

reaching out

education firsts

30,000 Students Participate in Invent Iowa

Some 372 Iowa school children bursting with ideas converged in Iowa City to participate in the 19th annual statewide Invent Iowa competition last spring.

Students selected as winners in local and regional competitions displayed their inventions, ranging from Katlyn Cowlham's Butter Toast

Stick to Nik Werner's Book Stopper, for volunteer judges at Carver Hawkeye Arena.

Jack Ralls, a third grader from Buffalo Center, said showing off his invention, the Comfor-Tent, which features an air mattress that takes up the entire floor of the tent, was a fun, "eye-opening" experience.

Owen Sherman, a third-grade student from Solon, said his invention, Candyland for the Blind, was inspired by a boy at his school.

"I wanted to make life better for someone who was disabled," he said. "There aren't very many games for young blind people to play."

Clar Baldus, a program administrator with the Belin Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development, coordinated Invent Iowa this year. The event

alternates between the UI and Iowa State University campuses.

Baldus said the purpose of the event is to encourage creative and critical thinking. "Kids learn to solve problems that they identify," she said, adding that some 30,000 students participate in Invent Iowa activities statewide.

"Providing curriculum activities and promoting participation at the local level sets Invent Iowa apart from other 'competitions'" she said. "The most important thing is the process—that's something students can take with them." —by Heather Spangler



Katlyn Cowlham's invention, Butter Toast Stick



Owen Sherman's invention, Candyland for the Blind



Jack Ralls' invention, Comfor-Tent



Statistics Outreach Center First of Its Kind

The Iowa Testing Programs in conjunction with the College of Education announces the opening of a revolutionary new resource, the **Statistics Outreach Center**.

"This Center is a unique initiative, particularly for a college of education," said Associate Professor **Tim Ansley**, former Iowa Testing Programs co-director.

With expertise in a broad range of statistical methods, the center offers assistance at any stage of the research process: designing a study, deciding what analysis would be most informative, doing the number crunching, or deciding how to best communicate the results to the intended audience.

The Statistics Outreach Center offers short-term consulting on statistical data analysis to College of Education faculty, staff, and students at no charge. Long-term statistical consulting services can be negotiated with Center Coordinator **Sheila Barron** (BA '89/MA '91/PhD '93).

"The idea is that if researchers have a place to go when they have statistical questions, doing research will be faster and easier, and more research will get published with fewer revisions," Barron said.

For faculty, staff, and students outside the College of Education, the Statistics Outreach Center provides fee-based consulting for statistical data analysis and grant proposals.

For more information, visit www.education.uiowa.edu/StatOutreach

Watt Recognized as Best

The College selected Assistant Professor **Sherry Watt** to receive its Collegiate Teaching Award. Watt teaches both didactic and clinical courses in student development theory and counseling.



Prof. Sherry Watt

Students and colleagues say what distinguishes Watt most as a teacher is her interpersonal style of teaching. While the course requirements are often extensive and demanding, her warmth, encouragement and high expectations demonstrate to her students that they can accomplish the work.

Harper Wins Regents Award



Professor Harper assists a student.

The Iowa Board of Regents selected Professor **Dennis Harper**, of Rehabilitation Counseling in the College of Education; of Pediatrics in the Carver College of Medicine; and of Health Management and Policy in the College of Public Health, for a 2006 Regents Award for Faculty Excellence.

Harper is a leading authority in the study of children with chronic health disabilities and adults with mental retardation during the aging process. In 2002, he became head of Developmental and Behavioral Medicine and clinical director of the Center for Disabilities and Development, Iowa's premier program for children with disabilities.

Faculty Leadership, Scholarship Honored

Dean **Sandra Bowman Damico** was elected vice-chair of the Midwestern Regional Educational Lab's Executive Committee. The laboratory provides research and development support to help educators, policymakers, and communities improve schools, and help students attain their full potential.



Dean Sandra Damico



Assoc. Dean David Bills

The College of Education named Social Foundations Professor **David Bills** associate dean for academic and graduate student affairs.

Assoc. Professor **Jodi Saunders** was elected chair of the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification, the field's national certification body.



Prof. Jodi Saunders



Prof. Kathy Schuh

Educational Psychology Associate Professor **Kathy Schuh** has been named a Distinguished Member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars.

The Ohio State University named Assistant Professor **Malik Henfield** its 2006 Outstanding Doctoral Student in School Counseling.



Prof. Malik Henfield

Coffman's Contributions Recognized



Prof. Don Coffman

Governor Tom Vilsack, UI President David Skorton, and the local community honored Music Education Professor **Don Coffman** for his dedication to community service. Coffman was recognized for volunteering more than 6,000 hours over the past decade with the New Horizons Band and the Iowa City/Johnson County Senior Center.

As founder and director of the New Horizons Band, Coffman, along with his undergraduate music education students and graduate students, has provided instruction for hundreds of older Iowans.

Coffman received the 2006 Governor's Volunteer Award, a community service award from the Johnson County AARP chapter, and one of the UI President's Faculty Awards for State Outreach and Public Engagement.

Spangler Places First in Writing Contest

Writer **Heather Spangler** received a first place in the General Features category in the Iowa Associated Press Managing Editors annual contest in the 10,001 to 50,000 circulation category. The story, "Out of the Storm," published in the Iowa City Press-Citizen, was the result of a months-long project observing a family's struggle after it relocated from New Orleans to Iowa City.



Heather Spangler

Students Receive Prestigious Fellowships and Awards

Ericka Meanor, a junior majoring in Secondary Education and German, was selected to receive a prestigious fellowship to conduct international research next year.



Ericka Meanor

Designed to foster mutual understanding between people of the United States and other countries, Meanor received a Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst grant, which is comparable to the U.S. Fulbright program, but funded by the German government.

The Council on Teaching selected **Sarah Haag**, a graduate student in Counseling Psychology, recipient of an Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award.



Sarah Haag

Ryan Wells, a doctoral student in Higher Education, received a \$2,000 Stanley Fellowship for Graduate Student Research Abroad, the UI's premier awards for international study.

Wells, who traveled to Uganda for his project, said the biggest lesson he

learned was that technology development in the schools can only be successful if it is coordinated with other development efforts.

"Of the six schools I visited, only one had electricity," he said. "Addressing infrastructure and public health issues are important, in addition to efforts aimed at schools."



Wells' students in Uganda help him explore the "Digital Divide."

Fillpot Enhances History Education

With a \$958,000 U.S. Department of Education Teaching American History grant, Visiting Fellow **Elise Fillpot** (PhD '04) makes history more meaningful for a difficult-to-reach demographic—middle and high school students.

"We hope to help young people increase the sophistication of their understanding of history, increase their historical and critical thinking skills, and enhance their appreciation of American history," Fillpot said.



In the course of the new project, titled "Grant Wood History Institute," Fillpot and her research team will work with 60 middle and high school teachers served by the Grant Wood Area Education Agency (AEA) in eastern and southeastern Iowa. The grant, which runs through 2008, will help establish professional development opportunities for 7th through 12th grade history and social studies teachers.

Fillpot has been director of the Bringing History Home (BHH) project since 2001. Under BHH, Fillpot worked with teachers and administrators in Washington, Perry, BCLUW, College Community, Maquoketa, and Creston school districts to establish a history curriculum for kindergarten through fifth grades. She was awarded Teaching American History grants for that project as well—one for \$701,133 and another for \$938,860 to expand the program—two of the largest grants ever secured by a UI College of Education graduate student.

Fillpot credits prior success, the cohesion of her program teams, and belief in the project's importance as reasons for receiving another large grant.

Ali Helps Iowa Students Reach Career Goals

The Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust awarded \$94,975 to Assistant Professor **Saba Rasheed Ali** to help the UI offer career-education services to rural high school students in Iowa. The grant will enable Ali and her colleagues to develop and implement a pilot program offering career-education services, also referred to as career intervention, to rural high school students in three locations in Iowa.



Prof. Saba Rasheed Ali

Ali and her team will conduct series of workshops with ninth graders in Columbus Junction, Muscatine, and West Liberty to help the students identify their career interests and determine how best to use their educational opportunities to achieve their career goals. The researchers will follow the students' progress for two years, evaluating school performance and the degree to which academic choices are aligned with career plans.

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/459 Lindquist Center North/Iowa City, IA 52242-1529 or by e-mail to education@uiowa.edu.

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grants
awards

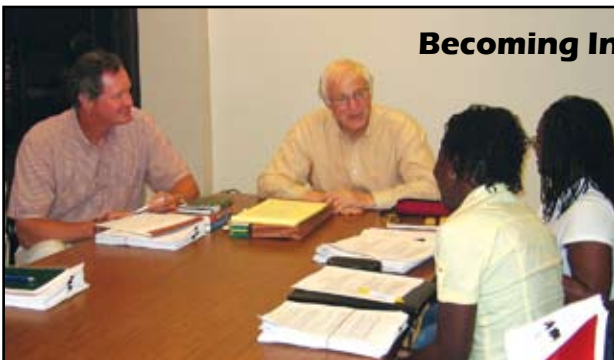


Saturday Art Workshops

Art Education students preparing to be teachers lead children in creating and learning about art.

www.education.uiowa.edu/arted/outreach

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Becoming Internationally Informed

In Social Foundations Associate Professor **Scott McNabb's** course, "Education in the Third World," students explore the roles that education plays within the broader context of development and global change, as well as examine larger issues concerning who attempts to control and shape knowledge on the international scene, their motivations, techniques, and levels of success.

An Iowan who knows a great deal about international relations is Iowa's 2nd District's Representative, Congressman Jim Leach (R). To a fascinated group of McNabb's graduate students, Leach painted a highly critical picture of the current administration's policy directions.

"This College of Education has an extraordinary international resource," Congressman Jim Leach said, "and that resource is Scott McNabb."

"Historically, American political theory was based on the common good, fairness, and justice. These concepts are now out of the vocabulary. The Neocon strategy is the worst geopolitical thinking I've ever heard of," he said.

To be better informed, Leach suggested reading more blogs and books, and praised the information available from guest experts and thoughtful and experienced op-ed columnists such as Thomas Friedman of *The New York Times*.

Leach said he makes time to speak to students not only because "the future is our youth," but because "we have the gravest problems in the world that this generation of leadership is not handling well."

He added, "We need to think about and emphasize education, world culture, and literacy problems."