Snow Days

Mounds of snow, blizzard conditions, and treacherous roads led to an unprecedented three snow days at KU this February. However, our little reader was unaffected by the frosty weather. She just sat on her bench and kept reading her book at the edge of JRP’s Centennial Reading Plaza.

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Breaking News:
US News & World Report 2014 Rankings for Public Universities

#1 Special Education
#12 SOE Graduate Programs (tie)
#15 Educational Psychology (tie)
Mirroring Our Little Reader

Rick Ginsberg, Ph.D., Dean

Just as our little reader pictured on the front cover of this issue of the *Jayhawk e-Educator*, plowing through her book despite the snowy conditions, we are moving ahead undeterred by the challenging conditions facing Schools of Education. We expect significant budget constraints in the years ahead, major accountability demands, ill-informed national criticism by groups uninterested in what we really do, and the challenge of keeping up in a dynamic technological environment. But despite all this, to me, these are truly exciting times, and as you’ll read about in this issue, our faculty, students and alumni are embracing the demands of the future.

Thus, you’ll read about Neal Kingston’s Dynamic Learning Maps project which has the potential to alter how students are tested across the country. You’ll note that Diane Nielsen is exploring ways to improve student reading, Joe O’Brien studying how social media can enhance student engagement, and these are but a few of the exciting projects underway. Worth noting is the work of Wayne Sailor and his colleagues who received the largest grant in KU history to create the Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) center, to work on strengthening inclusion of all students in education. These efforts display how our faculty are striving in P-12 education and in the health and sports-related fields that we teach to meet the Bold Aspirations the KU Strategic Plan demands.

One of the more challenging aspects of what we do is to stay ahead of the dynamic technological atmosphere that pervades our culture. We are a technology-rich School, where we are testing the use of iPads in some programs, using an avatar-based program (TeachLive) to instruct future special educators, while inculcating technology across the curriculum. In this issue you’ll read about the launch of our new blended program for preparing school principals. Utilizing both face-to-face and online instruction, the program draws on the best of both worlds to offer our students high quality programming in ways that meets today’s needs.

Along with having Bold Aspirations for the future, KU is also ensconced in a major capital campaign, Far Above. For the School, this calls for raising funds to support students and to help us with an array of projects geared towards keeping us at the forefront of the education world. We’ll be in touch as to how you can assist us.

I’m particularly excited about two new ventures we’ll be announcing in the near future. One will involve many of you as we work with our National Advisory Board of alumni and friends to create initiatives to tap into the great expertise and experience that so many of you are willing to share. The other will be a very innovative program to thrust the School into the online teaching world that will help make us a leader in this growing area. For this and the other initiatives underway, the idea is to build upon the well-respected past so that many of you helped form so we can continue to lead in the generations to come.

A Nobel Laureate in Economics recently wrote that what really counts for individual success are things like perseverance, curiosity and conscientiousness. Our little reader ignoring the snow to get her book done captures the essence of these characteristics, that we feel are also needed to grow and succeed as a School. Please join us on this journey, and thank you for all you interest and support over the past years.

Rock Chalk!!

In the Spring, I have counted 136 different kinds of weather inside of 24 hours.  

*Mark Twain*
There’s an old saying in education that first you learn to read, then you read to learn. A University of Kansas professor has authored a study highlighting the importance of focusing instruction early in a child’s life on vocabulary and understanding what is read, not only on aspects of word recognition, which are the hallmarks of “learning to read.” Attention to vocabulary and understanding text early in students’ school careers can help them develop the ability to comprehend text better.

Diane Nielsen, associate professor of curriculum and teaching, conducted a study with 28 kindergartners at a high-poverty, urban school who were all behind their classmates in aspects of language development. Students took part in a 12-week storybook-based intervention in which they focused on vocabulary and narrative (story) understanding. At the end of the intervention, they made significantly greater gains in vocabulary and narrative skill — two key elements of reading comprehension success — than students with similar needs who did not participate.

“As important as word recognition is, and it’s super important, vocabulary needs to be given as much emphasis,” Nielsen said. “It is essential that children learn to quickly decode words, but if they don’t understand the meaning of the words, then their ability to understand the overall meaning of a story or other text will be compromised. And comprehension should always be the ultimate goal of reading.”

Research has long shown that many kindergartners enter school with limited vocabulary knowledge and other language skills behind those of their peers, and a large portion of those who do come from poor backgrounds. This not only puts them behind their peers in reading achievement, it often leads to children being designated for special education when they should not be.

Nielsen’s study, which was published in the journal Reading Psychology, took place over the course of 12 weeks with students who were behind their peers on standardized measures of language development and narrative. Three times a week the students spent 30 minutes in a small group, storybook-based lesson, preplanned by Nielsen. A graduate student, who provided the instruction, taught selected words then read a story stopping to emphasize those words and asking the children their meaning. Elements of stories, such as character and story events, were also focused on before and during the book reading. In ensuing sessions, the students discussed or demonstrated the meaning of words and engaged in activities to emphasize story elements, such as by retelling and acting out the stories.

The students and their peers in a control group were tested before and after the intervention. As expected, the students in the intervention made significant gains in vocabulary scores, as they were explicitly taught as a part of the lessons. However, the intervention students also made larger gains on narrative understanding measures, including their ability to retell stories, a way to demonstrate story comprehension. Nielsen reported that narrative is also a much more difficult concept to teach than vocabulary words, which can be explicitly taught, illustrating the value of the intervention.

Nielsen suggested that the findings are important because students can often appear to be good readers in the primary grades, but when text becomes more demanding they can quickly fall behind. Such students may be able to identify and pronounce the words they are reading, but limited vocabulary knowledge and a general lack of understanding of how stories and other types of text work affects their comprehension. Even though continued on next page
Focus on Vocabulary, continued

the intervention students showed greater improvement than their peers, not all teachers will have time in their busy day to provide additional instruction as was the case in this study.

“It’s all well and good that the students in these intervention groups did well, but most teachers don’t have an extra hand to provide additional and separate instruction for the students who need it,” Nielsen said. “I like to think about ways we can support teachers to provide good solid instruction in vocabulary and narrative to all their students. Also, I think it really helps if we can all get kids to be ‘word conscious’ – get them excited about learning new words, show them that words can be ‘cool’ and get them thinking about words in many different contexts.”

Nielsen expanded this research to see if the success with a small group could be duplicated when the strategy to focus on vocabulary and narrative is delivered by the classroom teacher to an entire class. Her recently completed study, with a kindergarten teacher providing the instruction in a high-poverty urban school, demonstrated it was possible for many kindergarteners to make great gains with such focused instruction, even when delivered in a whole-group setting.

Some children will still need additional help even after quality classroom instruction. For that reason, Nielsen suggested, it is important for schools to find ways to support the delivery of research-based interventions focused not only on aspects of word recognition but also on vocabulary and narrative, so that all children have the best possible chance of reaching their potential as readers in the long term.

— Mike Krings
KU News Service
A nationally recognized expert in K-12 assessment, accountability systems and performance standards has been named the co-director of the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation. Marianne Perie joins Neal Kingston, current director and faculty member in the KU School of Education. “Marianne Perie brings a national perspective that focuses on the interface between assessment and policy,” Kingston said. “She brings a multitude of assets in the field of K-12 assessment, accountability and performance standards, which will not only benefit CETE, but the hundreds of students, parents, educators and schools CETE staff work with in Kansas and across the country.”

Perie has assisted many states in developing assessments and accountability systems and has created publications that have guided assessment and accountability leaders and policy makers.

Perie comes to CETE after six and a half years at the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment in Dover, N.H., where she consulted with many states about optimal design of assessment and accountability systems as well as setting performance standards.

“Marianne is a very nimble thinker,” said Melissa Fincher, associate superintendent for assessment and accountability at the Georgia Department of Education. “She understands what states are up against and how complicated it is to operationalize assessments and to get tests built and ready for students and school administrators. She has been able to come up with solutions for many states to some pretty thorny issues.”

Her expertise includes setting performance standards, and she has provided extensive technical advice on the matter to several states. Perie also has taught courses and writes extensively on standard setting.

Perie also brings experience in test validity evaluation and has served and continues to serve on several state technical advisory committees, providing expert advice and technical assistance.

She has worked to develop validity arguments for alternate assessments, which are assessments given to students with disabilities. She worked with Georgia and many other states in crafting a series of studies of states’ alternate assessment programs where she facilitated discussions across states to discover their commonalities and differences and what it all meant.

“With her guidance, this study of alternate assessments was a great opportunity for us to do some in-depth analysis and see our program’s strengths and weaknesses,” Fincher said.

She has also provided several workshops on validity of alternate assessments to states through the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs and Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Perie served as senior program administrator for three years with Educational Testing Service in Princeton, N.J., where she worked extensively on K-12 standard-setting planning, design and implementation. She also developed training programs to teach staff to run standard-setting workshops and taught graduate-level seminars on standard setting.

Perie received her doctorate in educational research, evaluation and measurement from the University of Virginia and a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Cornell University.

CETE is a nationally recognized research center specializing in K-12 large-scale assessment and online test delivery systems. Through its partnership with the Kansas State Department of Education, CETE offers assessments to all 286 Kansas school districts. During the 2011-2012 school year, CETE administered 4.6 million test sessions online, and 99.8 percent of the Kansas general and modified assessments were administered by computer using CETE testing software.

— Laurie Harrison, CETE
Vermont joins DLM Consortium

Vermont has joined the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment Consortium, a multistate initiative led by the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation at the University of Kansas. Vermont joins the DLM Consortium’s 13 other states: Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

The DLM Consortium is developing the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment, a computer-based assessment for the one percent of the K-12 public school student population with significant cognitive disabilities for whom, even with accommodations, general state assessments are not appropriate. The DLM assessment system is designed to support student learning by having assessment tasks model good instruction. Assessment is embedded in teachers’ instruction given throughout the school year in ways that allow the Dynamic Learning Map to help teachers teach better. It will be implemented in the DLM Consortium states during the 2014-2015 school year.

“We are happy to join the other DLM states in the development of authentic assessment tools to inform teaching and learning in Vermont,” said Armando Vilaseca, Vermont education commissioner. “Collaboration amongst states will increase professional development opportunities for our educators. I am a believer that collaboration, the sharing of best practices and resources, will strengthen our education system.”

“We welcome Vermont to the DLM Consortium during this exciting time in the history of educational testing,” said Neal Kingston, DLM project director and Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation director. “I fully expect that the addition of Vermont to the Consortium will help ensure we develop a high-quality assessment system that will support student learning and teacher instruction.”

DLM is funded through a five-year-grant awarded in late 2010 by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. Its $22 million grant award was the largest in KU history at that time. The DLM Consortium is one of two multistate consortia to receive federal grants to create a next-generation alternate assessment linked to Common Core State Standards in math and English language arts for the one percent population.

Laurie Harrison, CETE
The School of Education offers several graduate degrees in their entirety at the KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park. We can help you further your KU education without the commute.

**Education programs offered in their entirety at KU Edwards Campus:**

- **Curriculum and Instruction** (Reading, Math and Sciences, Language Arts, Social Studies, ESL)
- **Educational Administration**
- **Educational Leadership** (Ed.D.)
- **Special Education** (Adaptive, Autism/Aspergers)

For more information, contact:
Kim Huggett, School of Education Edwards Campus advisor, (913) 897-8421 or khuggett@ku.edu
http://edwardscampus.ku.edu/

Additional information about the new program format can be found at: [http://elps.soe.ku.edu/academics/edadmin/mse](http://elps.soe.ku.edu/academics/edadmin/mse)

A news release about the program can be found at: [http://news.ku.edu/2013/03/12/program-offers-new-path-busy-teachers-who-want-education-leadership-degree](http://news.ku.edu/2013/03/12/program-offers-new-path-busy-teachers-who-want-education-leadership-degree)

The application deadline for the new blended Master of Science in Education degree is April 1, 2013.
KUDOS
Horizon Awards Honor SOE Alums

Four School of Education alumni were part of the 32 beginning educators who were named 2013 Kansas Cable Telecommunications Horizon Award recipients recently. Sponsored by the Kansas State Department of Education and the Kansas Cable Telecommunications Association, the program recognizes exemplary first-year educators. Every school district in the state may nominate one elementary and one secondary teacher for the award who have successfully completed their first year of teaching and have performed in such a way as to distinguish themselves as outstanding. Four elementary and four secondary classroom teachers are selected for the award from each of four regions that correspond to the state’s U.S. Congressional districts.

I commend each of the award recipients for their commitment to making a difference in the lives of their students.”

The following KU alumni received the award.

Dr. Christopher Jenson, who completed the graduate licensure program in 2011 for biology education, teaches science at Blue Valley Southwest High School, Blue Valley USD 229. He began his career in medicine and continues to work clinically in the Kansas City area. He helped build and taught the Foundations of Medicine course at Blue Valley’s Center for Advanced Professional Studies during 2011-2012. A wonderful story ran in the KC Star about him recently: http://joco913.com/news/a-healer-and-now-a-teacher/

Alyssa (Auld) Meyer (B.S.E., 2010, M.S.E., 2011) teaches Physics and AP Physics at Mill Valley High School, De Soto USD 232. She is also the head girls’ tennis coach, assistant boys tennis coach, and the assistant quiz bowl sponsor at the school.

Scott Peavey (B.S.E, 2010) teaches World History and Foundations of Leadership at Tonganoxie High School, Tonganoxie USD 464. He is also an assistant football coach and head boys’ track coach for the high school.

Betsy (Elizabeth D.) Robb (B.S.E., 2010, M.S.E., 2011) was recognized for teaching 6th grade math at Maize South Middle School, USD 266. Robb is also the assistant coach of the girls’ basketball team.

Recipients of the 2013 Kansas Cable Telecommunications Horizon Award were notified of their selection by Dr. Diane DeBacker, Kansas commissioner of education. DeBacker remarked, “I want to extend my congratulations to the recipients of the Kansas Cable Telecommunications Horizon Award. These new educators have taken on the challenge of helping all of our students learn to their fullest potential, and I am heartened by the quality of individuals we bring to our classrooms each year.

School of Education Convocation
Saturday, May 18, 10:30 am
Allen Field House

★ There will not be a limit on the number of guests and tickets will not be required.
★ More information will be on the School of Education website in late March as well as an online registration form for participation in the ceremony.
Hyojeong Seo, a doctoral student in the department of special education, will receive the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Division for Research (DR) Student Research Award for Quantitative Methodology at the annual meeting of CEC in San Antonio early in April.

The DR Student Research Awards recognize high-quality research across multiple research methodologies conducted by students in the course of their undergraduate or graduate special education training program. DR presents up to three awards each year, one each of three methodologies (single-case design, qualitative design, quantitative design).

Hyojeong’s paper, titled A Two Group Confirmatory Factor Analysis of The Arc’s Self-Determination Scale with Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders or Learning Disabilities, was selected through a blind peer-review process to receive the award in the Quantitative Design category. Congratulations to Hyojeong and her major advisor, Professor Michael L. Wehmeyer.

Grace Francis, a doctoral student in the department of special education, has received the 2013 Student Award from the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. This recognition of the scholarship, contributions, commitment, and citizenship that Grace brings to her life and to her work with citizens with disabilities is well deserved. She will accept the award at the 137th AAIDD Annual Meeting, which is being held on June 3-6, 2013 in Pittsburgh, PA. Ann and Rud Turnbull are Grace’s advisors.

Congratulations for this significant award!

Please join us at
The 9th Annual KUPD & School of Education Graduate Student Research Conference
Friday • April 6, 2012 • 9:30-3:30 • Joseph R. Pearson Hall
Keynote speaker Dr. Karrie Shogren
The Kansas School Superintendents’ Association (KSSA) presented its annual Service Award to Dr. Sharon Zoellner, Superintendent at Louisburg USD 416, in recognition of her continual and excellent active service to professional educational organizations. The award was presented by Past President and Awards Chairman, Mike Mathes, during the KSSA Awards and Recognition Breakfast at the United School Administrators of Kansas (USA|Kansas) annual convention on January 24, 2013.

Zoellner has been president of USA|Kansas, president of KSSA, and member of KASBO Board of Directors, USA|Kansas Convention Committee, and USA|Kansas Task Forces for School Finance and for Legislation. She also is a member of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), Suburban School Superintendents and the Mid America Association of School Superintendents.

Zoellner has presented on the national and state level in the areas of assisting beginning principals, strategic planning, and school finance and bond issues.

Her presentations have taken her to Anaheim, California, San Antonio, Texas and Tampa, Florida. Her academic studies earned her a Ph.D. in educational administration from Kansas University, a master’s degree in educational administration from Emporia State and a BSE from Central Methodist College in Fayette, Missouri.

Zoellner has served as an elementary classroom teacher, a math and science junior high instructor, an elementary principal, director of finance and student services, assistant and deputy superintendent and superintendent. She became superintendent at DeSoto in 2003 and served for six years before moving to Louisburg where she is currently Superintendent.

“Dr. Zoellner is a passionate advocate for public education and she works closely her colleagues to ensure quality leadership at the classroom, building and district levels,” said Cheryl Semmel, Executive Director of USA|Kansas. Semmel was in attendance at the breakfast and was pleased to see Zoellner recognized. Dr. Don Wells, Executive Director of KSSA stated, “Dr. Sharon Zoellner is a consummate professional that has given more than her fair share to our educational organizations. She is the gold standard by which we can accurately measure our own endeavors. She is very deserving of the KSSA Service Award.”

KSSA press release

The Kansas Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (KDEC) at its 31st Annual Conference in Wichita, KS February 28-March 1, 2013 gave the award of Direct Service Provider Award to KU SOE alumni Marie Kohart (B.S.E., 2003, M.S.E., 2006).

This award is presented to a current DEC/KDEC member with less than ten years of direct service in the field who has made significant contributions to young children with exceptionalities and their families.

Kohart was nominated by her colleagues in Gardner/Edgerton Schools and Infant Toddler Services staff in Johnson County. She works as part of the ECSE team in Gardner/Edgerton conducting screenings, assessments and intakes, and provides itinerant services to children with special needs served in community settings.

One of her nominators commented on her "amazing ability to connect with families exemplifying the very definition of family/professional partnership for supporting young children's healthy development."

Editor’s note: Special education is a family pursuit, Kohart is also the daughter of Eva Horn (professor, early childhood special education).
Partnership works to help at-risk youth

A partnership between Kansas Children’s Service League, a private nonprofit social service agency, and University of Kansas researchers has shown that restorative justice helps at-risk youth reach their educational potential while reducing problem behavior.

Kansas Children’s Service League administers the Center for Restorative Education, a Topeka-based center that works with students who are unable to remain in a traditional school setting, and may be at an increased risk for falling behind or dropping out. In 2011, KCSL requested that KU’s Institute for Educational Research and Public Service and School of Social Welfare evaluate the CRE to determine whether the program was enabling students to meet desired educational goals. The evaluation showed that students increased their grade-point averages by 43 percent, earned 74 percent of the credits they needed to advance to the next grade level and maintained or increased their socio-emotional strengths.

While the initial evaluation confirmed that the program is working, the partnership will continue, both to increase the sample size and to provide more resources to help the Center be even more effective. The Morris Family Foundation has provided funds to support the evaluation of this program.

“Given the right environment we see that these students’ innate knowledge and intelligence can be supported and flourish,” said Teri Garstka, assistant director at the Institute. “These are students who can be successful, and we think CRE’s restorative justice model is responsible for some of the outcomes we’re seeing.” Read more... [link]

Professor develops profiles, guidance for creative students

Any teacher could name them. And anyone who ever had classmates could probably remember at least a few of them: Students who are clearly bright or creative but don’t necessarily excel in school or are often in trouble. A University of Kansas professor has published a paper showing that profiles she created can not only identify such bright, creative kids but help set them on the path to being the nation’s next innovators, creators, inventors and artists.

Barbara Kerr, Distinguished Professor of Counseling Psychology and director of the Counseling Laboratory for the Exploration of Optimal States at KU, co-authored the study with Robyn McKay of Arizona State University. It was published in the Creativity Research Journal. Studies of creative individuals have been done for decades, but they have always focused on eminent people after they’ve reached adulthood.

“Before this, creativity tests have been an expensive endeavor. There’s never been an efficient way to find adolescents, pre-college, who could benefit from a creative career,” Kerr said. “So we scoured biographies of eminent people and asked a question that hadn’t been raised before. ‘What were they like at 16?’”

Based on that research and interviews Kerr has done with creative individuals such as personal computer pioneer Steve Wozniak and participants in the Iowa Writers’ Workshop, Kerr and colleagues developed six profiles of creative adolescents in five domains of creative endeavor. They then sent the profiles to educators throughout Kansas. Over five years, 485 students were identified as fitting the profile.

[continued on next page]
“The schools would say ‘we know these kids are bright,’ but clearly they’re not achieving across the board,” Kerr said.

The students were invited to attend the CLEOS Project, a research through service counseling laboratory. At CLEOS, the students discussed creativity, their educational challenges and aspirations and were given personality tests and individual counseling to help them realize what they need to do to achieve their personal goals.

“To find the innovators, those who have the potential to make creative contributions to the global economy, research suggests that it is necessary to look beyond the traditional pool of math/science talent,” Kerr wrote. “Focusing on the career development of creative young people may be critical to innovation and renewal in society. Identifying those students who need specialized guidance into creative occupations is the first step toward establishing an innovative society.”

Read more... [http://news.ku.edu/2013/02/27/professor-develops-profiles-guidance-creative-students](http://news.ku.edu/2013/02/27/professor-develops-profiles-guidance-creative-students)

Study reflects children’s opinions on race, presidential election

The significance of Barack Obama’s historic 2008 election as the first African-American president was widely analyzed, discussed and documented by pundits and everyday citizens alike. A University of Kansas researcher has authored an article documenting what Obama’s 2008 victory meant for the country’s youngest citizens, how aware they were of politics and their opinions on the significance of race.

Meagan Patterson, assistant professor of psychology and research in education, was lead author on a project that interviewed 130 children ages 6 to 11 within three weeks prior to and following Obama’s election. The study, published in the journal Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy, found the children were highly aware of the campaign and that Obama would be the first African-American president, but had varying views on the significance of his race, whether it would affect his chances at election and their own aspirations to be president some day...

Researchers have long studied the political attitudes of young voters and those about to reach voting age, such as high school students. Patterson and her colleagues’ study is among the first to gauge the knowledge and interest of grade school children, however, especially examining issues of race in politics. The results show they do in fact pay attention and listen to messages about presidential politics and race from adults, teachers, parents, media and other sources. That could show potential for increasing political engagement among young people and minorities, who historically have not been as largely involved in politics as older and non-minority citizens.

“We’re telling kids that the whole point of an election is to listen to the voice of everyone,” Patterson said. “They’ve shown that when we say ‘we want a black man to be president,’ they notice that and are thinking about what it means for themselves and their country.”

Read more... [http://news.ku.edu/2013/01/17/study-reflects-childrens-opinions-race-presidential-election](http://news.ku.edu/2013/01/17/study-reflects-childrens-opinions-race-presidential-election). You can also view a profile of Dr. Patterson and a listen to a podcast about her study... [http://kcur.org/post/race-gender-elections-how-children-are-affected](http://kcur.org/post/race-gender-elections-how-children-are-affected)

Thanks to Mike Krings at KU News for all of these stories.

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In Memory

Robert W. Ridgeway 1923 - 2013

Emeritus Professor of Education Robert W. Ridgeway died on March 11, 2013, in Lawrence.

Bob was born December 19, 1923 in Emporia, Kansas. He graduated from Baldwin High School in 1941 and earned a Bachelor’s Degree from Baker University in Baldwin. He moved with his family to Lawrence in 1953, where he earned Master’s and Doctorate Degrees in Education from the University of Kansas. Dr. Ridgeway was a faculty member in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the School of Education from 1954 to 1990. He served the School in a variety of roles, including associate dean, department chair and director of the library at Bailey Hall.

Dr. Ridgeway served in the U.S. Army during WWII. He was awarded a Purple Heart after suffering an injury during the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium. He married Evelyn Warner on June 7, 1944 in Baldwin. Bob and Evelyn raised their four children to adulthood before she preceded him in death. He married Mary K Palmquist on April 1, 1983. She survives of the home.

Other survivors and their spouses are Susie and Dale Deere, Lake Waukomis, Missouri; Steve and Emily Ridgway, Palo Alto, California; Cathy and Dick Johnson, Leawood, Kansas; Dave and Dagmar Ridgway, Branford, Connecticut; and seven grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and three stepchildren. The family suggests memorials to the Presbyterian Manor, Good Samaritan Fund, Lawrence.

Editor's note: Dr. Ridgeway's contribution to "Remembering the Teachers Who Touched Our Lives" can be found at [http://www.soe.ku.edu/sites/soe.drupal.ku.edu/files/docs/jayhawk-educators/JE_W05.pdf](http://www.soe.ku.edu/sites/soe.drupal.ku.edu/files/docs/jayhawk-educators/JE_W05.pdf). Be sure to read it and the companion piece by Dr. Omiunota N. Ukpokodu that in turn celebrated Dr. Ridgeway.

Alvin H. Schild 1916 - 2013

Emeritus Professor of Education Alvin H. Schild died on January 14, 2013, in Lawrence.

Al served his country in the U.S. Army during WWII as a 1st Lieutenant. He received a BA, MA, and Ph.D in economics at University of Iowa. He started his teaching career in 1949 at the original Fraser Hall and retired in June 1982 from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

After retirement, he and his wife, Joyce, and youngest daughter, Crystal, finished a home on Clinton Lake where they lived for many years. Al was known for his sense of humor, as a supportive and loving husband, father and grandfather, a poker and bridge player, and for his woodworking expertise. His final residence was Presbyterian Manor. Al was married to Joyce J. McKercher on April 14, 1949, in Norwood, MN. She survives, of the home. Other survivors include three daughters, Linda K. Twitchell, Bellingham, WA, Darcy Schild, Lawrence, Crystal Schild- Carstens, and husband, Ken, San Antonio, TX; four grandchildren; a brother, Marcus Schild, Fort Dodge, IA, and many nieces and nephews.
Amber Elwood, a teacher in Columbus, Indiana, helps her second grade students enhance their literacy skills by utilizing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. Elwood uses television commercials, video games and student-created songs as part of her quest to provide multiple avenues for all of her students to successfully access learning. As she prepares her lessons, she considers student variability and how to represent the content through various forms of text, video, sound and hands-on manipulatives. Keeping UDL principles in mind, Elwood is always searching for the best ways to keep her students engaged, while allowing them to choose the best methods for expressing their new knowledge.

Elwood’s use of the UDL framework mirrors a growing trend in teaching and learning. Due to UDL’s proven success in classrooms and its inclusion in current drafts of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, more and more teachers are looking for support in classroom implementation. In an effort to meet this need, Sean Smith and Jamie Basham from the Department of Special Education, and Amber Rowland from ALTEC, a division of the Center for Research on Learning have been designing online UDL modules for both inservice and preservice educators. The three had the opportunity to visit Bartholomew Consolidated Schools Corporation where Elwood teaches – it is considered to be an exemplar of UDL by the National Center on UDL (http://www.udlcenter.org/). By capturing UDL in action, participants in the online module will now have video-based examples of the UDL principles in practice.

The trip was also an opportunity to test an assessment measure that Basham and Smith have been developing with several colleagues at different institutions and the UDL Implementation and Research Network (UDL-IRN) (http://udl-irn.org/). It allows an observer to determine if UDL is being implemented in a classroom and to what extent. Much like an athletic coach uses motion analysis to break down an athlete’s movement, this observation instrument is being used to see UDL in an action-packed classroom. Findings from this trip were quite promising.

Amber Rowland
ALTEC

More photos on page 20.

Lopez, a senior scientist at Gallup who is also a professor of practice at KU’s School of Business, was a faculty member of the School of Education from 1998 to 2008, leaving the SOE to join Gallup and the Clifton Strengths Institute.

While a doctoral student, Lopez began his work on positive psychology and hope with Rick Snyder from the KU department of psychology. He continued this focus as a SOE faculty member and was able to work with his mentor until Snyder’s untimely death in 2006. Snyder is still a major influence in Lopez’s work. “It always starts with Rick,” he affirms.

At Gallup, Lopez is involved in the Gallup Student Poll, “which measures the hope of hundreds of thousands of students each year to determine how hope drives well-being and achievement.” In the last three years, says Lopez, the organization has polled over 1.5 million students. The poll is, says Lopez, “designed to create conversations about non-cognitive skills that contribute to student outcomes. Hopeful, engaged, happy kids go to school more often, do better on tests, and are more likely to graduate.”

The Gallup Student Poll is also used to identify ‘High Hope Schools.’ Lopez notes that over 1700 schools participated this year; of those 170 met the criteria for being classified as a high hope school. “We’re getting a lot of information about what a high hope school looks like,” he says. Principals of high hope schools see parents and community members as a talent pool. This mindset expands school resources exponentially. Schools from all areas of the nation are high hope – there is no correlation with the economic status of the students.

“Hope is considered an equal opportunity resource. If someone teaches you to think about the future in a complex way you can get ahead in life.” Lopez continues, “So many people think wishing is hoping. But if we teach kids to wish instead of hope, we can undermine their growth. With kids we try to turn their wishing skills into hoping – we teach kids about the ‘ifs’ in life. When it comes to hope, you have to be a realist, because you have to identify the obstacles and come up with pathways to go around the obstacles.”

The 170 high hope schools that were identified this year have all had the opportunity to nominate one of their teachers for a new honor, “The Most Hopeful Teacher in America” award, sponsored by Gallup and Simon and Schuster. That award will be announced at the end of March.

In addition to the Most Hopeful Teacher award, Lopez has launched an app called My Hope Odyssey (http://shanelopez.com/hope-odyssey/) “that applies the science and strategy of hope to help users identify the goals that matter most to them and then achieve those goals by fostering a community of supporters on Facebook and Twitter.”

Lopez will bring his Hope Day tour to the University of Kansas on March 27, where he will meet with faculty, administrators and student leaders on how hope drives well-being, achievement and professional development.
Call for Nominations
University of Kansas School of Education
Distinguished Alumni Award & Friend of Education Award

Distinguished Alumni Award
The Distinguished Alumni Award is the highest honor the School of Education bestows upon its alumni. The award recognizes a particular achievement of noteworthy value, a series of such achievements, or a career of noteworthy accomplishments.

Nominations for the awards may be submitted by members of the University and the wider community; a graduate of the School of Education; a School of Education faculty member; a former Distinguished Alumni Award winner; an employer; a member of the community.

Permission must be obtained from an alumnus before proceeding with a nomination.

Friend of Education Award
This award honors an individual, organization, foundation, corporation or publication that has exemplified strong leadership and distinguished service to the field of education and whose service and support has helped to advance education locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally. The award is not restricted to a graduate of the KU School of Education, but rather is intended to recognize those who, regardless of educational background, have helped support and sustain elementary, secondary, or post-secondary public education.

Nomination Documentation for Distinguished Alumni Award and Friend of Education Awards must contain:
• A letter of recommendation signed by the nominator. Not to exceed two pages, this letter should describe the breadth of contributions made by the candidate.
• No more than two (2) additional letters of reference supporting the nomination signed by individuals from an institution other than the nominator’s.
• A resumé, curriculum vitae, or chronological listing of the nominee’s positions, titles, institutional affiliations, and accomplishments.

Additional information about the awards will be available at www.soe.ku.edu.

Nomination materials should be sent to: Distinguished Alumni/Friend of Education Award, c/o Sherrie Saathoff, Office of the Dean, School of Education, University of Kansas, 1122 W. Campus Rd., Lawrence, KS 66047. Deadline for receipt of materials is April 15, 2013.

The awards will be presented at the School of Education Spring Convocation.

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Mark Your Calendars
April 18  AERA Reception
May 18  SOE Convocation
May 19  KU Commencement
June 14  Strategies Conference
O'Brien finds social media platform boosts student engagement on provocative topics

Teachers can attest that engaging students with classroom material can be challenging. A School of Education professor is leading a study showing that given an online platform in which they can discuss provocative topics like what justifies war, middle school students not only get engaged, they go beyond class requirements.

Joe O’Brien, associate professor of curriculum and teaching, is leading a project among middle school students in Kansas, New York and Virginia. The students use Ning, a closed social media site, to discuss what reasons might justify going to war. They start with a discussion in their classrooms, put together a list of reasons, then post it to the site and eventually discuss their reasons with their peers online.

“It gives them a different audience than just their classmates,” O’Brien said of the synchronous online discussions. “Since their teachers are preparing them for life in a democratic society, we thought this would be an appropriate topic.”

Now in its third year, the project has shown that students regularly become more engaged in the topic as they participate in nine online discussions throughout the year. Before each discussion students are given a new historical situation in which to answer the question but with the identifying context removed. When they discuss their reasoning for war, possible solutions to a conflict and whether one side is right or wrong, the students have also regularly progressed in their use of logic, questioning their peers and defending their positions. After the online discussion, each classroom’s teacher debriefs the discussion and compares their thinking to what actually occurred during the historical situation.

“That’s one of the big takeaways,” O’Brien said of the students’ engagement. “Look at what they’re doing when they have a chance to express themselves. This is all peer to peer, and they’re getting very excited and engaged.”

A good deal of research exists on the use of nonsynchronous online discussions in education, but O’Brien wanted to find out whether having the chance to talk to fellow students in real time would make a difference. The results thus far have shown both a greater number of overall posts and progression in the students’ reasoning. Numerous students even take part in multiple discussions at the same time. While teachers lead the in-class discussions, they simply monitor the online work so students are free to take the lead.

In addition to simply generating a larger number of posts, the synchronous discussions have shown the students are willing to go beyond the requirements. The site will feature a required reading where students are instructed to post their thoughts. However, roughly two-thirds of all comments on the site are posted in “discussion threads” where the students are allowed to talk about the issue and hash out their reasoning, but are not required to do so. O’Brien and his colleagues have presented the findings in a series of journal articles and an upcoming book chapter.

Perhaps the greatest value of the project is preparing students to take part in public discussions. At the end of the school year the students are required to make a presentation to a group of adults representing nations on the United Nations Security Council. The ongoing conflict in Syria was one of the recent topics addressed at the United Nations exercise. As they showed in the synchronous discussions, students’ thinking on such matters showed depth and concern.

“Fighting to preserve peace is an oxymoron in my opinion,” one student wrote. “Fighting can only lead to increased citizen and military casualties. I do not believe our military should get involved at this point.”

The synchronous online discussions throughout the year are showing the ability to engage the students in such conversations, a skill they will need throughout their lives and careers.

“We’re hoping that as they interact with each other, the students’ reasoning for going to war become more complex,” O’Brien said. “They tend to see there’s not always a simple answer, and we want to see what needs to be done to get them to think more deeply about important issues.”

Mike Krings
KU News Service
Educational Opportunity Programs resecure funding

The University of Kansas’ Educational Opportunity Programs have secured more than $4 million in funding to ensure they can continue to help first-generation and low-income students not only reach college, but also be successful once they get there.

The programs, which include the highly successful TRIO and McNair Scholars programs, have been funded for five years. Tight federal funding made it unclear whether the full amount would be available, but the good news was welcome.

“When we got the word from Sen. Jerry Moran’s office I said, ‘Let me read this again,’” recalled Ngondi Kamatuka, director of the Educational Opportunity Programs of the Institute for Educational Research and Public Service. “We were thrilled. So we’re in business for another five years.”

Through nearly a dozen formats, TRIO programs span the educational lifespan, identifying students of promise from backgrounds that often come with barriers to higher education. The Educational Talent Search identifies students as young as sixth grade in Kansas City, Kan., with the potential for academic success and provides mentorship and guidance to help them graduate from high school and enroll in an institution of higher learning. The TRIO Educational Opportunity Center and TRIO Veterans Upward Bound programs respectively help first-generation and low-income adults enroll in GED or postsecondary programs and those who have served in the military enter a postsecondary education track.

In between youth and adults are a number of programs that work with students to provide guidance and opportunities necessary for college success. In fact, students who have taken part have referred their parents to the adult-oriented programs.

“It’s a really great pipeline when you think about it,” Kamatuka said. “There are many students from all kinds of backgrounds that have not had the opportunity for a higher education. These are the students we want to ensure are successful.”

Getting to college is only part of the goal. Students in the TRIO McNair Scholars Program graduate in six years with a graduate degree, and many go on to complete doctoral studies. The programs provide mentoring and assist the students with everything from making sure they have access to computers to paying for their visits to institutions at which they plan to matriculate for their doctoral degrees. Compared to their peers, McNair Scholars have higher percentages of students who graduate within six years, earning master’s degree and doctoral degrees.

Nearly 5,000 students take part in at least one of the TRIO programs. Mulu Negash, director of the McNair Scholars Program, said the

continued on next page
success could be largely attributed to collaboration from across campus. Between 2007 and 2011, 94 faculty members either served as mentors twice or mentored two to three students simultaneously. The students’ academic interests are as varied as the faculty who mentor them. They have majored in virtually all KU fields of study, and fully one-third of the newest class of McNair Scholars are studying in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, the so-called STEM fields, in which minorities are traditionally underrepresented.

While a good deal of focus is placed upon classroom work, the program’s directors realize education happens everywhere, not just on campus. Students have attended cultural events at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in Kansas City, the Lied Center and throughout the state. Students have also traveled to educational conferences throughout the country as part of their experiences.

“Sometimes you have to have time to socialize with people you aspire to be like,” Kamatuka said.

“I grew up in a different culture, and the majority of the adults I saw were teachers and nurses. Those professions are important, but when I learned there were other opportunities and I could do things other than what I’d known, it lit a spark in me. We’d like to be able to do that for these students.”

The success of KU’s programs has been noticed beyond campus. Last fall, Debra Saunders-White, deputy assistant secretary of higher education programs at the U.S. Department of Education, visited KU to learn more about the TRIO activities. She’s since shared examples of KU’s initiatives at conferences and events throughout the country. Last winter, Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little was featured in the Council for Opportunity in Education’s publication Networks discussing the importance of TRIO programs.

“There are students who, because of the TRIO programs, come to the university, and who because of the TRIO programs really excel,” she said in the article. “They have opportunities that they wouldn’t have thought of.”

Kamatuka echoed the sentiment of providing opportunity for those who have not had it or may not have realized it.

“They get a different worldview,” he said of students who take part in the programs. “We have to empower them with a broader spectrum of what the world is all about. Students are the agents for social change. When we give them the opportunity to succeed in education they can succeed in the world and change ideas and grow.”

Mike Krings
KU News Service

MARCH 17, 1942
University Chancellor Deane W. Malott recommends that KU accept Japanese-American college students being deported from the West Coast in the wake of Pearl Harbor, suggesting their presence would be “an interesting leaven in our group,” and contending the whole deportation scheme would appear “utterly foolish” in the “light of later years.”