

Catalyst

FALL 2011



Meeting the Needs of English Learners:
Focus on a Key Challenge in Education

Strengthening Scholarship and Practice for a Diverse World



Photo by Neil Michel/Axiom Photography

Dean Harold Levine

Our notion of the world is expanding. We are indeed a global community, full of overlapping expectations, norms, and cultures. Nowhere is this more evident than in our schools and classrooms.

Our schools, as a reflection of our communities, host a seemingly endless variety of ethnic, racial, cultural and language groups. For many of us, our diversity is a great source of hope and joy. But with our diversity comes a responsibility to ensure that all students can achieve their goals and enter the adult world prepared to succeed in the rapidly changing economy of the 21st century.

Meeting the needs of English learners is one of our greatest challenges. The School of Education understands this. This issue of the *Catalyst* features the deep intellectual, professional and policy expertise our faculty, staff, researchers and students bring to bear on understanding and meeting the needs of English learners, who make up the fastest growing segment of the public school population in the United States.

The School is uniquely positioned to provide critical leadership and scholarship for the effective education of linguistic minority students. And the stakes cannot be higher. According to a recent report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, about five million English learners are enrolled in the nation's schools, representing about 10 percent of all public school students. California

is home to one-third of the nation's English learner students. The National Education Association predicts that by 2025, one in four students in the U.S. will be from homes where a language other than English is spoken.

As the growth in English learners continues to trend higher, the persistent underachievement of these students continues to be a source of great concern. Tragically, the drop out rate for English learners is four times greater than for other students.

Teachers and administrators need training and guidance to improve instruction and quality of life for their students. Concerns for the future of this ever-growing segment of our population must extend to our community, government and business leaders.

The School offers a forward-looking combination of knowledge and experience to provide practitioners and policymakers with research and advice to address every major aspect of the challenge—from the best that is known about assessment and testing of English learners to preparing the next generation of teachers and school district leaders. The School's proximity to the California State Capitol has also positioned us as a go-to resource for education policymakers.

To make the most impact, we are seeking to establish a center for English learner scholarship and practice. Combining our in-house expertise with strategic partnerships among researchers, practitioners and government leaders, our faculty are seeking funding to establish a Center for Linguistic Minority Research, Policy and Practice dedicated to improving education outcomes for linguistic minority students, particularly English learners.

I hope in reading this issue of the *Catalyst* you will reflect on the complexity of the task at hand and come away with a sense of confidence that the School is making a major impact on one of the key education challenges in our country. 📖

diverse

Noun:

- Assorted: consisting of different or various kinds; miscellaneous
- Distinct: distinguished as not being the same; not identical
- Divergent: to differ in opinion, character, form; having no finite limits

CAROLYN ZACHRY: Expanding “Sphere of Influence” Sparks Leadership Path

By Heidi Sciutto

For Carolyn Zachry (EdD 2009), finding connections and community makes all the difference.

“Make connections outside your local area to improve your practice,” she advises students and fellow alumni. “If you can, get to know educators in other counties. Get to know leaders in nonprofit organizations and businesses. Others can help you—see how you can help others, too. The more you know, the more that will inform your practice.”

Hailing from the Midwest with expertise in special needs and gifted education, Zachry came to California in the 1990s to pursue a leadership path in education. Two master’s degrees, several administrative positions at school, district, and county levels, and one EdD later, Zachry is today an education programs consultant in the Charter Schools Division at the California Department of Education.

Zachry’s interest in education emerged when her brother was diagnosed with a learning disability. She earned a special education bachelor’s degree from Eastern Illinois University and took a teaching position in Maryland that aimed to transition teenage students with emotional and behavioral disorders from a special school to a mainline high school. “They always say your first year teaching is the hardest,” Zachry said. “That was indeed a very challenging first year. I learned a lot.”

Zachry went on to earn a master’s degree in gifted education and a certificate in administration. After teaching elementary school for three years, she became involved in school leadership through school and district committees, including acting principal. “I was the one who said ‘I’ll do it’ or ‘I’ll organize that,’ and I really enjoyed what I was doing,” she said.

With a taste of leadership experience, Zachry was intrigued by an all-woman panel during a job interview in California. “I got a sense that I would have more leadership

opportunities available to me, that this was a more progressive state than in the Midwest,” she said. She moved to Southern California and earned a second master’s degree—this time focused on educational leadership—at California State University, San Bernardino.

Eventually Zachry married, started a family and moved to El Dorado County, where she worked for Placerville Union and Pollock Pines school districts. With declining enroll-

ment and eventual closure of her school, Zachry moved up to the El Dorado County Office of Education and wore many hats. She served as the coordinator of categorical and student programs and built an array of community connections in the process. “At the county level, I felt my sphere of influence expand outside of the district,” said Zachry. “That became more interesting to me. I realized I like being a part of the bigger picture.”

Zachry, who became a student in the School’s EdD (CANDEL) program in 2006, credits her continued professional growth to CANDEL Co-Director Paul Heckman for his program mantra that “encouraged me to ‘think about my thinking.’ That resonated with me.”

“I always felt that the courses were basically a framework for the discussions that happened,” said Zachry. “Our cohort talked, listened, and challenged each other. I learned a

great deal about the community college system and gained a better understanding of the K-14 perspective as a result.”

She landed her current position in July 2010, and yet another world opened with more perspectives, connections and experiences. Zachry jumped right in. “It seems more limiting to me if I’m only looking inside—I want to continue expanding,” said Zachry. “In these tough economic times in education, I think it’s important for all of us to network with others to help us think outside the box.” ■



“It seems more limiting to me if I’m only looking inside—I want to continue expanding.”

– Carolyn Zachry

ALUMNI COUNCIL Update

By Sandi Redenbach (BA 1972, Credential 1973), Chair

Fall is a great time to update our alumni and friends about what the School of Education's Alumni Council has been up to and what we hope to accomplish this year and beyond.

At an all-day retreat this summer, we were pleased to reflect on some of our goals for this year and most important accomplishments from last year; not the least among them is the School's annual Honoring Educators event. Recognizing outstanding alumni and elevating the presence of the School are two of our key priorities, and this event is one very celebratory way to meet those priorities. The fifth annual Honoring Educators event is coming up in May, and we need your help through nominations and attendance. (See p. 5 for more details on this event and the nomination process.)

Another key priority is a focus on building relationships with students and young alumni, in addition to strengthening our network of alumni and friends through mentoring and

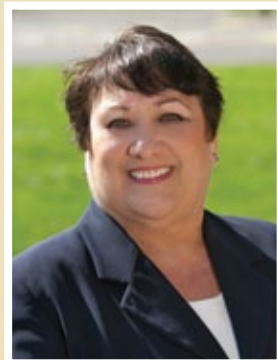


Photo by Neil Michel/Axiom Photography

Sandi Redenbach

events. We welcomed more than 100 alumni to our Bell Ranch alumni mixer in September, and we had two pizza nights in the fall for credential students we will help mentor throughout the year. We are always looking for other ideas from our alumni on ways to build lasting connections.

We urge you to connect with the School and with each other. Take advantage of the many events hosted by the School. Nominate an outstanding alumnus or alumna. Reach out to our students. Make a gift. Our ultimate goal is to provide all of our alumni with meaningful ways to support and connect with the School.

For ideas on how to get involved, contact Doreen Barcellona Strnad, assistant director of alumni relations and development, at (530) 754-2131 or at dastrnad@ucdavis.edu.



Alumni Mixer at Bell Ranch

On Sunday, September 18, the School hosted an Alumni Afternoon Social at Alumna Marlene Bell and her husband Bob Bell's walnut orchard in Winters, Calif. Nearly 120 people attended the mixer and enjoyed entertainment by the Cal Aggie Band-uh! At the event, the Alumni Council as a group presented its first-ever gift to the School for student support.

ALUMNI Updates

Michael Vlach Credential 2005, MA 2006

With a social science credential and a background in spelling and geography bees as well as academic decathlons, it's not a big stretch to audition for the "Jeopardy!" quiz show on television, right?

Michael Vlach, a computer technology teacher and assistant water polo coach at Dixon High School, had the right stuff and appeared on the show on June 15. He earned a second place showing and modest cash winnings, but Vlach has no future plans for another game show appearance. "I thought it would be a fun experience," he said. "I didn't really expect anything out of it." Television career aside, Vlach would like to explore photography and travel more in his spare time.



Michael Vlach (right) on "Jeopardy!"

Nancy McTygue BA 1988, Credential 1989, MA 1996

A former high school history and government teacher, **Nancy McTygue** is the executive director of the California History-Social Science Project, which is based at UC Davis. Featured in the summer issue of *UC Davis Magazine*, McTygue says she has long fought against what she considers the "marginalization of the discipline" of history. She works to support and advocate for history teachers—over 400 partake each year in the History Project's classes and seminars with some of America's top historians.



Photo by Kerith Higgins/UC Davis

Nancy McTygue

Teresa (Mathews) Gary BA 1969, Credential 1970

After 34 years as a high school English teacher, administrator and district superintendent, **Terry Gary** is retired and enjoying her second career as a volunteer with NorCal Sheltie Rescue. She has fostered over 40 dogs and recently wrote *English for Dogs*, a book that focuses on "teaching English as a 'second language' to dogs, keeping the words and phrases short, simple and consistent, and using positive training methods," says Gary. Her husband **Clifton Gary** (BA 1969, Credential 1971) took all the photographs for the book.



Terry Gary



Shayna (Glickman) Peeff Credential 2005, MA 2006

After teaching elementary grades in the Lafayette School District for the past six years, **Shayna Peeff** is teaching sixth grade core (reading, writing, history) in the district's Stanley Middle School this year; she herself attended these schools as a child. In 2008, Peeff earned her administrative credential at Saint Mary's College. In addition to teaching, she is a research advisor at Saint Mary's for the Teacher Leadership program, helping teachers with their action research projects for their master's degrees. "I continue to love teaching and enjoy taking on new challenges each year," Peeff said. ☐

Hold the Date!
Sunday
May 6, 2012

Honoring Educators Reception Send in Your Award Nomination!

Do you know outstanding alumni? Nominate alumni for an award using our easy online form so they can be recognized for their important work in education. For more information about this event and to submit a nomination by March 5, 2012, visit education.ucdavis.edu/alumni-awards.

LEAVING A LEGACY for TEACHER EDUCATION

Joanne Galli-Banducci and Anna Kato Retire

By Donna Justice

A great elementary school teacher is a bit of a magician: pulling out of the hat a vast array of tools and talents to meet the needs of a classroom full of unique individuals who are growing and changing every day.

Of course, every teacher preparation program must meet the minimum requirements of the state to ensure its students become credentialed and qualified to teach, but preparing teachers for the magic act is an art—one that the School of Education has mastered thanks to the dedication and passion of two of its most respected teacher educators.

Anna Kato and Joanne Galli-Banducci, who have given a combined 41 years to the School’s teacher education program, retired this spring. The program’s guiding principles are, in large part, a result of their work to build a program that emphasizes collaboration, inquiry and advocacy.

“Empathy is a necessary skill for 21st century citizenship,” said Kato. “Only through empathy can we reduce fear and encourage respect. Teachers can help children learn to be more empathetic through a focus on knowing the children they teach and by advocating for their needs.”

Kato, who began teaching at UC Davis in 1987, first taught art to deaf children at a school in Dublin, Ireland, right out of college.



Anna Kato and Joanne Galli-Banducci

“I wanted to travel and I wanted to do something that made a difference,” she said. “I didn’t want to be a nun or a nurse, so I thought I would explore teaching.”

When she returned to the United States, Kato taught for a year on a Native American reservation in Arizona. It was this experience that convinced Kato that teaching is about more than meeting standards and doling out classroom discipline.

“In the early seventies, my Native American students were

not allowed to speak their own language. I realized for the first time that education can be used as a tool for oppression,” said Kato. “I knew there had to be a better way to teach.”

Kato’s interest in different cultures and her understanding that the best teachers get to know their students—as learners and as people who bring their own cultures with them—led her to pursue a credential in multicultural and bilingual education. After teaching elementary school for 10 years in Elk Grove and earning a master’s and a doctorate, Kato came to UC Davis as a supervisor in the teacher credential program.

After a couple of years, in 1990, Kato was hired to teach and supervise full-time in the School’s multiple subject credential program. “I have to thank Dave Wampler, Susan Ostergard, Jo Skinner and MaryAnn Gatherall. They saw the potential in me to be an effective teacher educator. It has been a great fit for me,” said Kato.

Both Kato and Galli-Banducci agree that there is no manual for teachers. “They have to become the teacher they are,” said Kato. “They must learn about their gifts and then learn good practices.”

Galli-Banducci puts it this way: “A teacher must build a relationship with each student and his or her family. To effectively teach a child, you must know why they are or are not succeeding. That goes beyond coursework and training. Each

continued on next page

GIVING opportunities

Gifts to the **New Teachers Fund** provide support for aspiring educators as they prepare for careers in teaching, encouraging talented young people to respond to the call to teach.

For more information, go to giving.ucdavis.edu/schooled/newteachers. 📄

ANNA and JOANNE'S Impact on Alumni

“Joanne modeled what she taught. It was wonderful to listen to her read to us. It sharpened my listening skills. I think of that when I read to my students today.”

“What strikes me about interactions with Anna was her humanity. She extended a valuing of thought, reflection and the worth of the individual who is the teacher. She truly cared and it showed.”

– Tracy Anderson (Credential 2004)

“Being in Anna’s Effective Teaching class was a spiritual experience in which we really considered what teachers do and why we wanted to be teachers.... I felt joyfully that I was linked to a community of other people who shared and understood my love and passion for teaching.”

– Dorothy Lau (Credential 2010)

“Joanne Galli-Banducci will be sorely missed. Her Education 300 class was the very first of the credential year and the perfect way to begin the multiple subject program. Every student teacher in our cohort looked back on Joanne and her class fondly.”

– Evan Riley (Credential 2009)



Joanne Galli-Banducci and Words Take Wing author Laurence Yep



Anna Kato reading to students at Picnic Day

child needs to know that he or she is important to you and that their learning is important to you.”

Galli-Banducci never imagined herself as a teacher. Her interest in teaching was sparked after college when a friend was hired to teach at a continuation high school in Oakland.

“I wasn’t sure what to do after graduation. I visited my friend at his school and I was so impressed with his relationship with the students, how he was able to motivate children who had met with a lot of mishaps in life,” said Galli-Banducci. “I saw how his ability to connect to the kids enriched his life. I saw the reciprocity in teaching.”

She earned a teaching credential and began teaching in the early seventies. While taking a course in children’s literature, she realized how much she loved it. Eventually she became a reading specialist and taught third grade.

“In those days, there was a lot more freedom and no scripted curriculum, so we were able to do author studies and

a lot of other really exciting programs around reading,” she said.

Eventually, Galli-Banducci earned a PhD. For a time, she was a curriculum director in Dixon, Calif., but “I liked teaching too much. I missed it.” She began working in the School’s teacher credential program in 1994.

Perhaps, Galli-Banducci’s greatest legacy is her founding and management of the School’s *Words Take Wing* children’s literature lecture series. She remains the chair of this event, which has reached nearly 8,000 children over the last seven years.

“We will be forever grateful to Joanne and Anna for their dedication and commitment to the School of Education’s teaching credential program,” said Dean Harold Levine. 📖

Grant to Create **GUARDIAN TEACHER** Scholars Program Helps School Reach Out to Students Raised in the Foster Care System

Many students get left behind in school for many reasons, but perhaps no group of students is as isolated as those growing up in the foster care system. Of course, many foster youth accomplish great things, including graduating from college. With the right support and encouragement, the School of Education believes these students would make excellent teachers.

With a \$45,000 planning grant from the Stuart Foundation, the School is working with the Foundation to establish a Guardian Teacher Scholars Program at UC Davis. Planning is being done in partnership with Arnette Bates, program

director for the Equal Opportunity Program, and Valeri Garcia, the campus' Guardian Scholar Program coordinator.

The grant is focused on learning about the elements and components that will be needed for a successful recruitment, support, and retention program for former foster youth to enter the teaching

profession, in addition to providing a scholarship this year to one student. Chris Faltis, director of teacher education, Barbara Goldman, associate director of teacher education, and Dean Harold Levine lead the planning process to propose a sustainable program beyond this year.

The program will have four strands, with the planning grant funding the development of these strands as part of a comprehensive and cohesive program. Each strand is intended to address three stages of the education and teaching career: as an undergraduate, as a student in the UC Davis Teacher Education Program, and as an early career teacher.

Four Strands

- Academic, personal, and career support to ensure success at each stage.
- Leadership development to prepare Guardian Teacher Scholars to become advocates for foster youth in educational settings and to provide opportunities to




Lynn Romano, who is earning a single subject teaching credential in English, is the first recipient of a Guardian Teacher Scholars Program scholarship.

connect these emerging leaders with existing policy and practice forums that put foster youth education at the center.

- Recruitment strategies to promote teaching as a career to undergraduates who have come out of the foster care system, to facilitate their preparation for and their progress through the admission process into the Teacher Education Program, and to assist with post-credential planning.
- Scholarships to cover a significant portion of students' educational expenses; the university and the students themselves will also bear responsibility by sharing these costs.

Building on the Guardian Scholar Program for Undergraduates

The Stuart Foundation supported the launch of the first college campus support program for foster youth (Guardian Scholar) at Cal State Fullerton in 1999. At UC Davis, the undergraduate program is housed under the Educational Opportunity Program in Advising Services. Major funding includes a \$12,500 planning grant from the Walter S. Johnson Foundation and a \$55,000 matching grant in each of three years from the Stuart Foundation (2010 - 2013). Open to students admitted with freshman or transfer status, the UC Davis program celebrated its first baccalaureate graduates in June 2010. 

Grant from NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION Builds Pathways from Naturalist Education to Citizen Science

Heidi Ballard, assistant professor of environmental education, knows that non-scientists can play a key role in conservation, advocacy and education. They just need a little bit of training and encouragement to translate their interest into action.

With a recent \$250,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, Ballard will work with UC Berkeley professor Adina Merelender, junior colleges, nature centers and organizations such as the California Conservation Corps, and the Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA) program to build pathways for people to become Master Naturalists in the UC Cooperative Extension California Naturalist program and participate in environmental science.

This project is designed to test strategies to recruit young adults from under-served communities, who may be the first in their families to attend college, into the naturalist course and citizen science projects that often serve only adults over 50. Ultimately, the project intends to build a sustained regional network that fosters relationships among individuals and environmental science-based institutions (such as arboreta, botanical gardens, and nature and science centers) and enhances communication and interactions among the public and scientists.



Heidi Ballard

Ballard's focus is on what and how people learn through public participation in scientific research (PPSR) as a form of informal science education.

"From citizen science-type projects for conservation to participatory action research for natural resources management and environmental justice, PPSR projects can create unique opportunities for learning by participants and scientists," said Ballard. "Understanding the outcomes and processes of these projects can contribute to better practices in environmental and science education, and better conservation and natural resource management."

According to Ballard, many citizen science programs do a great job of engaging people over 50 in projects that can make a real difference in communities, but haven't really found an effective way to engage young people, particularly under-served groups who may have socioeconomic, language or other barriers to participating. By discovering effective ways to bring together diverse audiences to learn through naturalist training and citizen science, Ballard will begin to examine what engages people and sustains their participation in environmental learning and stewardship as adults. This project may provide a model for regional networks that could be expanded across the U.S. 📖

Education Faculty to Participate in New POVERTY Research Center

UC Davis has received \$4 million from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to establish a Center for Poverty Research, one of only three such centers nationwide designated to study the causes and effects of poverty and policies aimed at addressing poverty in the United States.

Several education faculty will play a key role in providing research and leadership to the interdisciplinary center, led by UC Davis economics professors Ann Huff Stevens and Marianne Page. Education policy professor Michal Kurlaender serves on the executive committee. Professors Paul Heckman, Heather Rose, Cassandra Hart, and Tom Timar are faculty affiliates.

"Educational success remains entirely too dependent on family socioeconomic background," said Kurlaender. "After nearly a half-century of policies and research since the

Elementary Secondary Education Act of 1965, we still have a long way to go in understanding what policies and practices are effective at improving poor students' educational trajectories and what can reduce intergenerational inequality."

"UC Davis is home to an incredibly productive group of researchers working on poverty. The center will build connections across campus that further strengthen this research, support the training of students to continue this research agenda, and provide an improved structure for sharing our critical findings with other researchers, policymakers and the public," said Stevens, who chairs the Department of Economics and will direct the new center. 📖



Michal Kurlaender

Faculty Publications, Presentations and Honors

Angela Booker, who studies ways that youth, families, and schools make use of media and technology for participation, learning, problem solving and political development, recently published an article with **Kindra Montgomery-Black** and **bel Reyes** of the School's CRESS Center, PhD student



Angela Booker

Adaurennaya Onyewuenyi, and Zanea Scott of Sacramento City Unified School District: "Public Scholarship within an Urban School District: A Community and University Partnership Approach to Service-Learning," *Journal of Public Scholarship in Higher Education*, 1.

Kerry Enright, whose research focuses on academic literacy, recently published an article with PhD student **Betsy Gilliland** that looks at the influence of the U.S. accountability and standards-driven context on the writing experiences of multilingual writers in "New Mainstream" linguistically diverse high school classrooms: "Multilingual Writing in an Age of Accountability: From Policy to Practice in U.S. High School Classrooms," *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 20 (3), 182-195.

Kerry Enright and **Shannon Pella**, a PhD candidate, presented research and best practices for teaching writing at the California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (CATESOL) Northern Regional Conference at UC Davis in November. Enright discussed how accountability policies and districtwide-required benchmark assignments are constraining the writing practices in content classrooms to such an extent that all students, but particularly English learners, have little chance to develop advanced writing skills. Pella presented her dissertation research on teachers' develop-

ment of writing pedagogy in K-12 settings through a collaborative inquiry process. PhD candidate **Betsy Gilliland**, one of the co-chairs of the event, said that the conference provides a great opportunity to showcase and disseminate research on English learners to TESOL instructors throughout the region.

Cindy Passmore, associate professor of science education, is taking over the helm of the Graduate Group in Education from **Steve Athanases**, who served as its chair for three years. Hosted by the School of Education, the Graduate Group in Education is composed of faculty from a wide range of academic disciplines, offering students unique opportunities to build personal programs where theory, research and practice merge to prepare them for exciting careers in educational research, teaching and other leadership roles.



Cindy Passmore

Rick Pomeroy, science credential lecturer/supervisor, gave the keynote address at the Nevada Teachers Association Conference in November. His talk was titled "Why Don't We Teach Science Like We Teach Math or Language Arts?"

Thomas Timar, professor and faculty director of the Center for Applied Policy in Education (CAP-Ed), has been appointed to the WestEd Board of Directors to represent the State Board of Education.

Thomas Timar and **Julie Maxwell-Jolly**, CAP-Ed's managing director, are co-editors of *Narrowing the Achievement Gap: Perspectives and Strategies for Challenging Times*, to be published by Harvard Education Press in January 2012.

Tobin White, who studies the use of technology in teaching and learning mathematics, recently released an article with Roy Pea: "Distributed by Design: On the Promises and Pitfalls of Collaborative Learning with Multiple Representations," *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, Volume 20, Issue 3, 2011.

Phil Young, whose research focuses on human resource and compensation issues in education, has received a 2011 Living Legend award from the National Association of Professors of Educational Administration. In making the award, the association remarked on Young's work on issues of diversity in the field of educational administration, his leading textbook *The Human Resource Function in Educational Administration*, now in its ninth edition, and his co-authoring of the *2010 Study of the American School Superintendency*.



Phil Young

GIVING opportunities

Gift to the Education Faculty Fund

Gifts honor education faculty and benefit future educators.

For more information, go to giving.ucdavis.edu/schooled/educationfaculty.

PHD STUDENT Named to Special Post

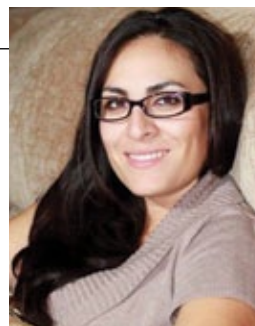
Lisceth Cruz, who is studying the role of Latino parents in the education of their children, has been chosen to serve as the Graduate Student Special Assistant to the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Chancellor.

“This position is really a bridge between graduate students and the administration on campus,” said Cruz. “Sometimes graduate students feel they can’t go to the administration with critical issues that concern them. I provide a layer of confidentiality to provide resources and advice.”

The special assistant not only serves as a liaison between her peers and campus leadership, but also sits on many councils and advisory groups, including regular meetings with the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Chancellor and the Graduate Council.

According to Cruz, each special assistant brings his or her own priorities and focus to the job. Cruz, who also served as the president of the Education Graduate Student Association, brings her focus on leadership development and service. “My hope is that I can help graduate students find meaningful ways to provide leadership inside and outside the academic world and to connect with other students who may share their interests.”

For her service, Cruz will receive a campus dissertation fellowship next year. 📖



Lisceth Cruz

UC/ACCORD FELLOWSHIP AWARD

Supports Academic Literacy Research

PhD candidate Betsy Gilliland has been awarded a UC/ACCORD Dissertation Fellowship in 2011-12 to support her project: “Talking About Writing: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Adolescents’ Socialization into Academic Literacy.” The project is concurrent with Professor Kerry Enright’s research (see p. 22) on English learners’ proficiency levels in the classroom.

Gilliland is tracking why first-year college students who are from immigrant families or who have a second language background might speak English well but are having trouble with their academic writing. “I want to see if language has something to do with that on some level,” she said. By studying three high school English classes and observing the

teaching styles, school policies and ESL curriculum, Gilliland hopes to discern what the students know, what they’re learning, and what causes the writing gap.

UC/ACCORD (All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity) supports and informs Californians’ efforts to replace prevailing patterns of schooling inequality and disparities in access to higher education with equitable conditions and outcomes for children from all sectors of the state. 📖



Betsy Gilliland

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT in MATH

Funded by CPEC/ITQ

In collaboration with the Colusa County Office of Education, PhD student Julie Orosco received a 2011 grant from the California Postsecondary Education Commission/Improving Teacher Quality (CPEC/ITQ) program for her project: “Colusa Mathematics Access Project.”

The funding will pay for teachers of grades 5 to 9 in Colusa County to participate in mathematics professional development and for the UC Davis Mathematics Project (UCDMP) to assess

their progress. Orosco’s grant and 13 other CPEC/ITQ grants were awarded statewide to help teachers from high-need school districts prepare for the new Common Core State Standards. 📖



Julie Orosco

Dean Welcomes NEW LEADERS to Staff

Kimberley Cole joins the School as assistant dean for finance and administration. She comes to the School with 13 years of experience in the Florida State University System. At Florida International University, she served as deputy director of The Metropolitan Center, assisted in developing the initial funding of the newly established College of Medicine, and most recently held the position of assistant dean for budget and operations for the College of Education.



Adrienne Capps joins the School as assistant dean for development and external relations, where she has overall responsibility for coordinating and implementing school-wide development, public relations, alumni relations, fundraising, and selected university-wide marketing functions for the School.



Since 1998, she has raised more than \$30 million for a variety of causes, including at-risk youth, mental health, and higher education in Virginia, New York,

and California. She previously served as the senior director of development for the Graduate School of Management at UC Davis. Prior to her move to California in 2007, she served as the head of fundraising for Dyson College of Arts & Sciences at Pace University in New York City.

School Welcomes New Students

Fall is an exciting time at the School. With the arrival of new students, the School kicks off the academic year with a welcome event at Gunrock Pub. This year, more than 200 faculty, staff and students attended the event.



Rick Pomeroy (right), lecturer/supervisor for the science credential, helped greet new students.

PhD Student Honors

M. Cecelia Gomez – 2011 Soroptimist Dissertation Fellowship Award for Graduate Women.

Kathryn Hayes – Participatory Action Research Fellowship through the Center for Regional Change and the Community Forestry and Environmental Research Partnerships (CFERP).

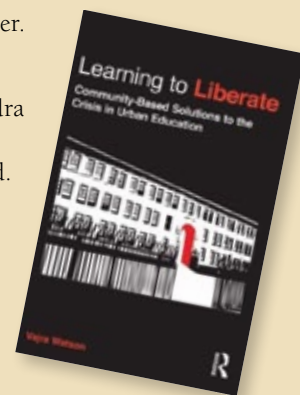
Ali Sakkal – 7th Annual *Games Learning and Society* Conference: Attendee Choice Award for “Most Shockingly Unexpected Findings” and Attendee Choice Award for “Most Inspirational” for the paper and poster presentation “Learning to Rock: The Role of Prior Experience and Explicit Instruction on Learning and Transfer in a Music Videogame.”

Staff Publications and Honors

Kindra Montgomery-Block, director of technical assistance and community relations in the CRESS Center, received the Northern California Exceptional Woman of Color Award from HUB Magazine in October.

bel Reyes, community schools program coordinator in the CRESS Center, and Kindra Montgomery-Block received the 2011 Yolo Family Resource Center Kids Choice Award.

Vajra Watson, director of research and policy for equity, released *Learning to Liberate: Community-Based Solutions to the Crisis in Urban Education*, published by Routledge, 2011.



Upcoming EVENTS

Science in the River City

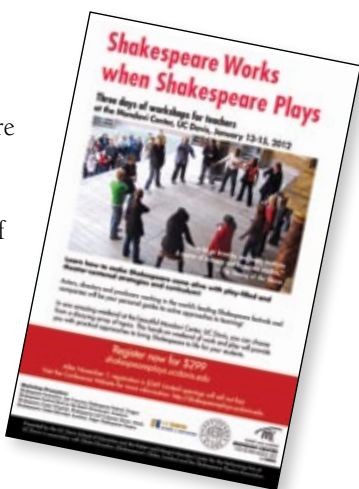
The Sacramento Area Science Project is entering its 25th year of Science in the River City, a professional development program for K-12 teachers of science. There are five sessions available: December 6, January 31, February 28, March 27 and April 24. Registration per session is \$40. For more information, visit www.csus.edu/mase.

Shakespeare Works When Shakespeare Plays Conference for Teachers

January 13-15, 2012

Teaching artists from some of the world's most respected Shakespeare theatres will share active and playful approaches to enliven the teaching of Shakespeare at a conference of hands-on workshops aimed to transform teaching across the curriculum in support of the Visual and Performing Arts standards.

Register now for only \$349. Check the conference website at shakespeareplays.ucdavis.edu for details on registration, workshops and hotels. The weekend is presented by the UC Davis School of Education and the Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts at UC Davis in association with Globe Education (Shakespeare's Globe, London) and the Shakespeare Theatre Association.



Academic Literacy Summit

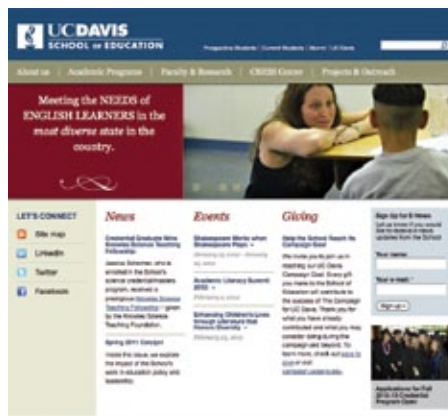
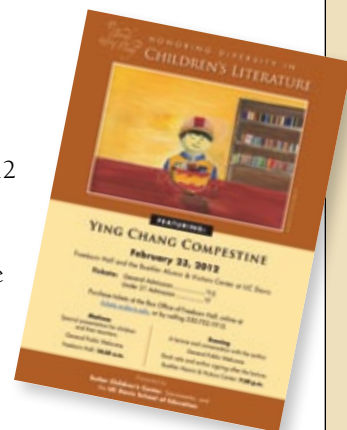
February 2, 2012

The School will host the fifth annual Academic Literacy Summit in February. This year will give special attention to California's newly adopted Common Core Standards. For details on the event, visit education.ucdavis.edu/2012-summit.

Words Take Wing

February 23, 2012

This year's author is Ying Chang Compestine, who will present to K-12 students and teachers at 10:30 a.m. in Freeborn Hall, and to a smaller audience of adults at 7:30 p.m. at the Alumni Center. Tickets are available for both performances at tickets.ucdavis.edu or by calling (530) 752-1915. For more details, visit education.ucdavis.edu/words-take-wing.



GIVING opportunities

Gifts to the **Catalyst Fund** support investment in innovative new initiatives to make a difference in teaching and learning, and in the lives of our children.

For more information, go to giving.ucdavis.edu/schooled/catalyst.

School's Website Has a New Look

Over the summer, the School revamped its website to highlight the latest news and events on its home page and to simplify navigation to all of its content. Check out the site at education.ucdavis.edu. Be sure to sign up for our monthly electronic newsletter and click on our links to the School's Facebook page.

English Learner Scholarship and Practice

Special section by Donna Justice

Bridging Policy and Practice To Strengthen Teaching and Learning for ENGLISH LEARNERS

“English learner education is even more fraught with tension and political divisiveness than other issues in education,” said Julie Maxwell-Jolly, and this can get in the way of providing these students with the best education possible. “I am really hopeful that we are moving to a time in which our focus is on how to use the whole range of research-supported strategies in well-designed and implemented programs to provide the best education for English learners.”

Research that Maxwell-Jolly conducted with Professor Patricia Gándara (now at UCLA) in the last decade revealed that one barrier to providing the “best” education is that many teachers feel unprepared to teach English learners. More recent research (as yet unpublished) by Maxwell-



Julie Maxwell-Jolly

Jolly found teachers expressing similar sentiments about their need and desire to increase their expertise in English learner instructional skills. “I am encouraged, though, by how well the School of Education prepares its credential students to serve the needs of English learners, the BCLAD credential especially.” (The School offers a Spanish bilingual credential.) “These teachers, even if they don’t end up teaching in Spanish, have many skills for working with English learners that are important no matter what the instructional approach.”

In schools, the focus must be on how to offer the best education possible for English learners, says Maxwell-Jolly, who has recently been tackling this challenge through research

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Bilingual Education Policy Context: Proposition 227


California was one of the first states to enact a comprehensive bilingual education policy in the 1970s, in response to research indicating that English learners did not have enough mastery of English to comprehend the content they were asked to master in classrooms.

But in June 1998, California voters passed Proposition 227 which restricted the use of primary language instruction for English learners and instead called for one year of “Structured English Immersion.” The result was far fewer students being taught in bilingual classrooms.

According to research conducted in 2000 by School of Education researchers Julie Maxwell-Jolly and Patricia Gándara, Proposition 227 was the result of a belief that bilingual education had failed to close the achievement gap between native English speakers and English learners. However, as Maxwell-Jolly and Gándara found, only a third of English learners were in special bilingual classrooms before Proposition 227; therefore, they argued that the gap could not be attributed to a failing in bilingual instruction.

What many parents did not understand, particularly parents who were English learners themselves, was that they could request a waiver requesting that their child receive primary language instruction.

“Only students under 11 years old or who were not fluent in English were required to be placed in English-only instruction, and no one was telling parents they had the right to a waiver,” said Michele Fortes, multiple subject credential instructor and supervisor. Fortes leads the School’s BCLAD (Bilingual, Crosscultural, Language, and Academic Development) program, whose graduates are authorized to teach in Spanish.

Overall, the researchers found that if districts or schools did not already have a strong commitment to primary language instruction, it sometimes disappeared altogether. Today, primary language instruction remains scarce, even though there is strong evidence that instruction supporting primary language is a highly successful means of promoting English literacy among English learners. 

Leading in the Assessment of ENGLISH LEARNERS

Professor Jamal Abedi is an internationally recognized expert on K-12 education testing and assessment. He is a prolific researcher, a sought-after consultant, and a go-to advisor on the policy and development of standardized tests for K-12 education.

Abedi's sensitivity to the needs of English learners and his scholarship in the field of assessment, especially of English learners, has led him to develop a strong body of work around the issue of unnecessary complexity in instruction and test language. Abedi's research suggests English learners may not be able to demonstrate in English their knowledge of content areas such as math and science. Consequently, standard assessments of their grasp of these core subjects may not provide reliable and valid outcomes.

"English learners face a dual challenge: learning a new language and trying to master content in a language they are struggling to learn," said Abedi. "These are two different tasks." But, Abedi argues, because the language on so many standardized tests is overly complex, both in its construction and in its vocabulary, we often assume English learners don't understand the material.

"This is not about dumbing down the content, but rather about reducing the complexity that is unnecessary for assessing content knowledge," he said.

According to Abedi, the major issue is the growing population of English language learners and the achievement gap between native speakers and English learners. "The trend since the late 1990s is that the English learner population has grown ten times faster than the rest of the population. About 10 percent of all K-12 students in the country are English learners, and California is home to a third of those. Eighty-five percent of those students are Latino. This is quickly becoming an issue of equity. We must do a better job of closing the gap."

Abedi, who serves on several major federal and international education advisory boards, says that his findings are starting to impact how government leaders and publishers develop and implement

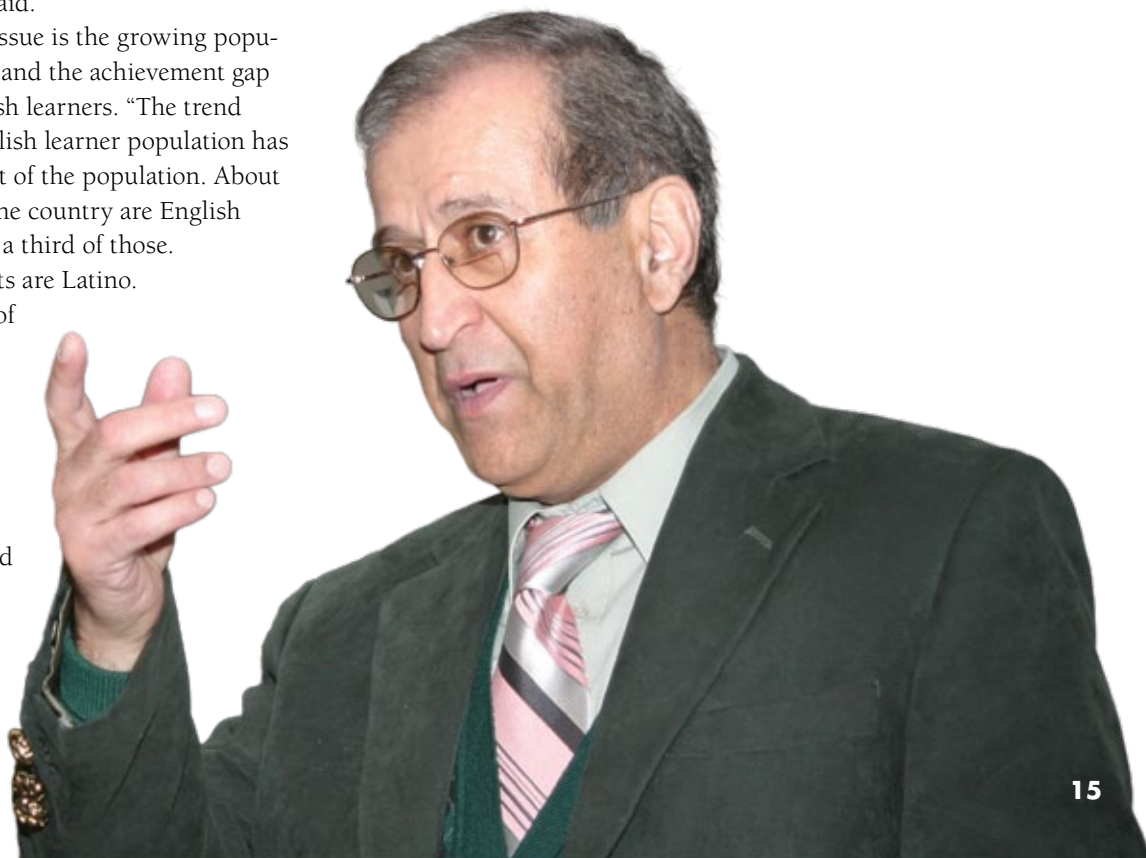
high-stakes assessments. Recently, Abedi and several of his graduate students developed a computer-assisted assessment system, which allows questions to be adjusted to the student's level of language proficiency and provides an embedded glossary of terms among other accommodations aimed at truly assessing content knowledge rather than language proficiency. "This has prompted several test publishers to inquire about how they can incorporate this in their assessments," said Abedi.

Abedi's work stretches from Washington, D.C. to the United Kingdom, Zanzibar and South Korea. "Many countries have second language learners," said Abedi. "We are truly a global community now." 🌍

"English learners face a dual challenge: learning a new language and trying to master content in a language they are struggling to learn."

– Jamal Abedi

Jamal Abedi



English Learner Scholarship and Practice

Graduate Students Bring IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE and Identity to Bear on Research and Community Outreach

Cirilo Cortez, who was born in Morelia, Michoacan, Mexico, moved to the United States when he was three. Though he spoke no English at first, he worked hard throughout elementary school to master his second language and his studies. By junior high, he felt he was really starting to understand his subjects, but was unable to shed the English learner designation until high school, where he learned about college and insisted on that path for himself.

Lisbeth Cruz came to the United States from Mexico City, Mexico, when she was a teenager. The learning curve was steep, but she had parents who emphasized the importance of learning, becoming bilingual, and giving back.

Cortez and Cruz are PhD candidates in the School of Education. They bring their experiences as English learners and scholars to the work they do in the community and in the research they conduct to discover novel approaches to meeting the needs of students who share their experiences in the American K-12 school system.

Visualizing a Path to College and Beyond

“I remember being really frustrated in school,” said Cortez. Especially frustrating was the English learner designation that kept him in courses that were not as challenging as he knew they should be. In high school, though, Cortez received support from the Migrant Education Program, which provides federal funds to support high quality education programs for migratory children. The program pointed him toward a new path.



“I remember being really frustrated in school.” Especially frustrating was the English learner designation that kept him in courses that were not as challenging as he knew they should be.

– Cirilo Cortez

Cortez, whose parents were migrant farmworkers in Kelseyville, Calif., credits his advisors in the Migrant Education Program with sending him to a conference at UCLA, where he learned about the UC entrance requirements and got the information he needed to insist on tougher classes.

Today, Cortez, who is a Gates Millennium Scholar,* is finishing his last year in the School’s PhD program. His dissertation focuses on a successful Latino mentoring program at a Davis, Calif., junior high school. The program grew out of a study eight years ago in the Chicano Studies department at UC Davis. To ensure that Latino students, particularly English learners, stay in school, the program pairs up Latino university students who provide one-on-one tutoring and mentoring to students who too often drop out before they even get to high school.

“A big part of the success has to do with a strong focus on familia,” said Cortez. “The mentors tap into the importance of strong personal relationships with the students and their parents. They are told to really invest in the relationship with the student.”

Cortez finds that many of the tutors see the job as an opportunity to give back, to help someone like them succeed. Cortez gives back, too, serving as a coordinator and advisor for the MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement) program at American River College. Upon earning his doctorate, Cortez plans to work in student services at a college or university.

continued on next page

* The Gates Millennium Scholars Program funds good-through-graduation tuition for low-income minority students seeking undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Fighting for the Right to an Education

“The right to an education is the civil rights issue of the modern age,” said Cruz, who is a major voice for immigrant student rights.

Cruz wears many hats, including serving as a leader among her peers and in her community in the fight for passage of California’s Dream Act, which provides undocumented students who graduated from a California high school the right to pay in-state tuition for college and to tap into a limited amount of state funding for college expenses. Governor Jerry Brown signed both parts of the California Dream Act into law in October.

“This whole issue is highly politicized, but the truth is these students are the valedictorians of their schools, they are high achievers,” said Cruz, who also serves as the graduate assistant to the chancellor and dean of graduate studies.



“I was always encouraged to be bilingual and to take my education seriously.”

– Lisceth Cruz

“One of my goals is to help undocumented students at UC Davis feel safe at the university, to help them develop support systems, and to be empowered to advance and seek change.”

Cruz knows firsthand that family is one of the most important support systems for any student. “My parents sat down with me every day after school and asked me to talk to them about what I had learned, first in English, then in Spanish. I was always encouraged to be bilingual and to take my education seriously,” she said.

Nothing bothers Cruz more than the belief among some that Latino parents don’t value education. “I offer college workshops aimed at Latino families. All of the materials are in Spanish; everything I say is in Spanish. I get 200, sometimes 300, families to attend, showing they care,” she said.

Cruz’s dissertation research is focused on the role of parental engagement in the lives of first generation college students. 📖

English Learners from page 14

that takes a deep look at what is happening for English learners at the school and district levels.

With support from The S.H. Cowell Foundation, Maxwell-Jolly just completed a two-year study of English learner education in three different school districts in Northern California. “We took a 360-degree look at EL education in three districts where leaders were interested in understanding better how those students were being served and wanted recommendations for how to do a better job meeting their needs,” said Maxwell-Jolly.

The researchers conducted a cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis and comparison of the performance of EL and non-EL students on standardized tests, including the California Standards Test, California English Language Development Test and the California High School Exit Exam. They also considered many different stakeholders’ experiences through interviews and surveys of students,

parents, teachers and administrators. “We took an almost journalistic approach,” said Maxwell-Jolly. The result is an in-depth report based on the particular findings for each district with recommendations for making strategic decisions moving forward.

In addition to her Cowell research, Maxwell-Jolly has been exploring the efficacy of providing extra time for English learners as an approach to helping these students succeed academically. In February 2011, she wrote a policy brief “English Learners and Out-of-School-Time Programs: The Potential of OST Programs to Foster English Learner Success.” You can find the brief on the California Afterschool Network’s website at www.afterschoolnetwork.org/node/9171. The complete article on which the brief was based will be published in the January 2012 edition of the peer-reviewed journal, *Afterschool Matters*. 📖

English Learner Scholarship and Practice

Championing Imperfection in the Quest for REAL LEARNING

Being an English learner in an American classroom is difficult enough, but for students who arrive understanding and speaking little or no English in middle school or high school, the experience can be completely disorienting.

“How do we meet the needs of immigrant children and youth who come to our schools with non-parallel schooling experiences?” asks Chris Faltis, professor of education and an expert on the educational needs of immigrant students. “Their life and learning experiences don’t match up well with the expectations of American schools.”

Professor Faltis, who directs teacher education and holds the Dolly and David Fiddymant Chair in Teacher Education, focuses on how to prepare teachers for variations in language use and prior schooling experiences among English learners and immigrant students. The stakes are high. “Language use is deeply tied to language and cultural identity,” said Faltis.

For most immigrant students, Faltis explains, bilingualism is “circumstantial.” In immigrant communities, students speak their home language and then are told that their home language gets in the way of learning in school. Many of our schools aim for teaching students to speak English perfectly, correcting their errors with hope that they will finally perfect their language. The focus on “language perfection” is not only interfering with students’ learning, but also sending the message that “imperfect English users are less capable than native English users.”

To exacerbate the challenges of teaching immigrant students, the focus on mastery of English, according to Faltis, leads to students being pulled out of “regular” classrooms for English language development. “More often than not, they also get placed in lower tracked classes and, therefore,



“Teachers need to create a set of rich activities that can set students up for success in English without disparaging their imperfect use of it.”

– Chris Faltis

denied access to rich interactions using language as they learn content.”


“The focus on ‘English learning’ ignores bilingualism,” said Faltis. The result is a system that emphasizes language learning rather than language use. “Teachers need to create a set of rich activities that can set students up for success in English without disparaging their imperfect use of it. This requires schools to give students an opportunity to interpret, extrapolate and use their developing language to show what they know.”

Faltis acknowledges the pressure teachers are under to provide low-level curriculum based on worksheets and testing outcomes, but he says “a teacher’s job is still to figure out how to engage students in language and literacy uses.” Teachers need not be bilingual, but they must be willing to give English learners opportunities to use language for interaction, drawing inferences, and showing their knowledge in multiple ways.

“Like it or not, schools are sorting mechanisms,” said Faltis. “That’s why

issues of social justice and advocacy are paramount in our teacher education program,” he said.

“Our program is based on a mission to serve the community in which our teachers learn about teaching,” said Faltis. That community includes many bilingual and transnational students. “Everything we do, from the coursework to field placements, revolves around ensuring our student teachers are prepared to serve the variety of students they will encounter.”

Faltis, the editor of *Teacher Education Quarterly*, has a book coming out soon on how teachers interpret language use in academic settings. He is co-editor with Professor Jamal Abedi of the American Educational Research Association’s (AERA) *Review of Research in Education* (Volumes 37 and 39) and is co-writing a chapter for the 2014 edition of the seminal *5th Handbook of Research on Teaching*, published by the AERA. 

Driving an Agenda for Advocacy: Preparing Teachers to Meet the NEEDS OF BILINGUAL STUDENTS

Behind every child is a family with a rich set of cultural values and expectations. Successful teachers not only recognize this fact, but celebrate it through outreach to parents, adapting their teaching methods, and continually learning about their students and school communities.

“A great teacher needs to be open-minded and admit that she has a lot to learn from her students as well,” said Laura Dubcovsky, an instructor and supervisor in the School’s BCLAD Credential program, which authorizes teachers to provide instruction in Spanish.

Dubcovsky, who was born in Argentina, explains that teachers must start by rejecting a monolithic approach to students who are learning English. “Who are English learners?” she asked. “We are people with diverse needs, backgrounds and educational levels. Teachers need to be able to understand different perspectives to meet the needs of all students.”

This approach can be particularly challenging for teachers and schools where demographic shifts have been most dramatic. “Having a lot of bilingual students, with varying levels of English proficiency, is relatively new for some districts,” according to Michele Fortes, who leads the BCLAD program. “In the ‘80s and ‘90s, some schools didn’t have any English learners.”

Consequently, the state has developed guidelines and requirements outlining how to prepare teachers for meeting the needs of these students. The School of Education’s approach is to go beyond the required minimum standards, emphasizing tools and strategies for teaching English learners and driving an agenda for advocacy for all students.

“Moving beyond an ethnocentric approach is unique to our program,” said Dubcovsky. “In this environment we argue that language is not a barrier, not a loss, but a benefit in the classroom. In the BCLAD program, we are preparing teachers

Laura Dubcovsky

who will help students maintain, develop and enrich their primary language while also learning to navigate content in English.”

“One of the overarching goals of our program is to address the needs of English learners,” said Fortes. The state requires one course for every teacher that focuses on teaching English learners.

The School’s Education 151 (Language, Learners and K-12 Schools) course meets that requirement for multiple subject credential students, but “every methods course we offer emphasizes teaching in a diverse linguistic setting.”

In addition, nearly every placement is in a school with English learners. Faculty encourage all student teachers to observe how English learners are taught in their schools. Courses provide information on research theories and strategies that empower student teachers to make informed observations and decisions about instruction. “Most importantly, we model the strategies for our students,” said Fortes. 📖



Michele Fortes



English Learner Scholarship and Practice

Preparing Teachers to Eschew the “Deficit Model” of BILINGUALISM

In a world where English is king, bilingualism can be seen as a weakness, not a strength. With the emphasis on testing that comes with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, our focus on English learners in schools and the tendency to single them out as low performers may be perpetuating this “deficit model,” according to Professor Barbara Merino.

Until the 1980s, according to Merino, bilingualism was considered a “handicap” by the medical profession. “Too often a linkage to intelligence was made through comparisons of a bilingual working class to a monolingual middle class,” she said, “as though education and socioeconomic status had nothing to do with how one scores on an intelligence test.” Research in the last 30 years, according to Merino, “has seen bilingualism only as an advantage intellectually.”

Merino, who was born in Mexico and raised by parents who spoke English and viewed bilingualism as an advantage,

There is one area where Merino thinks we can make a dent in the preparation of all students: teaching. “Teachers are really the key to any solution.”

– Barbara Merino

has always been interested in language acquisition, bilingualism, and the way language is assessed. She has developed tests for bilingual clinicians and conducted large-scale studies in Mexico of testing for special needs students. In the 1990s, she provided advice on assessments to the California Department of Education and served as the University of California Representative on the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Today, she serves as a consultant for the California

English Language Development Test.

Merino’s most recent research focuses on teacher inquiry, teacher performance assessment, and teacher development in addressing academic literacy across the disciplines.

In her years as a researcher and teacher educator, she has found that instruction is too often molded to meet the simplistic goals of testing. For instance, because there is



Barbara Merino

a basic disconnect between how students, especially English learners, use language in academic settings and an overemphasis on getting students to master questions on high-stakes tests, many students are not being challenged to think like scientists or mathematicians. “Science as factoids is not what it means to be a scientist,” she said.

“Actually, English learners are not even getting science instruction—most kids aren’t,” said Merino, “because so many schools are told they must have all children proficient in reading and math by 2014 to the exclusion of all else.”

Ultimately, how students are assessed is a political process, according to Merino, but there is one area where she believes we can make a dent in the preparation of all students: teaching. “Teachers are really the key to any solution,” she said.

Merino argues that especially in the midst of high stakes testing and narrowly defined curricula, teachers must be prepared to act as professionals and engage in inquiry about instruction and student learning. When the School launched the Credential/MA program at UC Davis, faculty targeted investigating how teachers use inquiry to identify student needs and design instruction for English language learners.

“From our research on exemplary case studies of student teachers, we are learning that even as novices they are about to engineer effective innovations to address students,” said Merino. “In some cases our graduates have been able to use their studies as a vehicle to modify policy at their schools.”

BAFA BAFA: Teachers Experience the Disorientation of Entering an Unfamiliar Culture

Multiple subject credential students in their course on diversity in education participate in a cultural simulation called BAFA BAFA. Students are assigned randomly to different cultures, with their own rules, values and language. Once they learn their culture, some visit the other culture only to realize how arbitrary and disorienting cultural behavior can be for a student who is not familiar with the dominant culture they find themselves in at school and beyond. One important lesson the students learn is even if two cultures

share a common language, they may not understand the meanings and rules of the other. Students also report overwhelmingly negative feelings if the rules and routines of the unfamiliar culture are not explicit. “It is quite interesting and goes a long way toward helping people understand the perspectives we bring when we judge others who are different,” said Michele Fortes, lecturer/supervisor in the multiple subject credential program. 📖

Students demonstrate their assigned culture, which in top photo includes a revered male patriarch (seen standing in circle) and approaching each other in a close proximity while engaging in chummy conversations about male family members.



Below, students demonstrate another culture by interacting with hand signals and a trading card system.



English Learner Scholarship and Practice

ENGAGING ALL STUDENTS in Academic Language is Key to Building Literacy within the Classroom and Beyond

Today's students are amazingly diverse, culturally and linguistically, so the challenge to ensure that all students master the required content is more complicated than ever. A typical response? Reduce instruction to the bare essentials, especially for English learners who face the steepest climb to performing well on standardized tests.

According to Kerry Enright, assistant professor of education and expert on academic literacy, the pressure to increase test scores has led many schools to focus instruction "very narrowly."

"Having explicit standards is good," said Enright. "Constraining instruction through pacing and scripted curricula to reach standardized outcomes is not."

In her recent research, she and several graduate students looked at how instruction was experienced differently by

students with different English proficiency levels; they found that too often instruction was designed to "teach standards, not students."

For example, in one instance, students were studying a poem by Emily Dickinson. Students were told to focus on uses of extended metaphor to prepare for a district-wide required essay. "The whole lesson became something

technical," said Enright. "The product was more important than the learning. This approach, which is mandated by the district to help students meet standards, teaches students that knowledge gained in a classroom is not for life. It is useful only for a discreet classroom purpose."

The disparity among students on different tracks exacerbates this problem even further, Enright found. "While authentic dialogue and discussion were rare in all classrooms, they were more typical in honors classes, where



Kerry Enright

students used academic language and reasoned together about what they were learning."

Too often, English learners are tracked on the opposite end of the spectrum. "These students are often being remediated, with teachers scaffolding lessons so tightly that it reduces students' ability to independently build skills that can translate to success beyond high school. Effective scaffolding removes supports over time in response to students' learning. It's very challenging for teachers to manage this sort of sophisticated scaffolding when they're overwhelmed by inflexible pacing and high stakes assignments," she explained.

The "new mainstream classroom is diverse," said Enright. "Each student brings so many talents. We need to give teachers the flexibility and autonomy to bring students' talents into the classroom, to honor the knowledge students already have, and help them develop and discuss meaningful ideas using academic language at every level of English proficiency." 📖

RESEARCH ON READING Leads to Greater Understanding of Challenges Facing Young English Learners

“Once you learn to read, you will be forever free.” – Frederick Douglass

The ability to read is seen as a gateway to all other learning. That’s why the stakes are so high for children in the early years of school. Many children struggle with reading, for a variety of reasons, but learning to read well is a particular challenge for English learners and children with learning disabilities.

Yuuko Uchikoshi and Emily Solari, assistant professors of education, focus their research on the challenges and solutions these children face in school.

Uchikoshi specializes in research on children pre-K through third grade. Her extensive analysis of how children who speak Cantonese learn to read reveals that the connection between oral English and reading comprehension may be stronger than previously thought.

Teachers are usually the first to notice that a child’s difficulty in reading may be caused by more than a language barrier.

Uchikoshi is also interested in the role of media in the literacy development of children. She is a consultant to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and Umigo, an innovative combination of educational media, including television, websites, and other digital platforms, to provide children, ages 2-8, opportunities to learn basic

mathematics. The initiative is funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

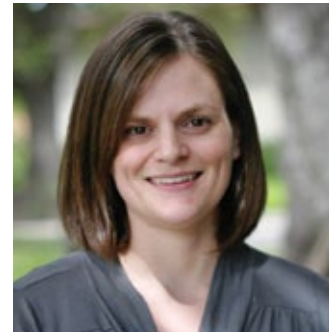
Solari’s research tackles a need that many teachers, schools and parents are just beginning to recognize: English learners who may also have a reading disability.

“This is a huge issue and one that is really hard for schools to figure out and to get the right services to kids,” said Solari.

Teachers are usually the first to notice that a child’s difficulty in reading may be caused by more than a language barrier, but Solari explains, reading specialists are often not trained to parse out the differences and lack many good interventions.



Yuuko Uchikoshi



Emily Solari

Another issue is cultural, according to Solari. “Many parents from different cultures and backgrounds don’t understand the school system or special education designations. They don’t know what they can ask for.”

Solari is engaged in a research project in Texas that is following poor pre-K English learners, who are most at-risk for low performance. “Poverty plays a large role in all of this,” she said. More than 60 percent of all English learner students live in poverty.

“I have found that the language scores of English learners are often comparable to poor native speakers. This doesn’t mean they should be taught in the same way,” she said.

Solari believes that one strategy for helping English learners with reading disabilities is to instruct them in their native language. “Focus on their strengths, but don’t ignore when children are having difficulties. Early intervention is important to confront reading disabilities.”

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English Learner Scholarship and Practice

CRAFTING WORD PROBLEMS Can Be Tricky for Teachers in Diverse Classrooms

Language and cultural differences can interfere with learning in surprising ways. Take math, for instance. Rebecca Ambrose, math education professor, discovered this recently when she asked first graders to solve a simple word problem:

There are 12 children at a party. There are four tables at the party. Every table has the same number of children. How many children sit at each table?

Before she asked the children to solve the problem, she asked them to simply retell it.

“Out of 18 children, only a couple comprehended the problem,” said Ambrose. “Most knew it was a party with kids and tables, but only two understood that the children would be equally distributed among four tables. We wrote the problem with all of the caveats in mind about reducing grammatical complexity and keeping the vocabulary simple, but they just didn’t understand it.”

What went wrong? Children do not go to parties where there are several small tables. The situation was contrived so the children couldn’t make sense of it, according to Ambrose.




Rebecca Ambrose (at head of table) works with a teacher and her students at a Sacramento elementary school.

“In every other reading situation, teachers encourage children to draw on their own experiences,” but in the case of math problems, Ambrose thinks teachers may have to explain that these are special kinds of stories and teach them to parse out the pertinent information.

Ambrose and a team of colleagues have been learning a lot about how children solve math problems by taping their explanations and discussing them with their teachers. For the last five years, Ambrose, linguistics professor Bob Bayley, and Fran Gibson (Credential 1982) of the Sacramento County Office of Education have been working with Superintendent Ruben Reyes (Credential 1984) and teachers in the Robla Elementary School District in North Sacramento to improve student performance in math. Looking at the needs of English learners is an explicit goal of the work.

“All students benefit from talking about math, and all teachers benefit from being attentive to how their students solve math problems,” said Ambrose. The key seems to be providing students with “authentic situations,” such as using the daily lunch count as a venue for story problems.

“There is a lot of evidence that when children can act out or imagine a problem in a real life context, it helps them understand mathematical operations better,” she said. “For English learners, it may be especially important to focus on problems in the here and now, by pointing to objects and referring to activities happening in present tense.”

The trick for the teacher is to recognize that differences in language and culture can affect how a child interprets the problem in ways that he or she may never have anticipated. 

“For English learners, it may be especially important to focus on problems in the here and now, by pointing to objects and referring to activities happening in present tense.”

– Rebecca Ambrose

CRESS CENTER Updates

Leadership Transition at CRESS Center

CRESS Director Mary Vixie Sandy became Executive Director of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) on November 1. “This is an extraordinary opportunity for Mary,” said Dean Harold Levine. “Mary is a champion of teachers, and the teaching profession. She will bring stature to the position of Executive Director, deep knowledge both about the Commission and about the preparation of teachers, and a rational and balanced approach to hearing and helping resolve honest differences of opinion about the training of teachers and the assessment of teacher education programs.”

Associate Director Renee Newton has taken over the reins of CRESS as interim director. Newton joined the CRESS Center in 2001 as the director of a statewide health access program administered through the Healthy Start Field Office. In 2005, Renee became the director of the Center for Community School Partnerships (CCSP) where she leads a multidisciplinary team in support of school and community partnerships. In this role, she launched the California



Renee Newton and Mary Vixie Sandy

Afterschool Network, providing oversight for designing a governance structure, developing an initial strategic plan, and recruiting staff that has led to extending the Network’s presence in the policy arena and field of practice.

“The CCSP under Renee’s leadership has been an unparalleled success,” said Dean Harold Levine. “We are very fortunate to have Renee’s leadership and experience during this transition period for CRESS.”

Third Sacramento Area Youth Speaks (SAYS) Summit Brings 900 Youth to UC Davis

In May, the CRESS Center hosted the third SAYS Summit at Freeborn Hall. The daylong event is the culmination of a yearlong effort to enhance literacy and advocacy among under-served youth throughout the Sacramento Region.

“There is widespread evidence of disengagement and alienation among many low-achieving students in Sacramento Area schools,” said Vajra Watson, SAYS director. “We are starting to see that when students are encouraged to write from their personal experience, their literary practice and products can be used as a bridge to facilitate academic and more traditional formal writing styles and concepts.”

The program has expanded from serving 100 students at its start in 2009 to serving well over 10,000. The use of trained community-based poet-mentors is key to that growth. After six weeks of intensive training, the team of seven poet-mentors with little or no previous experience in the classroom delivers the program to schools in seven districts.

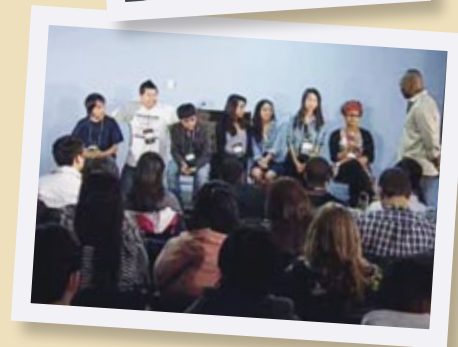


Photos by Nicole Martinez

Second Annual Youth Media FORUM FOR SOCIAL CHANGE Held at the Sacramento Bee

In May, the Center for Community School Partnerships (CCSP) hosted the Second Annual Youth Media Forum for Social Change. Over 100 youth and adult allies attended. The featured social media producers ranged in age from 11 to 21. The forum highlighted three core areas that connected the social media projects to youth-identified topics of concern: 1) Race, Culture, Gender and Class, 2) Health and Fitness, and 3) Summer and Out Of School Time. For many in attendance, the social media projects highlighted issues that create social barriers for many youth to succeed.

Keynote speaker Tom Negrete, online editor at the *Sacramento Bee*, encouraged students to continue to tell their stories online and “to push yourselves to be uncomfortable so you can grow.”



SUMMER PARTNERSHIPS Target Youth

Summer of Service 2011: For the second year, CCSP was a lead partner in the Sacramento City Unified School District’s six-week (June 20-July 29) summer of service program, targeting 1,000 incoming middle school 7th graders and high school 9th graders. CCSP provided staff and teacher training, curriculum development (in-service learning and social justice youth development), administration program quality assurance, and observational research.

Youth Block Report: This summer and fall, CCSP is working in partnership with People Reaching Out and The California Endowment Building a Healthy Community - South Sacramento Initiative to conduct observational research and assessment on youth-led community audits. This partnership works to highlight youth voice and community change through community asset mapping.



Kindra Montgomery-Block led the CRESS Center’s role in both the Summer of Service and the Youth Block Report.

Expanding the Reach of STEM Education in Out-of-School-Time Programs

After a nine-month planning initiative to lay the groundwork for a robust statewide system delivering STEM experiences during out-of-school-time programs, the California Afterschool Network is poised to launch the *JumpStarting STEM in OST* initiative. JumpStart will provide a menu of high quality curriculum and ongoing professional development to 200 statewide elementary and middle school afterschool programs, with another 100 high schools participating.

Deborah Vandell, chair of the UC Irvine Department of Education, will evaluate the initiative, which will include a virtual innovation center at UC Davis. The evaluation will help inform the work of regional liaisons and the virtual innovation center and lay the groundwork for a wider network across the state.

“We think the STEM education training that afterschool program staff receive could also help build a pathway to teaching for many,” said Andee Press-Dawson, director of the California Afterschool Network.



EDFORWARD: Center for Innovation in Education Updates

Calling All Pilots!

Traci Schmidt, director of the School's Center for Innovation in Education (EdForward), had a busy summer.

In June and July, EdForward piloted its Summer Adventures in Enrichment Camp for kids in grades 4-8, in conjunction with Campus Recreation. UC Davis scientists and researchers, along with credentialed teachers facilitated a one-of-a-kind experience by diving into unique and engaging subject matter, innovative activities, and supporting technology. Campers also developed a variety of problem-solving and collaboration skills through the three week-long camps:

- **Robots:** Campers learned the science, design, materials and construction of various types of robots and then built their very own.
- **Myth Detectives:** Campers used scientific and artistic techniques to test urban legends and myths.
- **Gumshoe Science:** Campers assisted top detectives in solving mysterious happenings around campus that are believed to be of scientific origin.




Campers used scientific and artistic techniques to test urban legends and myths.

In August, Schmidt led administrative staff and leadership of Sacramento City Unified School District through a week of Lean Six Sigma training and process redesign. Lean Six Sigma is aimed at dramatically cutting process waste and increasing greater service and efficiency.

In October, Schmidt, with guidance from Tobin White, assistant professor of math education, organized a day-long workshop led by Apple on student learning and the use of tablet technology in classrooms for principals and teachers in the Washington Unified School District. "We are interested in offering teachers and administrators another tool to enhance student learning," said Schmidt.

According to Schmidt, not only did the projects result in introducing new concepts to the community and region, but it also helped generate revenue for the School. "Next step—scaling up from the pilots," said Schmidt.

EdForward, launched in February 2010, has been actively pursuing new innovative opportunities for the School. With a goal of identifying and implementing revenue generating products and services in support of the vision and mission of the School, EdForward has not only identified viable opportunities, but has conducted numerous feasibility analyses, has implemented several pilot programs and is in the process of implementing several more, all while continuously feeding its pipeline of possibilities. 



Sacramento City Unified District coordinator Patrick Bohman (Credential '07, MA '08) participates in a school-led Lean Six Sigma exercise.



Students and parents ask questions during the Myth Detectives final presentations.

School of Education Surpasses \$8.7M in THE CAMPAIGN FOR UC DAVIS



As UC Davis begins its second century, it is poised to build upon its extraordinary foundation of academic excellence and global impact to advance among the world's top universities. Through The Campaign for UC Davis—a university wide initiative to raise \$1 billion in philanthropic support from 100,000 donors—UC Davis is expanding its capacity to meet the world's challenges and educate future leaders.

Through The Campaign, the School of Education has an historic opportunity to achieve its vision—by helping the most promising students to learn and discover here; by supporting our faculty and staff as they innovate, research, teach and serve the public; and by empowering our alumni and supporters to succeed and create opportunities for engagement with the School.

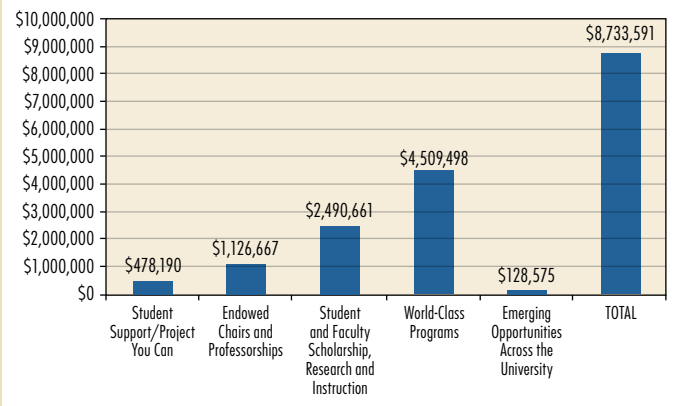
The School of Education has set an ambitious goal of \$16 million in The Campaign for UC Davis. We have made significant progress toward our goal—as of November 8, 2011, surpassing \$8.7 million in philanthropic support—*thanks to many of you*.

In fact, alumni and individual supporters of the School have generously donated more than 21 percent of this total, or nearly \$1.9 million since The Campaign began in 2006.

We have bold aspirations for the School of Education, and we ask you to be equally bold as you think about how you can engage and make an impact with students, faculty and programs at the School.

For more information about joining the School of Education in The Campaign for UC Davis, please contact Adrienne Capps, Assistant Dean for Development and External Relations, at (530) 754-7024 or adcapps@ucdavis.edu, or visit the School's website.

UC Davis School of Education Progress in The Campaign for UC Davis
As of November 8, 2011



DONOR GIFTS Make Scholarships Possible

In recognition of their outstanding achievement and promise, several students from the School of Education have been awarded scholarships for the current academic year. The School is proud of its students' accomplishments, and is pleased to support these extraordinary scholars and their potential to make a difference.

California Retired Teachers Association

- Laura E. Settle Scholar: Roya Ahmadinia (Single Subject – English)
- Mabel Outler Scholars: Michaela Baer, Jo Anne Lasola, and Roseann O'Brien (All Multiple Subject)

Boyd Family Foundation

- Francisco Gallardo (Multiple Subject)

Brad Davis – Alpha Gamma Rho Fellowship

- Kaytlin Ehlan (Single Subject – Agriculture)

Susan Schnitzer Fellowship

- Jo Anne Lasola (Multiple Subject)

Stuart Foundation Guardian Teacher Scholars Scholarship

- Lynn Romano (Single Subject – English)

School of Education Alumni Scholarship

- Michaela Baer and Jo Anne Lasola (Both Multiple Subject)

School of Education Faculty and Staff Awards

- Kelly Ware (Single Subject – Science)

Agricultural Education Enhancement Fellowship

- Kaytlin Ehlan and Brittany Whyler (Both Single Subject – Agriculture)

Donors' Lasting Legacy

Farrer/Patten Award

- Jesse Davis (Single Subject – Social Science)

Sandi Redenbach "Students at Promise" Award

- Roseann O'Brien (Multiple Subject).

Thank You

From the earliest stages of our development as a campus, philanthropy has played an important role in our ability to make a lasting contribution to the things that matter to all of us. We at the School thank our donors and honor their contributions.

Endowed Funds

These generous donors established permanent funds, the income from which supports our programs, faculty and students in perpetuity.

Anonymous

to establish two endowed funds for program and student support

Marcia & Mark Cary

to establish the Mark Cary Reflective Learner Award

Family & Friends of Brad Davis

to establish the Brad Davis – Alpha Gamma Rho Fellowship Fund

Dolly & David Fiddymont

to establish the Dolly & David Fiddymont Chair in Teacher Education

Mohini Jain

to establish the Mohini Jain Family Foundation Award, with matching gift from the estate of Charles Soderquist, Ph.D.

Nancy & Thomas Patten

to establish the Farrer/Patten Award in Teacher Education

Sandi Redenbach

to establish the Sandi Redenbach “Students at Promise” Award

School of Education Board of Advisors and Annual Fund Donors

to establish the Meg Stallard Leadership Fund

Susan Schnitzer

to establish the Susan Schnitzer Fellowship in Teacher Education

Sutter Children’s Center, Sacramento

to establish the Words Take Wing Endowment

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Mohini Jain’s family foundation established an award to support our PhD students.

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These gifts, received between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011, were made to the School of Education Fund, the New Teachers Fund, the School of Education Community Fund, and other funds supporting our people and programs. We are grateful to these generous donors who have joined with us in making a difference.

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Donors may make a gift to recognize someone who has made a difference. The following people have had gifts given in their honor or memory between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011, and we are pleased to be able to acknowledge them.

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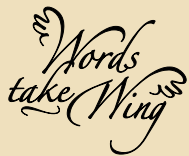
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January 13-15, 2012
shakespeareplays.ucdavis.edu

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February 2, 2012
education.ucdavis.edu/2012-summit



Words Take Wing: Honoring Diversity in Children's Literature

Author: Ying Chang Compestine
February 23, 2012
education.ucdavis.edu/words-take-wing

Equity Summit

Equity, Incarceration, and Education:
What is California's Future?
March 24, 2012
education.ucdavis.edu/equity-summit

Honoring Educators Reception

(Send nominations for outstanding alumni by March 5, 2012)
May 6, 2012
education.ucdavis.edu/alumni-awards

SAYS Summit and Poetry Slam

May 17, 2012, education.ucdavis.edu/sacramento-area-youth-speaks

School of Education Graduation

June 13, 2012
4 p.m., Mondavi Center



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