



EducationFirst

The University of Iowa College of Education Newsletter

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Remarkable Outreach

Kid's Education Goes International

Ishmael Beah lived through a nightmare: as a preteen, he was kidnapped by rebels in his native Sierra Leone and forced to become a child soldier in his country's civil war. This fall, the author of *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* served as a poignant keynote speaker at the 12th-annual International Day Human Rights Conference for middle school students.



Author Ishmael Beah explains how he missed his childhood.

“I’m happy that at this age you are learning about other cultures and understanding your privilege,” he said. “It puts you in a position to help.”

In addition to Beah’s talk, the day-long event featured special workshops on topics ranging from child labor to using new media to learn about the world.

Nico Moreno, an East Moline student, said he was moved by discussions about other children who “don’t have a fair chance.”

“You’re not always aware about other people’s situations because you’re thinking about what’s involved in your life,” he said.

Heidi Stofer, a DeWitt student, said she was particularly touched by a workshop session that focused on how chil-

What Mt. Vernon sixth graders said about International Day:

- “I want to help all the kids in the world and donate my money.” – Lucy Conroy
- “In America, we have a lot of rights, so it was really sad to learn about kids in wars.” – Kirra Hayslip
- “We shouldn’t buy from factories that children work, and we should do something about the bad things happening in the world.” – Matthew Wenzel

Remarkable Firsts

Technology Firsts

Since its founding in 1872 as the nation’s first permanent college-level department of education, The University of Iowa College of Education has been on the forefront of technology innovation.

Technological firsts include:

- first educational radio station established west of the Mississippi (1919)
- first to pioneer the field of standardized testing (1929)
- first educational television programs broadcast in the world (1932)
- first optical scanner invented (1952)
- first ePortfolio™ concept established (1996)

According to *U.S. News & World Report*, 2009 edition, The University of Iowa is the 26th best public university in the nation, 66th best university in the nation, and the best university in the state of Iowa.

dren in Kosovo use music to cope with the effects of war.

“Now I see how they felt and that makes it hit closer to home,” she said.

Social Studies Education Professor **Greg Hamot**, director of the UI Center for Human Rights, is the faculty sponsor of the annual event. He said the goal is to encourage Iowa students to think about the world around them and about people who are less fortunate.

“Bringing the knowledge that not all children receive the same opportunities may move the audience to recognize the importance of this issue as they develop into decision makers in their communities, the nation and the world,” Hamot said.



Students create posters that display human rights in current events.

Remarkable Accomplishments



Michael Kolen

Measurement and Statistics Professor Michael Kolen was appointed to the committee of researchers and experts in education and psychological testing to revise the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. He was appointed by the Management Committee that oversees the revision process for AERA, APA, and NCME. The standards—designed to establish criteria for appropriate development, use, and interpretation of tests—have

been widely cited by states, federal agencies, private organizations, legislative bodies, and even the U.S. Supreme Court. They are based on the premise that effective testing and assessment requires test developers and users to be knowledgeable about validity, reliability and other measurement issues.

The standards are more important than ever given the current demand for educational accountability, the increase of testing in the workplace, and the popularity of computer-based testing. The *Standards*, first published in 1966, remains strong to this day with nearly one million copies sold.



Susan Assouline

In an uncommon action, the Colorado Association for Gifted and Talented selected **Susan Assouline** (BS '75/EdS '84/PhD '88), Belin-Blank Center associate director, as recipient of their 2008 Distinguished Service Award. Assouline has been an advisor on acceleration, twice-exceptional students, assessments, and above-level testing.

"We celebrate Susan on many levels in Colorado," said TAG Developmental

Specialist Julie Gonzales, who nominated her for the award, "for connecting and inspiring Colorado as we advocate and support efforts to create opportunities for excellence among our most able youth in all areas of the population."

"Colorado's House Education Committee paused to review a summary of the Templeton National Report on Acceleration—*A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students*," Gonzales said. "The bi-partisan-supported legislation now requires all of Colorado's administrative units to develop a plan to identify and serve gifted children."



Laurie Croft

The Board of Regents, State of Iowa, recognized **Laurie Croft**, administrator of professional development at the Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development with a staff excellence award for outstanding contributions to Iowa and the University. Croft's work to expand the professional development program in the Belin-Blank Center has made the preparation of teachers of gifted students one of the center's national strengths.



David Lohman

The National Association for Gifted Children selected a paper written by Professor **David Lohman**, lead author, and his two graduate assistants, **Katrina Korb** and **Joni Lakin**, as the 2008 Paper of the Year. The paper, "Identifying Academically Gifted English-Language Learners Using Nonverbal Tests: A Comparison of the Raven, NNAT, and CogAT," appeared in *Gifted Child Quarterly*.



Malik Henfield

Associate Provost Marcella David appointed Assistant Professor **Malik Henfield** to the Hubbard Group, a University task force aimed at increasing the retention and overall success of black male faculty, staff, and students on the UI campus. To aid in this endeavor, the group will provide educational resources, workshops, forums, mentorship, and social events that create and nurture a more capacious sense of community.



Robert Yager

The University of Iowa Alumni Association selected Science Education Emeritus Professor **Robert E. Yager** (MS '53/PhD '57) for a 2009 Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award.

Throughout a University of Iowa career of more than 50 years, Yager has provided the vision and leadership to transform the way science is taught in schools near and far. He has advocated that science teachers at all levels must themselves undergo rigorous preparation and depth of focus, and he has challenged the effectiveness of the traditional lecture format. Instead, Yager has shown that engaging students in exploring questions that are relevant to their lives fosters their innate creative intelligence. Because of his longtime commitment, The University of Iowa is recognized as having one of the world's premier programs in science education.



Elizabeth Constantine

The University of Iowa recognized **Elizabeth Constantine**, director of the College's Grant and Research Services Center, with an Outstanding Staff Award, for her accomplishments and contributions that have significantly benefited the University. Constantine identifies external and internal grant opportunities for College faculty, staff, and students, which has led to an increase of grant application submissions and funding.

Remarkable Accomplishments



Dennis R. Maki

President Sally Mason selected ICATER (Iowa Center for Assistive Technology Education and Research) Director **Dennis R. Maki** and Coordinator **Jim Stachowiak** as recipients of the 2008 President's Instructional Technology Innovation Award. This award recognizes their project "The Mobile Assistive Technology (MAT) Lab."

"Both the Academic Technologies Advisory Council, chaired by Maggie

Jesse, and I were very impressed by the innovative ways you are preparing future teachers to use assistive technology as instructional tools in the K-12 classroom through real-world experience during their student teaching," Mason said.



Jim Stachowiak (L) explains the MAT.



John Achrazoglou

John Achrazoglou (BA '81/MA '94/PhD '03), director of the College's Educational Technology Center, is a recipient of the 2008 Catalyst Award for individual efforts to enhance diversity and inclusive excellence at The University of Iowa. Achrazoglou has been a leader in virtually

every major diversity effort that the College has undertaken over the past several years.



Deb Liddell (L) and Samantha DeVilbiss

The National Orientation Director's Association named Student Development graduate student **Samantha DeVilbiss** recipient of the \$1,000 Norman K. Russell Scholarship. In her nomination letter, Associate Professor

Debora Liddell wrote, "Sam is a bright, capable, committed, and conscientious woman who is a rising star in our field."

DeVilbiss is currently the assistant Student Program Coordinator for UI Orientation Services.

The National Council on Rehabilitation Education appointed **Erin Barnes** as the new student representative on the NCRE Executive Board.

Remarkable Grant Support

AVD Funds Professional Development

The Arthur Vining Davis Foundation awarded Science Education Professor **Brian Hand** a \$150,000 grant to develop a professional development program for secondary education science teachers. Through the program, Hand will work with science teachers in New York, Pennsylvania, and Cedar Rapids to provide them with new strategies designed to improve student understanding and performance in the classroom.

Iowa Partnership Funds Math, Science Research

Teaching and Learning faculty have received \$198,800 in funding from the Iowa Mathematics and Science Education Partnership (IMSEP) to extend research on four science and mathematics education grant projects.

- *Learning Progressions to Support Science Teaching and Learning*—a two-year grant for \$52,047 awarded to Science Education Assistant Professor **Alicia Alonzo**.
- *Improving High School Biology Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge Using a Web-Based Video Analysis Tool*—a one-year grant for \$53,121 awarded to Science Education Assistant Professor **Soonhye Park**.
- *Elementary Mathematics Partnership Opening Windows to Excellence, Rigor and Relevance (EMPOWER)*—a three-year grant for \$43,613 awarded to Mathematics Education Clinical Associate Professor **Vicki Burketta** and Mathematics Professor **Walter Seaman**.
- *Traversing Parallel Lines: A Long Distance Pilot Partnership to Articulate Geometric Problem Solving for Students and Enable Action Research for Teachers*—a one-year grant for \$50,018 awarded to English Education Professor **Bonnie Sunstein**.

IMSEP is a state-funded initiative—led by the University of Northern Iowa in partnership with Iowa State University and The University of Iowa—to improve the mathematics and science performance of Iowa students, prepare more high quality mathematics and science teachers for Iowa's schools, and promote statewide collaboration and cooperation.

NSF Funds Collaborative Research

The National Science Foundation awarded Teaching & Learning faculty \$121,284 in grant funding for collaborative interuniversity science and mathematics education research projects.

- *Study of the Intended Algebra Curriculum*—a one-year grant for \$64,120 awarded to Mathematics Education Assistant Professor **Cos Fi** and his colleague at Cornell University.
- *Learning Progressions in Science (LeaPS) Conference*—a one-year grant for \$57,165 awarded to Science Education Assistant Professor **Alicia Alonzo** and her colleague from Michigan State University. This project's ultimate goal is to close the gap between U.S. students' science performance and that of their peers in other countries and to better prepare U.S. students for 21st century jobs.



Remarkable Connections

Service-learning Project Creates Intergenerational Connections

When Music Education Professor **Mary Cohen** learned that Willowwind School in Iowa City was without a choir, she knew that her choral methods students could help fill the void.

“Students learn best through hands-on experiences,” Cohen said, explaining how a course’s service-learning component creates the perfect win-win situation. “When we connect UI students with elementary students, both student groups benefit.”

Every Friday afternoon, the UI students travel to Willowwind, an independent private school that provides learning opportunities for students from pre-school through 14 years.

“The skill of being a choral music educator is complex,” Cohen said, adding the UI students get to do everything from honing their own musical skills to arranging rounds, learning to work with an ensemble, conducting a choir, and learning teaching techniques and classroom management in a peer-review atmosphere.

While the UI students have been working on songs with the Willowwind students, they have been figuring out other performance details such as the concert theme, program order, and concert dress. They’ve also been designing a paper program, helping the students design a poster, and teaching the students performance etiquette.

Cohen added another important dimension to the project: matching each Willowwind choir student with a pen pal in Cohen’s Voices of Experience senior-citizen choir, creating an intergenerational learning and friendship opportunity. Cohen

said there is tremendous value in having the Willowwind students build relationships with members of the senior choir and in watching them enjoy a life-long love of singing.

“These children get to see the worth and joy that singing and making music can bring throughout their entire lives,” Cohen said. “An activity they’re doing in school as a young child has life-long importance.”

One of Cohen’s goals is to enhance the UI choral music education program. “Service-learning projects provide meaningful learning and relationship-building opportunities for our students,” Cohen said.



Cohen’s service-learning project connects elementary and college students with seniors.