

Education First

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA ♦ COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ♦ NEWSLETTER

Education Firsts

College First to Use ePortfolio for Assessment

The University of Iowa College of Education leads the nation in integrating technology and instruction with assessment. Teacher education students create online portfolios called ePortfolios that display examples of their professional preparation, including teaching philosophy, lesson plans, technology skills, and training in specialized areas. The students upload video clips to these web sites, creating ePortfolios that provide authentic documentation of actual instructional methods and strategies.

Through the ePortfolio framework, the College is the first education program in the nation to use such a technology tool that allows state and national assessors and accreditation teams to view the College's strengths in its teacher education programs and how well its students meet educational standards. Students will use the ePortfolios themselves in their search for teaching positions.

"The ePortfolios provide our students with a sophisticated, cutting-edge venue for demonstrating their professional skills," Interim Associate Dean **James Marshall** said. "It is an extraordinary tool and we are very proud that John Achrazoglou and Rebecca Anthony have made it available to our students."

To view an example visit www.education.uiowa.edu/resources/eportfolio.



With their innovative ePortfolios ideas, Achrazoglou and Anthony lead the nation.

"With the click of a mouse, employers around the world can see evidence of our students' skills," said Educational Placement Office Director **Rebecca Anthony** as she displayed an online example of a teacher education student's ePortfolio for the Iowa Workforce Development Board. "With these cutting-edge online technology skills, employers see our graduates as the best in the nation."

Technological competencies are no longer a luxury but an essential element of teacher training and the workplace. As a framework for professional development, the ePortfolio concept was developed and produced by Anthony and the College's Coordinator of Technology **John Achrazoglou**. Since 1995 the two have worked to ensure College graduates are competitive in the workplace.

Symposium Brings Socio-cultural Scholars Together

Nine scholars from across the county and Associate Professor **Cynthia Lewis**, participated in an intensive three-day educational symposium at The University of Iowa. Lewis, an Obermann Scholar and 2000-01 Spencer postdoctoral fellow, coordinated the interdisciplinary group's gathering to discuss socio-cultural research and theory as part of a National Academy of Education and Spencer Collaborative Projects Initiative.

"Even though we come from different disciplines of study, we all have a theoretical perspective in common and a commitment to reform in education," Lewis said.

In addition to theoretical aspects of research, symposium participants discussed how their own backgrounds and ongoing participation in the communities and schools they study shape the ways that they frame and conduct their research. Lewis and two co-authors plan to edit a book that examines how such "histories of participation" produce particular kinds of knowledge or practices related to formal and informal learning.

"Longterm involvement in research communities allows researchers and participants to come together to achieve common goals," said Lewis, "and through this connection, change can occur."

ePortfolio Impresses Iowa Workforce Development Board

Through the ePortfolio project, University of Iowa graduates licensed as new teachers will enter the workforce with a diploma and a set of integrated digital tools affording short-term career advantages and long-term professional benefits.

In addition to providing evidence of web-based abilities for employers, the ePortfolios are now being used as a tangible performance assessment for state standards. "The University of Iowa is currently the only university in the nation being assessed electronically by the state and the nation," Achrazoglou said.

Iowa Workforce Development Board Member and State Senator Neal Schuerer said he was struck with the level of sophistication at The University of Iowa.

"I have heard a lot of talk about the uses of technology in education, but I am most impressed to see that the College of Education is teaching practical applications in technology, not just theory."

"Students leave this university with technology experience," Anthony said, "confident about the skills they can offer their classroom and their community."

December 2001

Reaching Out ... Reaching Out ... Reaching Out ... Reaching Out ...

International Day Helping Make the World a Better Place

In an effort to promote human rights, the College of Education hosted the 5th Annual Human Rights Conference November 7th. Nearly 300 Eastern Iowa elementary, junior and senior high school students, and their teachers attended the conference, coordinated by **Margaret Evans** and Associate Professor **Greg Hamot**.



*“Education is the right from which all other rights depend.”
Margaret Stimmann Branson*

Keynote speaker, Dr. Margaret Stimmann Branson, associate director of the Center for Civic Education based in California, focused on the international rights of youth and the basic right to education. The statistics she shared astounded the group.

“Today, about 130 million children between the ages of six and 11 do not attend school and another 150 million drop out of school before the fourth grade,” Branson said. “That’s a total nearly equivalent to the entire population of Iowa of children who are not receiving basic education, two-thirds of whom are female children.”

In various workshops and seminars presented throughout the day, students learned about human rights in Palestine, Thailand, and for people during wartime. Several workshops were created to highlight issues relating to the Sept. 11 attacks.

One student asked about child labor issues, especially in the context of freedom, democracy, and recent world events, to which Dr. Branson replied, “Until we live in one world where all people are educated and able to participate in the world economy, we will not be a world at peace.”



Photos top and middle: students engage in learning; bottom: workshop presenters—Amy Baum, Claire Cardwell, Margaret Branson, Scott McNabb, and Hani Elkadi

TOP/BOTTOM PHOTOS BY JILL FISHBAUGH; MIDDLE BY SCOTT SIEGLING

Best Practices for Educators



Assoc. Professor Dan Clay

Through the Iowa Communications Network (ICN), Associate Professor **Dan Clay** reached out to the state’s education community by

leading a workshop for educators working with Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) children. Over 50 professionals, mainly school teachers, administrators, and counselors, participated in the workshop from eight different

ICN sites, including Ankeny, Bettendorf, Cedar Rapids, Cedar Falls, Council Bluffs, Creston, Iowa City, and Marshalltown.

The workshop focused on behavioral, educational, and medical aspects of ADHD. “A large number of children are identified as ADHD,” Clay said, “Education professionals appreciate the opportunity for distance education since many don’t have the resources or staff with experience and expertise in this area.”

Clay integrated slides, videos, and engaged the participants in a statewide group discussion. “People learn a lot from each other,” Clay said. “By sharing ideas between rural and larger districts, this outreach activity provided a much needed service for educators in the state.”

Education First is produced monthly by The University of Iowa College of Education Office of External Relations, Jill Fishbaugh, director. Send items of interest to her at The University of Iowa/ College of Education/452 Lindquist Center N/Iowa City, IA 52242-1529 or by e-mail to educationatiowa@uiowa.edu.

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