of a Chicago surgeon. She lost her identical twin sister at the age of three as the result of a fire started by a dollhouse stove, and her next-closest sister two years later to appendicitis. As she grew up, she learned to keep her aspirations to herself, but she finished high school and insisted on college, where she studied philosophy and psychology.

Then World War I intervened. At the University of Chicago, Jeannette chose a master’s degree in organic chemistry to “free a man for the front,” as the saying went. That was how she met visiting professor Jean Piccard, a Swiss pioneer in balloon technology already well known, along with his own twin brother, Auguste, in Europe. She finished her degree and they married in 1919, moving to Switzerland, where three sons were born. The youngest was an infant when they moved back to the United States in 1926 after Jean accepted a professorship at MIT, followed by a series of industry jobs.

Serenity and fun

“Who is that woman with the serene face and six horrible children?” someone was heard to inquire in a church where she attended as a newcomer. It was a story that was passed down through the family with laughter, because Jeannette did possess a remarkable sense of calm and joy, and she also was known for taking in foster children in addition to her own three boys. Robert Gilruth, for example, thought the Piccards had 12.

It was serenity that Jeannette described as the peak of her stratospheric experiences in open-air as well as pressurized gondolas. She was the first woman officially licensed to pilot balloons, an assignment she seized and completed in the summer of 1934 as she and Jean prepared for their flight of scientific discovery using a balloon leftover from the Chicago Exposition the year before.

“You go where the wind goes,” she said. “You feel like part of the air. You almost feel like part of eternity, and you just float along.”

Yet it wasn’t passive. Flying a balloon is “more fun than a goat,” she later told a Minnesota reporter. “In a balloon, I lose all sense of earthly necessity.”

That was another characteristic of Jeannette, remembered well by her son, Don Piccard, now of Columbia Heights, who grew up to become a balloonist himself.

“As a mother, she was fun,” says Don. “She liked to play, and she had a good time.” She won a limerick contest on the radio, liked to chop wood in the back yard, and always had projects going.

When their parents launched the famous flight in 1934, the Piccard boys stayed on the ground in Dearborn, Michigan, and weren’t surprised to hear their mother had brought down the gondola safely in Ohio, 600 miles away.

“No, I wasn’t afraid,” says Don, who was eight at the time. Soon Jean was a professor in Minnesota, and the family settled a mile down the Mississippi from his campus lab.

A PhD of her own

In the late 1930s, Jeannette Piccard was in her early 40s. The first of her sons had started at the University and her youngest, Don, had reached his teens. It was time to prepare for the next chapter.

Jeannette knew college students. As she told an interviewer years later, she decided to prepare for a position like dean of women, counseling college women thinking about their future lives, and she enrolled in a doctoral program in education. When it came time to choose her dissertation topic, she said would have preferred a topic like changing religious attitudes. Instead,
“She had to make a leap,” Sally Brummel says of Jeannette Piccard. As a woman in science herself, Brummel, MEd ’16, has discovered the stories of many pioneering women across the STEM disciplines—science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The striking thing, she says, is that “these women didn’t give up and go home.”

Her colleague Sarah Komperud, MEd ’12, adds, “[Jeannette Piccard] must have been very self-motivated...she had to know her own abilities.”

Brummel and Komperud are leaders, too. Both are alumni of the master of education program in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Today they are two of four full-time staff members for the Whitney and Elizabeth MacMillan Planetarium at the University’s Bell Museum—manager and programs coordinator, respectively.

Brummel recently wrote One Giant Leap, an original Bell production celebrating the 50th anniversary of the first Moon landing, which Piccard worked so hard to make possible. The museum’s “Year of Apollo: The Moon and Beyond” continues into the fall, celebrating the past and looking forward “to a new era of inspiration, innovation, and discovery.”

Komperud teaches astronomy across a range of programs including a traveling planetarium, called the ExploraDome, and Skynet Scholars, where middle schoolers learn to operate research-grade telescopes through the internet.

“In first grade, I wanted to be an astronaut,” Komperud grins. “It was my love of telescopes that convinced me to major in physics, and here I can work with them every day!”

Brummel and Komperud both majored in physics as undergraduates, started grad school in astrophysics, then discovered their love of educational programs by working in planetariums, Brummel in Maryland and Komperud in New Jersey. In Minnesota’s STEM education program, they found the flexibility and support that prepared them for teaching outside traditional classrooms.

Komperud is excited to create learning environments like Skynet Scholars, where gender equity is a reality. Brummel looks forward to bringing a play called Silent Sky to the planetarium in 2020 about Henrietta Levitt, an astrophysicist in the 1920s, produced by a local theater company.

On the STEM education faculty in CEHD, Barbara Billington has studied gender equity.

“We know there is no big gap in what girls and boys can do in terms of STEM,” she says, “but men still outnumber women in most STEM careers.” Only 20 percent of computer scientists are women, for example.

Billington has made it a priority to find and help to create resources that can turn girls onto STEM. She has contributed to TPT’s SciGirls initiative, including short, fun role-model videos about women in STEM, some right in the Twin Cities. She cites six strategies that teachers, counselors, and other adults can use to support a girl’s growing STEM identity and encourage her to consider a STEM career.

“The biggest one of those six is the sharing of female STEM role models,” says Billington. “This can have a lasting impact on girls.”

Read more at bellmuseum.umn.edu and cehd.umn.edu/STEM.
she agreed to research the University’s insufficient housing for married graduate students to complement a study of undergraduate housing going on at the time. Her adviser was Mervin Neale, but it was a topic suggested by her sociology professor, F. Stuart Chapin, a leader in the application of statistics in the field.

In typical fashion, Jeannette threw herself into the task. A total of 1,745 students were registered in graduate courses, but the vast majority were part-time. A few hundred were unmarried. Armed with tape measure and meticulously designed surveys, in fall quarter 1939 she visited and interviewed in person the nearly 300 graduate students enrolled full-time or working on their theses, or their spouses, for 45–60 minutes. Toddlers often climbed onto her lap and older children played with her. The hand that had tabulated flight data recorded numbers of rooms and their sizes, numbers of windows, wattage and type of study lamps, types of heaters and kitchen stoves. For the next two years she tabulated and analyzed her data.

In March 1942, she defended her thesis, all 437 pages, including 111 tables, five figures, and three captioned photos of addresses with hazardous and inhumane conditions. Six pages were fold-out ledger sheets with 42 columns of data, tabulated in her neat scientist’s hand, from address and degree program to annual income, numbers of children, and fire hazards. The crowded, dirty, and dangerous conditions she found sobered her readers, even considering the Depression period. Her study became part of a growing body of data that would help to improve living conditions for married graduate students at major universities across the country.

Yet, by the time she finished, the country was again at war. Instead of looking for a job at a college or university, Jeannette applied her expertise at the local board of civil defense, working on housing for military families. She volunteered on blood drives with the Salvation Army.

Four stars shone in the window at 1445 East River Road for her naturalized-citizen husband and their sons in the service. Upon hearing the name Piccard, U.S. naval officers assigned Don to a unit using balloons to train blimp pilots how to fly without power.

And as Jeannette observed, lives were being saved by frost-free windshields on bombers, a direct result of the Piccards’ work to make frost-free windows in their stratospheric cabin.

After the war, family housing at the U consisted of trailers and Quonset huts, many built for veterans returning to school. It wouldn’t be until the late 1960s that family housing, called Commonwealth Terrace, was built on the St. Paul campus, followed by the Como Student Community in 1975.

From housing to Houston

In the post-war years, the Piccard sons finished college and started families and careers—a mechanical engineer in an industrial laboratory, a professor of political science, and an innovator in patents and aeronautics. Jean suffered a stroke in the early 1950s and died in 1963. That was also the year Soviet Valentina Tareshkova officially became the first woman in space, 29 years after Jeannette and many miles higher.

It was on a visit to speak in
Minneapolis that one-time grad student Robert Gilruth, by then at NASA, saw Jeannette in the audience and recruited her to Houston.

In her new job as a consultant for NASA, Jeanette traveled around the country, speaking to students and community groups about the space program with energy, passion, and humor. After the first spacewalk by astronaut Ed White in June 1965, she often concluded her presentations with a film of that walk that continued to thrill her. She even ventured to share ideas with Gilruth and saw a few applied, such as the design of a periscope for the man-to-the-moon Apollo spacecraft.

In 1968, she received an Outstanding Alumni Award from the University, and in 1969 she spoke to high school students at Northrop Auditorium just weeks before Neil Armstrong walked on the moon in July.

In 1970, her post with NASA ended and she was back in Minnesota, where in 1971 she was ordained as a deacon in the Episcopal Church. Her final adventure had begun.

A spirit to serve

The first person to affirm Jeannette’s calling to the priesthood was Rev. Denzil Carty at St. Phillips Episcopal Church in the 1960s. The black congregation in St. Paul had become her spiritual home.

Jeannette regularly brought home someone for dinner who needed a meal, according to her granddaughter, Jane, who lived with her grandmother for a quarter while attending the U. Jeannette also found that, with age, she had acquired a gift for working with the sick and lonely elders in nursing homes. As a deacon she brought the Episcopal service and knew the comfort and connection to community it provided.

Jeannette had gained confidence and even greater skill in public speaking during her years traveling around the country for NASA. She’d also met and spoken to countless groups in the movement toward ordination for women. Now Jeannette once again took leave of her house on East River Road, this time for a year of seminary study in New York. At 77, Jeannette studied Greek and applied her incisive mind to scripture.

“None of the people who meant a great deal to Jeannette in her spiritual life had no support system. It shows the independence of her thinking,” says retired Rev. John Rettger, rector for an Episcopal church in Spring Lake Park at the time. “She had to make in herself, in her own mind, this tremendous leap between nineteen-hundred-and-some years of tradition and a bold thing.” He chuckles. “She was a balloonist! She had a different view.”

Rettger had never questioned the tradition. Hearing Jeannette Piccard persuaded him otherwise, and he invited her to speak at his church.

“She was thorough, almost lawyerly,” he says. “By marshalling all this evidence, little thing after little thing, she was able to do what is the mark of true scholarship: You come up with a new way.”

In 1974, Jeannette was the eldest of 11 women ordinands and first to be ordained as an Episcopal priest at a service in Philadelphia, attended by her three sons and 1,500 others. The ordination, carried out by three retired bishops, was controversial and not confirmed by the church until 1976 at a convention in Minneapolis that made headlines.

Jeannette Piccard fulfilled her calling and ministered as a priest and chaplain to the isolated and homebound until her death at Masonic Memorial Hospital in Minneapolis in 1981. She lived long enough to see a granddaughter, Katherine Piccard, also ordained as an Episcopal priest. Another granddaughter, Mary Piccard Vance, became an ordained Presbyterian minister.

“She believed she could do anything,” says granddaughter Jane Piccard, ’73, “and she did.”

Read more and link to sources at connect.cehd.umn.edu/heaven-and-earth.
Move and be free

Daheia Barr-Anderson researches physical activity and relationships

WHEN DAHEIA BARR-ANDERSON was growing up in South Carolina, she learned at an early age that girls were expected to behave like “young ladies.” In her family, that meant “kids were not supposed to move too much or be seen too much,” she says.

But that belief system did not prevail for Barr-Anderson. Motivating children and adolescents to move is at the core of her life’s work.

Barr-Anderson is an associate professor in the School of Kinesiology who specializes in the behavioral aspects of physical activity. She focuses on African American children and adolescents to find underlying individual and interpersonal barriers that contribute to obesity in families. A physical activity epidemiologist with a public health background, she is working to understand what motivates people to be physically active.

“I have an interest in working with African American females because of the low levels of physical activity and high levels of sedentary behavior,” she says. “I take a family-based approach, looking at how family members’ behavior may have an influence on the physical activity behavior of children.”

She strives to be a role model through her research and as a mom.

“I really focus on physical activity because of my two girls,” says Barr-Anderson. “I don’t want them to be a statistic. Over 40 percent of African American girls are overweight and obese compared to their same-age, different-race peers.”

Social dynamics of physical activity

Barr-Anderson directs the Behavioral Physical Activity Laboratory (BPAL), conducting studies that focus on physical activity as a behavior. One study explores how the physical and social environments of families influence physical activity and healthy eating interventions in African American adolescents.

“In the homes of African American families, we try to understand the dynamics between parents and children,” she says. “We want to see how this plays out in terms of influencing physical activity and healthy eating behaviors.”

She also has a study incorporating yoga to address obesity and cardiovascular disease in African American women. She created a yoga intervention for African American women who have high blood pressure rates, high levels of stress, and low levels of physical activity.

Barr-Anderson received her PhD from the University of Maryland in kinesiology with an emphasis in exercise epidemiology and her MS in public health from the University of South Carolina. After researching postdoctoral positions, she accepted an offer from the U of M’s School of Public Health in the Division of Epidemiology and Community Health.

“It was 16 degrees when I came for a two-day visit,” she recalls. “I was sitting around a table with professors, post-docs, master’s and PhD students, and there was this amazing dialogue going on. I realized this is where I want to be.”

Barr-Anderson places a priority on talking with her daughters about life and wellness.

“I want my girls to know that the possibilities are endless and they can be whatever they want to be,” she says. “I never want them to feel limited by race or gender, the status quo, or anything that could be considered a barrier.”

It’s a given that Barr-Anderson is not raising her daughters to be her family’s definition of “young ladies.”

“My girls are not like that—they’re free,” she laughs. “We move all the time. I want them to move and be free.”

—Marta Fahrenz

Learn more about Daheia Barr-Anderson and her work at cehd.umn.edu/kin/people/barra027.html.
Honored

Yonghwan Chang (kinesiology) has been named the 2019 Emerging Scholar in Sport Marketing and the 2019 North American Society for Sport Management Research Fellow.

Priscilla Gibson (social work) received a Fulbright award to the University of Namibia in 2020. She will teach and research caregivers’ strengths and capacities across generations amid their burdens in the HIV and AIDS pandemic in urban areas of Windhoek.

Jenifer McGuire (family social science) was honored by U of M Extension with the Distinguished Campus-Based Faculty Award for her collaboration with Parents Forever to support gay parents and for her research supporting the health and well-being of transgender youth.

Faith Miller (educational psychology) received the 2019–20 Faculty Interactive Research Program award from the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs for her project to improve measurement and evaluation of school mental health.

Gary Peter (organizational leadership, policy, and development) received the Midwest Book Award for Oranges, his novel in short stories. A story from the collection was performed in New York for Selected Shorts to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising.

Renáta Tichá (Institute on Community Integration) was recognized by NARRTC (formerly the National Association of Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers) for contributions that have strategically advanced the field of disability.

Andrew Zieffler (educational psychology) was named Outstanding Graduate Faculty in Psychology by the Minnesota Psychological Association.

Retired

Retiring faculty honored at the college’s spring assembly for their careers of distinguished teaching, research, and service in CEHD and the University communities were:

David Arendale (curriculum and instruction)

Roy Gaddey (organizational leadership, policy, and development and Center for Sales Leadership and Education)

Jean King (organizational leadership, policy, and development)

Thomas Skovholt (educational psychology)

Appointed and elected

Mary Jo Kane (kinesiology) became director emeritus of the Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport this spring after 25 years at the helm, and co-director Nicole LaVoi assumed sole directorship of the center.

Beth Lewis (kinesiology) has been selected by the National Institutes of Health to serve as a member of the Psychosocial Risk and Disease Prevention Study Section, Center for Scientific Review, for a four-year term.

Bic Ngo (curriculum and instruction) has been appointed co-editor of the journal Educational Studies for a five-year term that begins January 1.

Michael Rodriguez (educational psychology) has been appointed to the Minneapolis Foundation Board of Trustees and to the board of directors for the National Council on Measurement in Education.

Glenn Roisman (child development) has been appointed as the next editor of Child Development published by the Society for Research in Child Development.

The following were promoted to tenured associate professor:

Dan Berry (child development)

Bodong Chen (curriculum and instruction)

Joshua Collins (organizational leadership, policy, and development)

Amy Krentzman (social work)

Faith Miller (educational psychology)

Jason Wolff (educational psychology)

The following were promoted from associate to full professor:

Clayton Cook (educational psychology)

Tabitha Grier-Reed (family social science)

Mary Hermes (curriculum and instruction)

Muhammad Khalifa (organizational leadership, policy, and development)

Amanda Sullivan (educational psychology)

Sashank Varma (educational psychology)
Ken Bartlett, professor of human resource development (HRD), became chair of the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development (OLPD) July 15.

Originally from New Zealand, Bartlett earned his undergraduate degree in park and recreational management there and first came to the United States through a program for training park rangers, working as a wilderness ranger in Mt. Hood National Forest. His management work in that role led him to graduate school in Illinois for park and recreation, where he developed a keen interest in how public organizations differentiate themselves and develop a reputation as better, more efficient, and more effective places to work. He completed his PhD in HRD.

Bartlett joined the U in 1999 and built his academic career around internationally recognized expertise in HRD, strategic organizational change, employee engagement, and leadership development. From 2006 he chaired the Department of Work and Human Resource Education, which merged in 2009 with Educational Policy and Administration to form OLPD. He served as associate dean of CEHD 2010–18, focusing first on graduate, professional, and international education and then on faculty development. Rejoining the faculty fulltime in 2018, he served as coordinator for graduate programs in HRD.

As chair, Bartlett’s goal is to continue to build on the many strengths of the department so OLPD becomes an academic department that attracts, retains, and advances people dedicated to understanding and action for the roles of organizational leadership, policy, and development.

“We need to focus on research-supported remedies for education across the lifespan,” he says, “to move us to a world defined by increasing equity and equality.”

Kristen McMaster, Stern Family Professor of Reading Success, became chair of the Department of Educational Psychology July 1. McMaster earned her PhD in special education from Vanderbilt University and came to the department in 2002 as a lecturer in the special education program. She moved to a tenure-track position a year later and has called “Ed Psych” her academic home ever since.

McMaster says her experiences in the department have helped her to “grow as a scholar and contributed to the joy and satisfaction” she finds in her work. And as chair, she is looking to pay it forward. She envisions a department where faculty, staff, and students find fulfillment and meaning in their work each day.

“It is a place where the excellent research, teaching, and mentorship that happens every day is evident in the spaces we occupy and in all the things that we do,” she says.

A leader in the field of special education, McMaster researches ways to improve how academically diverse students—including those at risk for and with disabilities, and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds—respond to interventions. McMaster currently serves on three federally funded research grants. And in recent years, she gained valuable leadership experience overseeing undergraduate, graduate, licensure, and certificate programs as special education program coordinator.

Meet the new department heads
New leaders for educational psychology and organizational leadership, policy, and development

Ken Bartlett, far left, is also a mountain climber who has reached the highest points in all 50 states and 38 countries, including Mont Blanc in France, shown here. Kristen McMaster, left, and her husband are avid cavers and the owners of Crystal Cave in western Wisconsin.
Seeing students’ potential

Her passion propels them forward

DOUA YANG, ’13, is loud, proud, and unapologetic—and wants you to be, too. The first female of her 15 siblings to finish college, she had to clear her own path, overcoming daunting cultural, personal, and economic challenges to finish a degree in family social science.

The lessons she learned fuel the energy and commitment she brings to helping students succeed in Metropolitan State University’s TRIO Upward Bound program.

“She plays an important role in making sure our students are ready and prepared for college,” says Pa Yong Xiong, director of the program. “She is passionate about equity work, college access, and success, and I am thrilled she is on my team.”

The U of M TRIO Student Support Services played a big part in Yang’s success. In her first semester at the U, she was called to the office because she was struggling with the transition from high school to college. The staff listened, understood, and offered valuable support.

“I walked into the TRIO office angry, and left validated. They saw the potential in me and listened,” says Yang.

“TRIO helped me build community, confidence, and, most importantly, the power to use my voice to advocate for myself.”

In her current role as a TRIO professional, she advises high school students to ensure academic success and retention, teaches classes that help them find their own voice and build leaders, and coordinates programs to engage parents and families.

Her skills in understanding the complexities of family dynamics and in actively listening and empathizing with others lived experiences were honed in family social science.

“I have 15 siblings! Growing up, we all squeezed into a four-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment,” says Yang. “The craziest thing is that we shared everything without question and never fought. I was always fascinated by how all of my siblings had different personalities and different ways of approaching and doing things. How did we all come from the same household but act so differently?”

The theories and research she learned in family social science formed the foundation that today helps her connect with students, parents, and families, problem-solve with them, and act as a mediator.

“FSoS courses made me more self-aware and intentional,” Yang adds. “I am able to understand, analyze, and articulate my own growth as an individual, partner, daughter, sister, and aunt.”

Yang also developed her advocacy skills as a member and later adviser for the U of M’s Hmong Student Association, where she created programs to build awareness for social justice issues and support students academically, socially, and culturally.

She carries those skills forward, helping Metro State colleagues understand the cultural nuances needed in workshops and presentations to better serve students and families in her community.

Moving forward, Yang aspires to master’s and doctoral degrees in higher education and perhaps even running for office. But first, she says, she plans to marry her college sweetheart, start a family, and be a great mom. —Julie Michener

Learn more about family social science and about TRIO programs at cehd.umn.edu/fsos and cehd.umn.edu/trio.
FROM THE PRESIDENT
MARVIN BANKS, MEd ’12

DEAR FELLOW ALUMNI,

As I think about becoming the new Alumni Society Board president, the word that comes to mind is gratefulness. It is such an honor to have the opportunity to learn from great leaders, like dean Jean Quam and senior alumni relations officer Serena Wright, and I am thrilled to lead the Alumni Society into our next exciting year. Stepping into this role is no easy task, but together with everyone connected to CEHD, we know we can take the college forward.

This past year, our board saw a lot of significant accomplishments on several levels. The board was able to raise scholarship funds from Minnesota Give to the Max Day, connect students with leaders for career guidance, and establish a better CEHD brand across the world. All these accomplishments have a certain underlining parallel and that is engagement. As CEHD continues to grow, one of our goals is to gain a deeper engagement with the 350 CEHD alumni who are faculty and staff in our college. We on the board want to take engagement to the next level and continue to work together, as one, to build for the future. As the incoming president, my commitment is to work with all the stakeholders and continue to develop engaging communities for CEHD.

Thank you for this opportunity. I am excited to be the new Alumni Society Board president and I look forward to connecting with you soon.

Marvin & Bank

Thank you to our volunteers!

The CEHD Alumni Society Board celebrated the end of a successful year on June 5. Everyone gave a big thanks to outgoing president Chris Dixon as he passed the gavel to new president Marvin Banks. Special thanks for their years of services were given to those concluding terms on June 30 (designated with an asterisk * below). Pictured above, seated (L–R): Shawna Monson, BS ’04, MEd ’08; Jenny Wright Collins, MEd ’10; Chris Dixon*, MEd ’05; Ellen Doering, MSW ’17; Sheila Piippo, MEd ’04; Jan Ormasa*, MA ’74. Standing (L–R): senior alumni relations officer Serena Wright; student representative Jeremiah Dean*, HRD certificate ’18; student representative Haelim Chun*, Shirley Flittie*, MA ’85; Mark Groves*, AA ’83, BA ’90; Anna Lifson, MSW ’17; Candice Nadler*, MEd ’82; Tessa Tangney, BS ’17; Jenna Mitchler, PhD ’15; Takehito Kamata*, PhD ’18; Mary Branca Rosenow, MEd ’85; Marvin Banks, MEd ’12. Not shown: Reem Al-Ghanim*, BS ’01, MEd ’09; faculty representative John Bricout*; Lekie Dwanyen, BS ’14; Jónína Ólafsdóttir Kárdal, MA ’99; Jill Stein Lipset, MEd ’13; Meredith McQuaid, MEd ’15; Marcus Pope, MEd ’06; and Alexis Venne, BS ’19.

Welcome, alumni board president

Please welcome Marvin Banks, MEd ’12, as the new president of the CEHD Alumni Society Board. His term began July 1. Banks is a talent acquisition consultant at the U of M Office of Human Resources whose previous experience spanned public relations, marketing, and finance for organizations including U of M Athletics, the Minnesota Timberwolves, and the Minnesota Twins. He completed a BA in communication with a concentration in sports journalism in the College of Liberal Arts and a master’s of education in applied kinesiology with an emphasis in sport management in CEHD.
Our 2019 Rising Alumni Award winners

The CEHD Alumni Society honored 22 college alumni this spring who have achieved early distinction in their careers, demonstrated emerging leadership, or shown exceptional volunteer service in their communities. Congratulations to our Rising Alumni! Seated, left to right: Doua Yang, BA ’13; Clark Hoelscher, PhD ’14; Kaaren Williamson, PhD ’17; Sousada Chidthachack Grande, PhD ’16; Anitra Cottledge, MA ’07; Ellen Doering, MSW ’17. Standing, left to right: Kablia Thao, MEd ’16; Kelsey Funk, MEd ’15; Emily Kedrowski, MEd ’08; Thorunn Bjornadottir on behalf of Brynja Halldórsdóttir Gudjonsson, PhD ’13; Sung Tae Jang, PhD ’18; Dean Quam; Kara Galvin, MA ’07; Austin Stair Calhoun, PhD ’14; Joshua Lupinek, PhD ’15; Courtney Holmes, PBC ’13. Not shown: Zachary Casey, PhD ’13; Mohammed Elmeski, PhD ’12; Devon Gilchrist, MSW ’11; LeeAnn Melin, PhD ’15; Chelsea Petree, PhD ’13; Jennifer Ridgeway, PhD ’18; Mary Yeboah, PhD ’18. Read more about them at cehd.umn.edu/alumni/rising.

Connecting in Korea

Haelim Chun, a PhD candidate in comparative and international development education and Alumni Society Board member, visited her home country of Korea over last winter’s break and met with CEHD alumni. Left to right: Haelim Chun; Jae-eun Jon, PhD ’09, assistant professor, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies; 2017 Rising Alumni Award winner Soo-yong Byun, PhD ’07, associate professor, Penn State University; Jaerim Lee, PhD ’09, assistant professor, Seoul National University; and Soo-Kyong Lee, PhD ’14, research professor, Chungbuk National University.

Celebrate a win

Congratulations to the CEHD Alumni Society for being named the 2019 UMAA Outstanding Alumni Society of the Year! The award will be presented on October 3.
Supporting CEHD students

On behalf of all CEHD alumni, the Alumni Society Board was honored to share 17 scholarship awards with students for 2019–20 and got to meet many of them at an event this spring. Pictured above among the attending recipients are board members Jan Ormasa, MA ’74; Marina Aleixo, PhD ’12; Marvin Banks, MEd ’12; Jenny Wright Collins, MEd ’10; and Takehito Kamata, PhD ’18; seated, senior alumni relations officer Serena Wright. The full roster of recipients is named at news.cehd.umn.edu/category/alumni.

Undergraduate and alumni networking event

Undergraduates from across CEHD joined peers, faculty, staff, and alumni at an annual networking event in March. Panelists and breakout session leaders shared ideas and resources for post-college life related to physical health, mental health, financial health, social engagement, and more.

In the photo lower right, Alumni Society Board member Tessa Tangney, BS ’17, facilitated the panel with (L–R) Martha Taye, BS ’18 (family social science); Laine Mohnkern, MSW ’11 (social work); Meg Walters, BS ’18 (kinesiology); and La Tasha Shevlin, BS ’08 (human resource development), MEd ’13 (family education).

Share your news

Land a new job? Celebrate a professional milestone? We want to share your news! All our alumni class notes are now published online. Go to cehd.umn.edu/alumni/notes and send us your news—with photos if you have them. Read about people you know from CEHD.
I want to thank you, our donors of gifts large and small, who have made a huge difference in recent months. Not only are we making progress toward our Improving Lives campaign goal, but our donors, alumni, faculty, staff, students, and other college partners were highly successful in helping Minnesota legislators understand the need for a new Institute of Child Development (ICD) building during the legislative session. We so appreciate all those who testified at legislative hearings, visited with their legislators, made calls, or wrote letters on behalf of the project. While the session closed without time to pass a bonding bill, we are in a strong position with bipartisan support for the building project as we plan to bring this project forward again at the upcoming legislative session.

Your early gifts to the ICD building reinforced with legislators and other opinion leaders the need for the new building and showed them there is a very real commitment on the part of our college’s alumni and friends.

As you know, the funding for the new ICD building is a priority of the Improving Lives campaign. Plans call for public support of $29.2 million from the legislature and $14.6 million to be raised by CEHD. To date, we received private gifts of $10.25 million for the project with a little more than $4 million to go.

If you haven’t done so already, I hope you will consider making a gift to the ICD building or another of our campaign priorities. You can learn more at cehd.umn.edu/giving/improving-lives.

Again, thank you for your support!

Susan Holter, CEHD Class of ‘83, susan@umn.edu
Chief development officer

cehd.umn.edu/improving-lives/
An enthusiastic group of attendees, including many founding members, attended the Women’s Philanthropic Leadership Circle (WPLC) Awards Celebration on June 11. Two CEHD doctoral candidates were recognized—Fatima Tufail from the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development and Christina Zdawczyk from the Department of Educational Psychology. Timothy Piehler from the Department of Family Social Science received the Rising Star Faculty Award.

Tufail thanked the circle by video from Pakistan, where she is conducting research on educational policies that advance socio-economic and gender equity. Zdawczyk studies common scientific misconceptions and gender disparities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) classroom teaching. Piehler focuses on preventing conduct problems and substance use in youth through more targeted and tailored intervention programs.

WPLC has a strong legacy dating back to 2002, when a dedicated team built a robust foundation that has provided recognition for more than 140 scholars. As we look toward its 20th anniversary, CEHD remains committed to WPLC.

The partnership of circle friends, both longtime and new donors, remains critical to its mission of helping women and encouraging philanthropy. Join the circle and watch for information about its fall event on September 17 at cehd.umn.edu/giving/wplc.

“This award reminds me of the values with which I entered my program, those same values that WPLC supports, and who I want to become in the future—a compassionate, strong, inspirational leader and philanthropist with a commitment to empowering women.”

—Christina Zdawczyk
Three sisters honor a family legacy

It’s not surprising that sisters Mona, Camilla, and JoEllen Langguth all attended the University of Minnesota. As children, the three lived next door to Memorial Stadium, with a popcorn wagon parked in their front yard during home football games. Mona and Camilla, only 16 months apart, cherish memories of attending the Shirley G. Moore Laboratory School.

The sisters followed a long line of family members who attended the U. Their father, Karl, BS ’27, and Langguth sisters Alice and Ruth all earned degrees at the U. So did their mother, Ellen, BA ’27, and her six siblings. Their uncle, alumnus Arthur Peterson, BA ’26, established an endowed scholarship. The sisters’ spouses graduated from the U, too.

The College of Education and Human Development was the alma mater of all three sisters, whose paths took various directions. Mona Walz (BA, BS ’52, MA ’56) became a real estate broker and community activist in Michigan. Camilla Reiersgord (BS ’55, JD ’70) went to law school and practiced in the Twin Cities. JoEllen Hurr (BA ’58) has been active in the community, including serving on the boards of the Lake Minnetonka Conservation District and the Freshwater Society.

In response to growing evidence that a high-quality preschool education is critical for children’s future success, the three sisters came together. Increasing emphasis among educators and the public about the importance of early childhood education as well as Head Start research and follow-up studies made an endowment for preschool teachers an easy choice.

Last year, Mona, Camilla, and JoEllen created the Langguth Sisters Scholarship to support students preparing to become early childhood education teachers. The first recipient is Nora Waaraniemi, an MEd student whose interests are in teaching and public advocacy.

“Our family has a long history with the U,” says Mona Walz. “It seemed like a natural step at this point in our lives to honor this legacy and establish an endowment fund that reflects our values to support early childhood education.”

The sisters unanimously agreed to use their birth name for the scholarship, recognizing not only their own bond but their whole family’s remarkable legacy.
The first ‘R’

While growing up in St. Louis Park, the late Judy King Potts always wanted to attend the University of Minnesota and become a teacher. Her focus was the first of the “three Rs”—reading, writing, and ’rithmetic.

“She had a passion for literacy,” says her husband, Robert Potts, “and her education at the U was the launching point for that calling.”

Bob and Judy met at the U, the night she was crowned homecoming queen in 1964. Both were members of Greek organizations and had a lot of fun participating in sorority and fraternity events. Along the way, they each also got an education that provided long and rewarding careers.

Bob, BSB ’65, studied accounting and joined Touche Ross upon graduation. After military service, he worked in a variety of finance roles.

Judy, BS ’64, achieved her dream of a teaching degree and spent her whole career in the Hopkins school district, initially as a third-grade classroom teacher at Westview Elementary. After raising their two daughters, she taught at Alice Smith Elementary, which has a schoolwide Title I program. There she found enormous satisfaction in working more closely with individual students and inspiring in them a love of reading.

About 16 years ago, the Pottses decided to give back to their respective U of M programs and established funds in the Carlson School of Management and CEHD.

“Judy felt strongly about giving to promote literacy education,” says Bob. “She saw reading as essential to children’s success in school and throughout their lives.”

Their commitment to CEHD addresses the need for current teachers to receive professional development and also builds the pipeline for future teachers and scholars focused on literacy, especially in the pre-kindergarten to second-grade levels.

The Judy King Potts Endowment for Teaching Leadership in Literacy provides resources for practicing teachers to receive additional training. The Judy King Potts Endowed Fellowship Fund for Literacy Education supports students who are doing graduate work in some aspect of literacy.

“Mastery of reading is a lifelong skill,” says professor of literacy education Marek Oziewicz, “and the gifts from Judy and Bob Potts have been crucial to the education and continued training of teachers who have a big impact in children’s development of that skill.”

Judy left a lasting legacy as a teacher. When she passed away in 2017, several of her former Alice Smith students wrote to Bob, sharing stories about her special influence on them.

“It’s our hope that those who benefit from the Judy King Potts endowments have a similar influence on their students,” says Bob.
YOSAN TSEGAI GREW UP spending many hours with her grandmother. “Since my parents were working a lot, my grandma was the most reliable person my siblings and I had,” says Tsegai.

When her grandmother passed away, Tsegai struggled. But she knew that her grandmother wanted her to be the best she could be.

“Even though she didn’t go to school, when I came home from school she would ask me how it went and then would try to read my notes,” Tsegai remembers. “Her presence and hard work were very inspirational to me.”

Tsegai was the first in her family to attend college. As an aspiring pediatric occupational therapist, she realized she wanted to work with children because the first few years of a child’s life are fundamental in building cognitive and sensorimotor skills. It’s an area in which children—particularly those with injuries or disabilities—need augmented support. Tsegai’s goal is to increase their sense of confidence as well as behavioral and academic development.

But just navigating the University is not an easy task, especially for first-generation college students. And the need to work limits opportunities for many like Tsegai.

Thanks to support including the Lee Piechowski and Mayra Oberto-Medina Scholarship, Tsegai has more freedom to experience all the U has to offer. She has been able to pursue her passion for child rehabilitative care without sacrificing her college experience to student debt—able to take on leadership roles, study abroad in India, and work in relevant paid and unpaid positions that provide the necessary tools and experience for her next big step.

The scholarship was established in 2010 with a gift from Lee Piechowski, who started at the University in General College, and Mayra Oberto-Medina. By providing financial assistance to first-generation college students in CEHD, the award strengthens access to higher education and helps students like Tsegai achieve their academic goals as well as personal growth.

“This scholarship lightened my financial burden and allowed me to focus on the most important aspect of school—learning.”

—Yosan Tsegai
Senior, kinesiology

Giving matters
Support CEHD student scholarships at cehd.umn.edu/giving
Contact us at 612-625-1310
There are many ways CEHD alumni and friends can stay connected to the college. We hope you’ll join us at some of the events listed here or connect with us online. Visit cehd.umn.edu/alumni/events or call 612-624-0430.

Women’s Philanthropic Leadership Circle Event

Tuesday, September 17
5:30–7:30 p.m.
Coffman Memorial Union, Mississippi Room
Inspire philanthropy, support achievement, foster leadership.
Join in a discussion about transformational leadership and philanthropy with CEHD alumni and donors.
RSVP: cehdas@umn.edu

Alumni–Graduate Student Networking Event:
“Balancing Career and Family Life”

Friday, September 27
5:30–7:30 p.m.
Coffman Memorial Union, Presidents Room
Join graduate students, alumni, faculty, and staff for dinner and a robust discussion about resources and strategies for balancing the demands of career and family life. Cosponsored by the Student Parent HELP Center. RSVP by September 21: cehd.umn.edu/events/grad-networking

Alumni Day of Service

Saturday, September 28
Come out to volunteer with your fellow alumni and friends through one big day of service and gratitude to the community.
Info: umnalumni.org/dayofservice

Homecoming 2019

Pre-Parade Tailgate Gathering and Parade
Friday, October 4, beginning at 4 p.m.
4–6 p.m., location to be announced (see also page 3)
6:30 p.m. parade on University Avenue
Please join us for great food, music, and more. Alumni are encouraged to bring family and guests! Receive a Homecoming T-shirt when you march in the parade.
RSVP: cehd.umn.edu/events/homecoming

University-wide festivities run September 28–October 5.
Info: homecoming.umn.edu