



EducationFirst

The University of Iowa College of Education Newsletter
September 2008

Remarkable Firsts

First Assistive Technology Institute Benefits Teachers, Students across Iowa



Stachowiak assists teachers by providing hands-on equipment experience.

Students with disabilities in Iowa—and those who help them learn—benefited from an educational opportunity to discover the latest technological advancements available.

Two dozen teachers, speech pathologists, parents of students with disabilities, and others participated in the first Assistive Technology Summer Institute, sponsored by the Iowa Center for Assistive Technology Education and Research (ICATER) in The University of Iowa College of Education.

Debora Hentzel is a teacher and a parent of a child with dyslexia. She attended the institute in hopes of learning about programs to help her students as well as her son.

"I see many instances where students need a little boost," she said. "The software presented allows me to be aware of what's out there and hopefully advocate for those students."

The institute is a unique summer learning opportunity that combines discussion of current relevant topics in assistive technology with hands-on learning opportunities of some of the most recent and most commonly used software programs.

"Assistive technology would benefit many schools and students," ICATER Coordinator **James Stachowiak** said. "But not enough teachers know how to use it. This educational opportunity gives hands-on experience with the latest and greatest materials available and the laws that go with them."

Assistive technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment, or product system that increases, maintains, or improves functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. At the institute, AT professionals, special education teachers, general education teachers, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, counselors, psychologists, parents of students with disabilities, and students with disabilities across the state learned how to use AT software such as Dragon Naturally Speaking Version 9, Read and Write Gold, WordQ and SpeakQ, IntelliTools, and Clicker 5. They also discussed issues involving AT and learned about the legal requirements in a school setting.

Stachowiak, who conducted the program, holds a master's degree in biomedical/rehabilitation engineering from the University of Michigan and is a RESNA certified Assistive Technology Practitioner. Stachowiak presents AT topics to numerous classes within the College. He also instructs for ICATER's online course, "An Introduction to Assistive Technology."

"Our center has been here a couple years," Stachowiak said. "I hope this summer program opened teachers' and other professionals' eyes on how AT can help students and that it further promoted our mission of helping better educate students with disabilities."

Institute participant Greg Shefanich, a UNI professor, said he's been interested in improving access for students with disabilities for 30 years and described the Summer Institute as "perfect." He added, "What I learned will really help me in my work."

Stachowiak plans to make the Summer Institute an annual event. For more information on the Summer Institute or ICATER, visit www.education.uiowa.edu/icater.



Bridging the Generation Gap

A multi-generational musical performance spearheaded by Assistant Professor **Mary Cohen** provided learning opportunities for young musicians and excitement for seniors.

Cohen directs the Voices of Experience Choir, a group of senior-citizen singers, who joined together with the Iowa City Boychoir and Beat for Peace, a drum ensemble from Roundy Elementary in Columbus Junction, for a performance called "Springtime Singing Jam: Intergenerational Music Concert."

Each musical group took the floor for performances on their own and then joined in concert for three numbers, including "Rock Around the Clock."

Cohen said the Voices of Experience members enjoyed the chance to show the youngsters that they've still got it.

"They view themselves as giving hope, showing children that music is indeed a lifelong activity," Cohen said.

Paul Corbiere, who founded and directs Beat for Peace, said his group, which is made up of at-risk students, got the message.

"I wanted them to see the seniors' choir and realize that people do enjoy making music their whole lives and what I'm teaching them now will be a life skill," he said. "The Springtime Jam accomplished all our goals."

Remarkable Accomplishments



Prof. Jodi Saunders

Saunders Receives Collegiate Teaching Award

Collegiate Teaching Awards are the highest honor a college bestows on its faculty for excellence in undergraduate and graduate teaching. This year, the College of Education recognized Associate Professor **Jodi Saunders** for her work teaching a variety of courses in rehabilitation counseling.

In their nomination letters, students commended Saunders for the mentoring and community-based agency workshops she leads. Dr. Mary Barros-Bailey writes, "Because of Dr. Saunders' profound influence in various aspects of my life, I am a better rehabilitation counselor, a better practitioner-scientist, a better professional, a better person."

Sarah Jennings (MA '07) agreed. "In thinking of Dr. Saunders' impact on me, I am reminded of the adage—Education is not filling a bucket, but lighting a fire. If that statement is true, then Dr. Saunders has set my life ablaze."

Dean's Scholars

Dean **Sandra Damico** appointed three highly productive associate professors as Dean's Scholars with three-year appointments. They are: **Chris Ogren**, **Katrina Sanders**, and **Sherry Watt**.



Dean's Scholars: Watt (L), Sanders, and Ogren

Ogren's research will focus on the simplified-spelling movement, examining educators' involvement in the spelling reform movement of the Progressive era (1890-1920), in addition to other projects including the history of access to higher education. Her mentor is Associate Dean **David Bills**.

Ogren was also appointed an Obermann Center for Advanced Studies Scholar for fall 2008.

Sanders' research focuses on American race relations and social justice movements during 1950-1980. Her mentor is also Associate Dean **David Bills**.

Sanders was also appointed book review editor of the *History of Education Quarterly*.

Watt's research explores participants' reactions to difficult dialogues regarding racism, heterosexism, and able-bodyism. The Privileged Identity Exploration (PIE) Model identifies eight defensive reactions often displayed in difficult dialogues when people are encouraged to reflect on their social, political, and economic position in society. Her mentor is Professor **Elizabeth Altmaier**.

Faculty Excellence

Blackburn College in Carlinville, Ill., bestowed an honorary doctorate degree to the Mary Louise Petersen Chair in Higher Education Professor **Ernest T. Pascarella** at its 139th graduation ceremony. Pascarella received an "Ed.D. honoris causa" for his important contributions to understanding the impact of American postsecondary education on college students. Blackburn College is one of the two oldest postsecondary colleges in Illinois.



Prof. Ernest Pascarella



Prof. William Liu

The American Psychological Association Committee on Socioeconomic Status (CSES) selected Counseling Psychology Associate Professor **William Liu** to receive the 2008 Award for Emerging Leadership.

"We are impressed by Dr. Liu's scholarship and contributions related to social class and classism," CSES Chair Heather Bullock writes. "Our selection for this inaugural award speaks to his dedication and leadership. We commend him for his tremendous work and eagerly await his future contributions."

The American Psychological Association selected an article written by Assistant Professor **Noel Estrada-Hernández** and Professor **Dennis C. Harper** as the 49th best of the 200 articles published last year in the *Rehabilitation Psychology* journal. The article, "Research on Psychosocial Aspects of Albinism: A Critical Review," examining over 20 years of literature revealed that although people with albinism were found to have average cognitive abilities and achievement skills, they experienced many physical, mental, emotional, and social challenges.

The Iowa Academy of Education named Measurement and Statistics Assistant Professor **Andrew Ho** recipient of the 2008 Thomas A. Urban Research Award. Created by the FINE (First in the Nation in Education) Foundation, this award recognizes outstanding educational research in Iowa and carries a \$2,000 prize.



Prof. Andrew Ho

Associate Professor **Leslie Schrier** served as guest editor of *Hispania*, the official journal of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese.

The American Psychological Association appointed Assistant Professor **Saba Ali** to a three-year term as editor of the APA's Counseling Psychology newsletter.

Remarkable Accomplishments



Prof. Nick Colangelo

Myron and Jacqueline Blank Professor of Gifted Education **Nicholas Colangelo** received one of the University's finest recognitions for faculty—the 2008 Michael J. Brody Award for Faculty Excellence in Service to the University and the State of Iowa.

In his nomination letter, Psychological and Quantitative Foundations department chair **Tim Ansley** wrote, "I believe Professor Colangelo's career has been the

epitome of work at the highest level in teaching, scholarship, and service. His efforts have had a direct, positive impact on every school, teacher, and student in our state. His work has also garnered the College and University a substantial amount of respect and good will around the state, country, and world.

"In fact, only the name of E.F. Lindquist comes to my mind as someone who has had a comparable impact in terms of giving greater visibility and prestige to our College. I can think of no colleague I have known in my 25 years at Iowa who is more deserving of the high recognition associated with the Michael J. Brody Award."

The American Psychological Association Society of Counseling Psychology appointed Professor **John Westfeld** president for a one-year term, beginning August 2009. Currently, Westfeld is serving as president elect. As president, he will lead the 3,000-member society, which is the nation's primary professional counseling psychology organization.



Prof. John Westfeld

The Rehabilitation Services Commissioner, Institute on Rehabilitation appointed Associate Professor **John Wadsworth** issues editor. Wadsworth was also elected Region VII Board Representative for the National Council on Rehabilitation Education.

The Iowa Department of Education awarded Associate Professor **Tarrell Portman** and Assistant Professor **Susannah Wood** with a certificate of appreciation in recognition of their valuable contributions and valuable support for Iowa students and school counselors.

Associate Professor **Greg Hamot** was named state director of the "We the People" program, a social studies program aimed to help teachers educate their students about the U.S. Constitution.



Prof. Greg Hamot

Remarkable Outreach

Celebrating Young Children with the Community

Two-year-old Zachary Logsdon shook an egg-shaped percussion instrument along to the beat provided by Music Education majors and Assistant Professor **Mary Cohen** at the Celebration of the Young Child, a local community event.

Cohen, who requires that her students participate in a field experience such as the young child event, said she hoped her students would gain confidence in their teaching abilities and take advantage of the opportunity to practice some of the techniques and activities they were learning in class.

Patty Haman, one of Cohen's students, said she enjoyed planning activities and interacting with the children. "This was my first experience with a number of small children since high school and though I had no reason to believe it would be difficult, it was encouraging to realize my teacher training has been effective," she said.

Zachary's mom, Jennifer Logsdon, said she could tell her son was enjoying himself and she was impressed with the way the UI students interacted with the children.

"The teacher education students are doing great," she said. "They're engaging and good about trying to get the kids involved without pressuring them."



Cohen (L) and her student engage children with song.

Mason Honors Morgan for Outstanding Outreach

UI President Sally Mason honored Educational Measurement and Statistics doctoral student **Vernita Morgan** with the 2008 President's Award for State Outreach and Public Engagement. The \$3,000 award, given to one faculty, staff, student, and organization, recognizes those who demonstrate exemplary outreach to the State of Iowa and the public in general.

Morgan was recognized for her leadership and initiative in organizing the 2007 Cedar Rapids Community-wide Health and Wellness Fair, "It's All About You." Hundreds of people received free access to screenings that included blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index, bone density, glucose, glaucoma, hearing, HIV/AIDS, and others, at more than 40 booths. Aerobics classes, low cholesterol cooking demonstrations, CPR demonstrations, and other workshops were also presented. A blood drive was also held as well as collecting clothes and toys for a "give-away closet."

The fair's organizational committee, headed by Morgan, received a 2007 Iowa Governor's Group Volunteer Award. Morgan has also been invited to serve on the Cultural Health Initiatives Collaborative Council, which seeks to increase awareness about minority heart health within Iowa.



Vernita Morgan



Teaching Tools for Special Children



Socks allow Metcalf and McCarthy to experience what it is like for a person with Down syndrome to tie their shoes.

Michelle McCarthy (BS '93) heard an inspiring presentation at the 2007 National Down Syndrome Congress Convention and wanted to bring that message to Iowa. McCarthy, a teacher, mother of a child with Down syndrome, and co-founder of the Hawkeye Area Down Syndrome Association, invited speaker Susan Peoples to present on the UI campus. Peoples has developed a curriculum of reading, writing, and spelling for children

with Down syndrome and other developmental delays.

The invitation grew into a full-day workshop, "Teaching Tools for Special Children," which took place on campus last spring. The event had a special price break for college students and also offered six CEU credits for teachers.

McCarthy said she saw the conference as a chance to reach out to the community and spread her association's message.

"I think it's important that we not only are teaching parents that have kids with Down syndrome all the possibilities for the children," McCarthy said, "but also that we link up with the

community and teach them as well."

Amanda Metcalf (BA '08) plans to teach special education and attended the workshop to get ideas about how to reach her future students.

"I want to be as effective as possible with my instruction, so I thought the conference would be a great opportunity," she said.

Metcalf said she left the conference with lots of ideas.

"The main thing I took away from the conference was that students with Down syndrome are capable of learning every thing that a 'typical' student can learn," she said.



Peoples' (L) workshop inspires teachers Metcalf (center) and McCarthy (R).

Remarkable Education

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