Like many of my colleagues, I came to the University of Pittsburgh School of Education to help improve the world of schooling. At the start, I was a little naive. I thought the key element was preparing educators to teach the various complex concepts that constitute a good education. I still think this is important, but the more I've seen of urban schools in Pittsburgh and other cities, the more I realize that additional efforts are needed.

I'm the grandson of immigrants. While my parents weren't poor, we weren't all that wealthy, either. I shared a small bedroom with two brothers. My dad was the first person on his side of the family to go to college. But, both for him and for me, there was a substantial system of social support. It was part of the culture that working hard in school would pay off.

Within 300 yards of Pitt, there is a school that we attempt to help. It is part of a school district that is working very hard to improve and that really cares about its students. It has teachers who could easily move to another area and teach wealthier kids. It has kids whose parents care every bit as much about them as my parents cared about me.

But there are a lot of differences between me and a child and the children in this school. Many come from homes where it takes all the energy and time parents have to earn a minimum-wage living. Many come from single-parent homes—and the single parent often works multiple jobs to earn enough to feed the family. This pattern has continued for generations, so the ability of the parents to help educate their children is less than I experienced. And because of discrimination throughout the region's history, few people in the lives of these children can point to those who did well in life because they worked hard in school. A focus on superficial standardized tests makes it hard for a child to translate a higher test score into a feeling of true understanding. There is widespread belief that even if a child learns a lot and excels in school, the system will somehow deny that child the type of good outcomes that came to me because I worked hard in school.

"Because of discrimination throughout the region's history, few people in the lives of these children can point to those who did well in life because they worked hard in school."

Teaching in such a school is difficult, and the extant union system makes it easy for the more experienced teachers to avoid the challenges by opting to teach elsewhere. What often occurs is that the teachers who have minimal classroom experience or the teachers that are among the best quickly leave to teach somewhere else. Teachers in the school are pushed to conform to a curriculum that, at best, can adapt to children who are about two years behind grade level. Because the cost of pensions for a much larger school system in the last generation are being subtracted from what is available for these children, there are few frills and many trade-offs. Do we have less physical education so we can have an extra reading specialist? Do we cut back on art and music so we can have a social worker? Do we use older textbooks because there is no money for the laptops and electronic texts that are starting to appear in wealthier communities?

A school of education in a top university should be addressing this; it is perhaps the central problem of American education in our time. We're taking several important steps to do this. We have invested strongly in scholars of urban education, with several new colleagues joining us in September to complement those who have joined us in recent years. A leader in our efforts will be H. Richard Milner IV, who assumed the Dr. Helen S. Fason Chair in Urban Education and became director of our Center for Urban Education. More about Milner and his background is available on page 8. We have built a strong concentration in the areas of motivation and engagement among faculty in our Department of Psychology in Education, and these trained faculty members now play a significant role in our teacher preparation efforts. We also have developed the Urban Scholars Program in our Master of Arts in Teaching degree program, and Jennifer Carter's article on page 6 mentions a bit about that effort, which partly occurs at Pittsburgh Brashear High School. We're beginning an all-intensive teaching practices program for future teachers that will help them learn to cope with the stresses of urban teaching as well as how to help students cope with their own stresses.

The teachers we produce in the future will still have the ability to teach hard concepts in their subject areas. They will still have the ability to differentiate their instruction for children with different needs. They will also, we hope, be prepared to connect with their students more strongly and to facilitate their efforts to find their way to an education that will make them valued citizens and provide them with a comfortable life. This will be a challenge, both for the School of Education and for the students we prepare to be teachers. We must do it, though, and we will.

Thank you for reading this issue of our school magazine. We welcome your ideas and suggestions.

Best wishes,

ALAN LESGOLD, Professor and Dean
DO PRESERVICE TEACHERS NEED Educational Psychology?

By MING-TE WANG, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology in Education

Do students become more effective teachers and motivators through taking educational psychology course work? How can this type of psychology research become more accessible for teachers and their in-classroom practices?

These are the questions facing the field of educational psychology, which involves the study of how people learn and develop in educational settings; the social, emotional, and cognitive aspects of instructional and learning processes; individual differences in learning; and the effectiveness of educational interventions. With policy increasingly emphasizing students’ role mastery of material rather than understanding it and relying on standardized testing to evaluate classroom work and materials with supported reflection and analysis, these are questions that must be addressed.

Content learning is best enabled when teachers understand both the theoretical science of learning and the psychological and interpersonal nuances of the art of teaching. As accountability for content learning increases through standardized testing requirements, students’ understanding and retention of the material may inversely suffer. Educational psychology is the difference between students’ learning to simply repeat material on a standardized test and actually understanding and retaining the material. By creating and maintaining a classroom dynamic that is psychologically and developmentally optimized for learning, teachers become more effective motivators and students become better learners.

Educational psychologists suggest that more classroom-based research on the actual teaching effectiveness of teachers trained in this psychology is not only needed but imperative. Unfortunately, there is a serious lack of research concerning the effectiveness of preservice teachers. Many psychologists reject classroom-based studies for their lack of rigor or validity, including a lack of diversity at the classroom, school, or geographical level and small sample sizes.

Regardless, the theoretical concepts of educational psychology are ideally suggestions and guidelines that teachers may use to inform their own classroom practices as opposed to rules that must replicate experimental settings. Therefore, researchers must address research in such a way that their findings can be readily incorporated into classroom practices. Publishing evidence of the benefits of educational psychology course work in pedagogical journals as well as in journals of educational psychology will increase not only the audience of teachers and practitioners but also the relevance of the research. Publishing in journals and expanding the scope of these psychologists’ beyond academic research and strictly scientific settings will help to establish productive and useful partnerships with teacher educators. These collaborations will help to create practical solutions, apply theoretical research to actual classroom practices, and reciprocally increase both teachers’ and students’ learning.

Along with establishing collaborative and reciprocal relationships with teacher educators, it is equally important to establish a working partnership with public schools. The current wisdom of educational psychology dictates that as much preservice teacher preparation as possible should take place within a real public school setting. In addition to learning the abstract principles of pedagogy and instruction communicated in lectures, teachers will be better prepared for effective teaching if their theoretical learning occurs in real classrooms.

However, simply being in the classroom and observing teaching practices is not enough. Faculty and preservice teachers also must integrate principles of educational psychology into field learning. Beginning this process prior to in-classroom education work is of great importance. A challenge facing teachers is how to incorporate educational psychology into their teaching repertoire without adding to their already stressful and heavy workload. Educational psychology is seen as a “trivialous luxury” that comes second to content learning and mastery. But, in fact, it makes for more effective and efficient teaching and increases students’ understanding and retention of the material.

“Educational psychology is both relevant and necessary for the effective teaching of content.”

To address this issue, the School of Education is developing strategies known as attentive teaching practices (ATPs) that will help teachers to cope with stress and not only recognize but proactively address their emotional needs. The ATP training makes explicit connections between in-the-classroom work and materials with supported reflection and analysis. In addition to developing ATPs, faculty within the Department of Instruction and Learning also are implementing a new curriculum in adolescent development. This will provide preservice teachers with opportunities to notice specific elements of their school contexts, many of which are guided by recognizing the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive dimensions of adolescent development.

As it stands today, educational psychology is both undermarketed and undervalued. In an era of increasingly test-based educational standards, it is certainly easy for educators of preservice teachers to view the pedagogy of content learning as a better use of increasing time and budget constraints than educational psychology. But, in fact, educational psychology is both relevant and necessary for the effective teaching of content.

A paradigm shift in the field of educational psychology—and in the field of education as a whole—is very much needed; researchers and educators should realize that educational psychology and content learning must work in tandem. This means increasing the accessibility and transferability of educational psychology research to actual classroom practice by creating relationships that are more collaborative among practitioners on both sides. Ultimately, the science of educational psychology is the glue that helps to bind teaching and learning together.

For additional information, please see the following:

BUILDING **Teacher Relationships**

**IS A CRUCIAL COMPONENT FOR SUCCESS IN URBAN SETTINGS**

By JENNIFER CARTIER

A successful teacher is one who can create a classroom community, motivate students to engage in that community, and build students’ confidence in their capacity for learning. To achieve these goals, a teacher must develop and nurture positive relationships with students, family members, and colleagues. Relationships are particularly crucial to success in urban schools, where many students—and often generations of family members before them—have been consistently labeled as “failures,” and feel that schools don’t value the things they know and can do.

Despite the importance of these relationships, educators often assume that preservice teachers will simply pick up necessary knowledge and skills related to relationship building during their field experiences. Believing that the stakes are too high to leave such crucial skill development to chance, a group of educators from the School of Education’s Department of Instruction and Learning, Pittsburgh Brashhear High School, and Propel Braddock Hills High School developed and launched the Urban Scholars Program in 2012. The goal of the program is to prepare preservice teachers to be successful in urban schools by pairing them with skilled mentors who model and support strategies to build positive relationships with students.

Thirty-one secondary (grades 7-12) preservice teachers across all core subject areas (English, foreign languages, mathematics, science, and social studies) participated in the first year of the program in 2012. In addition to Pittsburgh Brashhear and Propel Braddock Hills high schools, students were matched with mentors at Pittsburgh Allderdice, Pittsburgh Carrick, Pittsburgh King Prep-B, Pittsburgh Langley K-8, and Propel Andrew Street high schools. While fulfilling the demands of their Pitt teacher education programs, urban scholars also spent a minimum of five additional hours each week at their school sites.

The urban scholars’ work included publishing weekly class newsletters for distribution to parents, in-school and after-school tutoring, coaching, and organizing activities like weekly pizza lunchees to recognize and celebrate students’ achievements. Social studies scholar Richard House devoted his time to serving as a mentor to and role model for ninth-grade male students, providing academic and social/emotional support for these youths throughout the year. Katelein Seidler, an English education scholar, collaborated with her mentor teacher to enable 120 ninth-grade students to plant flowers, paint, and pick up garbage in Schenley Park. (This program was funded through a Love Your Block grant obtained by Seidler’s mentor teacher.) English scholar Christine Homa cultivated her students’ awareness about options for college, transforming her weekly advisory period into a college readiness course in which students “discussed their thoughts, fears, and goals regarding higher education pursuits.” Homa’s students participated in a trip to visit Pitt’s campus as part of her program.

The Urban Scholars Program has provided Pitt teacher education faculty members with opportunities to collaborate with mentor teachers in school contexts and to reflect across content area groups on practices that show promise for preparing successful urban teachers. Pitt faculty members also have seen the program as an opportunity to see core program commitments in action.

In the 2013-14 school year, Pitt will place 25 new urban scholars with mentors in partner schools and will continue to emphasize the importance of relationship-building activities in urban school settings. Scholars also will participate as a cohort in training sessions aimed at building teachers’ emotional resilience and ability to manage stress. They will benefit from training opportunities and guidance from Rich Miner, who recently joined Pitt as director of the Center for Urban Education (read more about Miner on page 6).

You can learn more about the Urban Scholars Program and follow some of the 2012-13 scholars through their 10-month internship by visiting the School of Education Web site, at www.education.pitt.edu/FutureStudents/TeacherCertification/UrbanScholarsProgram.aspx.

**“It was great to see the urban fellows take a keen interest in developing relationships with our students. I think many fellows came to realize that knowing things about students’ home lives, personal lives, favorite activities, skills, interests, and hobbies can be a valuable tool in getting students to achieve.”**

OSCAR MILLER, math teacher, Pittsburgh Brashhear High School

**“Catherine Seeger’s (MAT ’13, Urban Scholar) poetry slam, which brought together students from Propel Braddock Hills, Propel Andrew Street, and the local community, is an example of how our teacher candidates are inspiring urban students and building on their out-of-school interests to teach academic literacy skills.”**

AMANDA GODLEY, associate professor of English education, University of Pittsburgh

**PHOTOS at right:** Urban Scholars and Pittsburgh Brashhear students work together during a Love Your Block field trip.
his picture of **URBAN EDUCATION** in Pittsburgh

by John Conroy

H. Richard Milner IV sits in his office at the University of Pittsburgh School of Education’s Urban Center. The center, on the fourth floor of Wesley W. Posvar Hall, is still being constructed and there is much to do, much like the difficult road ahead for Milner in his new position at the school. In early 2013, he was appointed not only director of the Center for Urban Education but also, the Dr. Helen S. Faison Chair in Urban Education and professor of education. He officially began his role in August.

Rooms are empty, carpets are torn up, walls are plain, and scaffolding is set up for painting. Establishing a solid foundation for the center is a microcosm of the work that lies ahead for him as he attempts to better Pittsburgh’s urban education community.

Milner came to Pittsburgh from Nashville, Tenn., where he was the Lois Autrey Betts Associate Professor of Education and Human Development; a founding director of the Learning, Diversity, and Urban Studies Graduate Program; and, most recently, associate professor of education at Vanderbilt University’s Peabody College of Education and Human Development. His wife, Shelley, and two daughters, Anna and Elise, are joining him in the next step of his journey.

The School of Education founded the Center for Urban Education in 2002 with a mission of researching and disseminating evidence-based methods for improving urban education in Pittsburgh and across the country. The center’s three main areas of focus are research and practice, regional service, and institutional advancement.

“We are fortunate to have Professor Milner joining the Pitt community,” says School of Education Dean Alan Lesgold. “The School of Education can now focus on urban education more broadly and especially on the ways in which the accumulated knowledge of multiple disciplines affords opportunities to work with the local community. Our goal is to learn how to create an overall environment—in and out of school—in which urban youth can successfully complete their precollege years.”

**“Part of my work is serving as a catalyst in bringing people with different expertise together to identify problems and develop solutions to address them.”**

—RICH MILNER

Milner attempted to do something that at first glance seems fairly straightforward but is actually quite difficult and is emblematic of the overall complications: defining what urban education means.

“Urban communities are resource rich in terms of culture and human capital,” Milner says. “The challenge is to build intellectual, social, and educational bridges to connect youth and others to these important assets already present in urban communities.”

He views his overarching goal for urban education as a concentration on both in- and out-of-school factors that influence the educational experiences of children, which he discusses in detail in his fourth book, *Start Where You Are, But Don’t Stay There: Understanding Diversity, Opportunity Gaps, and Teaching in Today’s Classrooms.*

“Challenges in and surrounding urban communities are so complex that it will take expertise from people across various walks of life and disciplinary backgrounds inside and outside of schools,” says Milner. “Part of my work is serving as a catalyst in bringing people with different expertise together to identify problems and develop solutions to address them. This is our center, and the work ahead will require contributions and commitment from many in the School of Education through my leadership.”

**GROWING UP**

Milner was born to hardworking parents in a rural community, becoming a good student himself through the example they set. So what was it about urban education that interested him?
"I see how Black and Brown children and those who live in poverty are undererved and undereducated in educational systems across the United States and think it’s very easy for people to inaccurately blame families and say they don’t value education or the kids simply aren’t motivated," Milner says. "Educators’ practices directly influence student motivation, involvement, and achievement in and out of school.”

Milner has a tendency to view the world in ways many people don’t. And it’s not simply within his work; it’s a personal viewpoint as well. “I have two daughters who live in a world where they’re going to experience life at a degree as two Black girls. They are blessed to have parents who can provide for them in ways some kids don’t have. But they are Black and female, so I understand their experiences will be shaped—some positively, some negatively—because of that,” he says.

If statistics were a predictor, Milner says that he probably isn’t supposed to be directing a center at Pitt. Those same statistics, he adds, also would suggest he shouldn’t have been the first African American to earn tenure at the Peabody College of Education and Human Development at Vanderbilt. His ability, experience, and insight indicate, however, that his new position at Pitt is exactly where he belongs. And he looks at his new venture with excitement and an eagerness to produce positive change. “I’m honored to have this great opportunity to do something beyond myself, to really impact the community, and to build a center that can truly make a difference for so many children who are underserved in the community and school. I want the educational experience for all children to improve, and I know we can make a contribution.”

**THE CONNECTION BETWEEN STUDENT IDENTITY AND TEACHING**

Milner takes a systemic approach toward urban education, viewing what happens inside and outside the school as intrinsically linked. He says, “From an ecological perspective, there are community resources inside and outside of school that we just haven’t tapped into on behalf of families and children. We must shift the gaze from looking at the problems of the people to looking at the problems of structures, institutions, and systems. Building from an interdisciplinary perspective, we will work to transform communities to address human suffering on so many levels.”

For example, Milner points to students attending a high-poverty school with inconsistencies like underqualified teachers or constant substitute teachers, educators teaching outside their content matter area of expertise, inequitable funding, and teacher attrition. Milner explains that these inconsistencies “fall far beyond the control of students; they are institutional and structural challenges.” However, when these same students are placed in a high-functioning school, the result is a “completely different kid with a completely different outcome.”

Milner also talks about the importance of understanding how students’ identities influence how they interact with others and how they see the world. “I’m a Black man, so my experiences are shaped in some part by being Black,” he says. Milner mentions that the ability to understand the multiple identities of students is essential when it comes to teaching them. “It’s important to help teachers understand that they are teaching students with a particular history and who live and learn in a certain neighborhood. Understanding these complexities as they are connected to content students are expected to learn and teachers are expected to teach is key.”

Understanding the sociology of the school and community, according to Milner, is essential. “How do I demonstrate my capacity to teach a content lesson but also connect those I’m teaching when I may not live a similar experience myself as an educator?” He hopes that, as a professor in the School of Education, he’ll be able to “gallvanize colleagues and partners” through the center to do relevant work that will improve student learning outcomes and outcomes.

**JOINING THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

Milner prepared to lead the Center for Urban Education, simultaneously finishing up his work at Vanderbilt and moving his family from Nashville to Pittsburgh. So what convinced him to leave his home and position to join the School of Education?

"The opportunity to work with Alan Leapold—his leadership style and vision are very appealing to me because I truly believe he is committed to improving the lives of students in urban environments," he says. "Also, having the opportunity to make an impact through the center. During a visit, one of the deans at Pitt, Larry Davis [dean of the School of Social Work], said to me, ‘Make sure when you leave this Earth that you are not the only one who benefited from what you know and what you do.’ And I truly believe I am doing that with this move to Pitt. That comment resonated with me in important ways. I want my work to count and be transformative in the lives of urban youth. So I do this work with my head and heart because I have come to realize what life for youth can mean when individuals, structures, and systems are not in place to support them.”

Milner truly feels that this type of work begins inside the home, which is why he puts such a strong emphasis on his family. When asked about what he would like to be known for, he answers, “That I am an outstanding husband and father. This work is important to me, but I realize my family will support me in ways that others can’t. They keep me grounded and remind me how blessed I am to be able to pay my gifts, skills, and talents forward.”

This passion in turn extends to his work. Milner wants to speak for those who don’t necessarily have a “seat at the table.” He adds, “I want people to say he spoke truth to power and wasn’t afraid to make people uncomfortable. I want people to say he had integrity, cared about people, and dedicated his life to making conditions better for others. In that sense, this work is beyond me. It is what I am called to do.”
FUTURE OF THE CENTER
Milner’s main areas of concentration through the center will include focus on race, poverty, and geography; teacher and administration practices; student learning, development, health, and motivation; family, community, and school partnerships; and policy and reform.

Milner has created four main anchors for the development, health, and motivation; family, community, teacher and administration practices; student learning, will include a focus on race, poverty, and geography; Milner’s main areas of concentration through the center for Urban Education:

1. **GALVANIZE RESOURCES**
   “Identifying and drawing from human and material resources and expertise that faculty, students, staff, and others possess to help the Pittsburgh community and beyond better serve urban youth.”

2. **KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTION**
   “Building a team of diverse individuals and a type of infrastructure to work together in order to build knowledge about problems and solutions in urban communities and education.”

3. **KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION**
   “Regularly producing documents to ultimately lead the conversation and the practices related to what happens in urban education across the country and what needs to happen to improve it.”

4. **SERVICE TO SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES**
   “Using our collective resources to serve and partner with schools and communities to improve them.”

His dreams for the center include hosting urban education conferences featuring researchers and practitioners from across the country as well as those from local Pittsburgh communities, universities, and surrounding areas. Other ideas include allowing students to develop their work through the center within and outside the School of Education related to problems and solutions in urban communities; developing and releasing policy and reform briefs, articles, and books; developing podcast interviews; and conducting a fall and spring major lecture series, featuring a more senior person in urban education in the fall and a newer scholar in the spring. “We will hit the ground running with this. The idea is to launch many of these initiatives within the first year.”

Despite all of the expectations ahead of him—not only from Pitt and the surrounding community but from himself as well—Milner is looking forward to the challenge of painting urban education in Pittsburgh with his own style. “I know it will take a lot of work, dedication, and perseverance, but I am capable and committed to serving in this leadership role that has the potential to improve the lives of youth in Pittsburgh and beyond.”

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SCHOOL NEWS

ELIZABETH KLINE (BS ’13) received the Pitt Department of Athletics Blue-Gold Award at the 2013 senior athletics banquet. Kline’s name was engraved on the Varsity Walk between the Cathedral of Learning and Heinz Memorial Chapel. The award recognizes her academic scholarship, athletic achievement, leadership qualities, activities, and citizenship. Kline graduated in May 2013 in applied developmental psychology but is in the School of Education’s Combined Accelerated Studies in Education (CASE) Program, which means she will continue to pursue a master’s degree and teacher certification in PreK-4 and Pre-K 8 education.

GARY PEIFFER was appointed superintendent of the Carlynton School District.

MARY CATHERINE RELJAC will be assuming the role of assistant superintendent in the Franklin Regional School District. She was previously a principal in both the Pine-Richland School District and the Gateway School District.

BRADLEY WEAVER was awarded the best of faculty competition Television News Feature Reporting at the Broadcast Education Association’s Festival of Media Arts. Weaver’s video, Deconstruction on Spring Break, follows Westminster College students, faculty, and staff during spring break as they participate in a service learning trip in North Carolina through Westminster’s chapter of Habitat for Humanity International and campus ministries. Weaver has been with Westminster since 2000 and is a doctoral student in the Pitt School of Education.

PITT’S BUILDING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER CAPITAL CAMPAIGN EXCEEDS GOAL

The University of Pittsburgh School of Education is happy to announce that, through the generosity and encouragement of its alumni, faculty, staff, and friends, it has raised more than $57 million for the University’s overall capital campaign. During the campaign, the School of Education established the Dr. Helen S. Faison Chair in Urban Education and the Center for Urban Education, recruited a number of world-class faculty members to the school, and established many new scholarship funds that will benefit its students for years to come.

The University of Pittsburgh also exceeded its goal of raising $2 billion through the Building Our Future Together capital campaign, the largest and most successful fundraising initiative in the history of Western Pennsylvania. Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg announced this to a standing room-only audience of more than 700 alumni, faculty, staff, students, and friends in the J.W. Connolly Ballroom of Pitt’s Alumni Hall during Homecoming 2012.

When Pitt announced the campaign in October 2000, its goal was to raise $500 million. In 2002, after that goal was reached, it was doubled to $1 billion. And in 2007, after $1 billion had been raised, the campaign goal was doubled again. The Building Our Future Together campaign has now raised more than $2 billion from 92,000 donors, which is more than eight times the $250 million raised in the University’s largest prior fundraising initiative, the Campaign for the Third Century, launched during Pitt’s 1967 bicentennial.

It is encouraging that so many alumni and friends of the School of Education have recognized its efforts, but we must continue to improve our school and attract the very best students so that one day, they can become the educational leaders of tomorrow. The School of Education also must continue to establish scholarships to aid its talented students and build on the support that alumni, faculty, staff, and friends have already given it.

The Building Our Future Together campaign concluded on June 30, 2013. For more information on the campaign, please visit www.giveto.pitt.edu. If you would like to discuss how you can support or become involved with the School of Education, please contact Michael Ilao, director of constituent relations, at 412-648-1789 or michael256p@pitt.edu.
RICHARD CORRENTI has been promoted to the position of associate professor in the Learning Sciences and Policy Center. Correnti has worked as an assistant professor and research scientist in the Learning Research and Development Center and School of Education for the past seven years. Through his research, Correnti has attempted to inform policy debates regarding approaches to improving teaching, with targeting the needs of the student being of primary importance. This research includes collaborations with the Institute for Learning for assessing leaders’ abilities to attend to substantive aspects of instruction when observing classrooms.

Correnti also developed Leaders Improving Support for Teaching, a research tool that helps to improve leadership capacity in observing and evaluating teaching. In addition, he serves as principal investigator for the William T. Grant and Spencer foundations’ study of teaching through multiple measures, while at the same time conducting research on the Pittsburgh Public Schools for the advocacy group A+ Schools, through which he helps to develop insight about the formation of local education policy.

KEVIN CROWLEY has been promoted to the position of full professor in the Learning Sciences and Policy Center. Crowley joined the School of Education as a pioneer in the now popular field of informal learning—designated as out-of-school settings—which accounted for a sparse amount of researchers and funding as little as 15 years ago. Crowley’s research interests include the role of informal learning settings in facilitating children’s early engagement with science, art, and technology; museums as learning environments; and the ways to design connected systems of experiences that support lifelong learning in science, technology, and the arts.

Crowley splits his time between the School of Education and the Learning Research and Development Center, where he is director of the University of Pittsburgh Center for Learning in Out-of-School Environments (UPCLOSE). Crowley has long-standing research and design partnerships with the Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh and the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, is currently a William T. Grant Foundation Distinguished Fellow, and, in the fall of 2013, will be a visiting professor at the University of Tokyo. He lives in Indiana Township with his wife, Karen Kroftau (associate director of UPCODE); their children, Colin and Sarah; one cat; two goats; four chickens; and a lot of honeybees.

SUZANNE LANE has been appointed chair of the Department of Psychology in Education. After receiving her doctorate from the University of Arizona, Lane joined the faculty at the University of Pittsburgh as an assistant professor in the research methodology program. Her research focus is on technical and validity issues related to large-scale assessments. Her professional involvement includes serving on the editorial boards of the Journal of Educational Measurement, Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice, Applied Measurement in Education, Educational Researcher, American Educational Research Journal, and Educational Assessment. Her tenure also has featured a variety of professional appointments and awards, including serving as vice president of Division D (Measurement and Research Methodology) of the American Educational Research Association, being elected president of the National Council on Measurement in Education in 2014, and being appointed to the National Technical Advisory Council on K-12 Assessment and Accountability Systems.

In 2011 and 2012, Lane received the University of Pittsburgh School of Education Award for Research and Scholarship. Lane is married with one daughter, who will be attending a small private college in North Carolina this fall. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling, reading, and running.

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT RANKS THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
As a testament to its faculty and staff, the School of Education was ranked 32nd in the nation by U.S. News & World Report in its 2014 “Best Grad Schools” (in education) rankings. U.S. News determines the rankings by surveying schools granting doctoral degrees. The ranking is the cumulative effect of the work of a very large number of faculty and staff members who attract and serve a strong student body.

SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2014 ALUMNI AWARDS PROGRAM
The University of Pittsburgh School of Education will be sending out information in the near future about the 2014 Alumni Awards Program. This event will honor the outstanding accomplishments of School of Education graduates who earn professional achievement, demonstrate commitment to the continued success of the School of Education and the University of Pittsburgh, and serve to advance the field of education. If you have any questions about the nomination process, please contact Michael Haas, director of constituent relations at the School of Education, at 412-648-1769 or mhh26@pitt.edu.

RICHARD CORRENTI 
Associate Professor Learning Sciences and Policy Center

SUZANNE LANE
Chair
Department of Psychology in Education

KEVIN CROWLEY
Professor Learning Sciences and Policy Center

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KEVIN CROWLEY has been promoted to the position of full professor in the Learning Sciences and Policy Center. Crowley joined the School of Education as a pioneer in the now popular field of informal learning—designated as out-of-school settings—which accounted for a sparse amount of researchers and funding as little as 15 years ago. Crowley’s research interests include the role of informal learning settings in facilitating children’s early engagement with science, art, and technology; museums as learning environments; and the ways to design connected systems of experiences that support lifelong learning in science, technology, and the arts.

Crowley splits his time between the School of Education and the Learning Research and Development Center, where he is director of the University of Pittsburgh Center for Learning in Out-of-School Environments (UPCLOSE). Crowley has long-standing research and design partnerships with the Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh and the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, is currently a William T. Grant Foundation Distinguished Fellow, and, in the fall of 2013, will be a visiting professor at the University of Tokyo. He lives in Indiana Township with his wife, Karen Kroftau (associate director of UPCODE); their children, Colin and Sarah; one cat; two goats; four chickens; and a lot of honeybees.

SUZANNE LANE has been appointed chair of the Department of Psychology in Education. After receiving her doctorate from the University of Arizona, Lane joined the faculty at the University of Pittsburgh as an assistant professor in the research methodology program. Her research focus is on technical and validity issues related to large-scale assessments. Her professional involvement includes serving on the editorial boards of the Journal of Educational Measurement, Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice, Applied Measurement in Education, Educational Researcher, American Educational Research Journal, and Educational Assessment. Her tenure also has featured a variety of professional appointments and awards, including serving as vice president of Division D (Measurement and Research Methodology) of the American Educational Research Association, being elected president of the National Council on Measurement in Education in 2014, and being appointed to the National Technical Advisory Council on K-12 Assessment and Accountability Systems.

In 2011 and 2012, Lane received the University of Pittsburgh School of Education Award for Research and Scholarship. Lane is married with one daughter, who will be attending a small private college in North Carolina this fall. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling, reading, and running.

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT RANKS THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
As a testament to its faculty and staff, the School of Education was ranked 32nd in the nation by U.S. News & World Report in its 2014 “Best Grad Schools” (in education) rankings. U.S. News determines the rankings by surveying schools granting doctoral degrees. The ranking is the cumulative effect of the work of a very large number of faculty and staff members who attract and serve a strong student body.

SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2014 ALUMNI AWARDS PROGRAM
The University of Pittsburgh School of Education will be sending out information in the near future about the 2014 Alumni Awards Program. This event will honor the outstanding accomplishments of School of Education graduates who earn professional achievement, demonstrate commitment to the continued success of the School of Education and the University of Pittsburgh, and serve to advance the field of education. If you have any questions about the nomination process, please contact Michael Haas, director of constituent relations at the School of Education, at 412-648-1769 or mhh26@pitt.edu.
NEW Faculty

MICHAEL LOVORN has joined the School of Education as an assistant professor in social studies in the Department of Instruction and Learning. He earned a PhD in social studies education at the University of Tennessee in 2003 and comes to Pitt with nearly 20 years of experience in education. Lovorn spent more than a decade in public middle and high school classrooms and nearly the same amount of time in university-level teacher development programs. His research currently is focused on best instructional practices in social studies, teaching and learning culture and social studies around the world, and humor in the classroom. He enjoys teaching at the high school level, and his recent work has involved engaging high school students in activities that develop their historical thinking and historiographical analysis skills. Lovorn also is an avid world traveler and has visited more than 75 countries and regions.

MICHAEL LOVORN
Assistant Professor in Social Studies
Department of Instruction and Learning

AMBER JEAN-MARIE PABON has joined the Department of Instruction and Learning as an assistant professor in English education. Pabon graduated from the City University of New York (CUNY) with a PhD in urban education and a certificate in Africana studies. She also has master’s degrees in English education and urban education. Her doctoral experience included an Enhanced Chancellor’s Fellowship and a MAGNET Dissertation Fellowship for her research on the educational life histories and pedagogical practices of African American male teachers in urban schools. She has worked as a literacy staff developer for the New York City Department of Education, served as a visiting professor and interim coordinator of the Adolescence Urban Education Program, while completing her doctorate at CUNY, and also was a core contributor to the Teacher Development Literacy Workshop series at CUNY. Her areas of research interest include literacy practices of adolescents in urban communities; critical literacy, curriculum development; urban English teacher preparation, philosophy, and pedagogy. Pabon has strong ties to New York, N.Y., and began her teaching career in Bedford–Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. She enjoys spending time with her 6-year-old daughter, Chloe; fitness training; and pursuing interests in music and dance.

AMBER JEAN-MARIE PABON
Assistant Professor in English Education
Department of Instruction and Learning

RACHEL E. ROBERTSON has joined the Department of Instruction and Learning as an assistant professor in special education. Robertson graduated from Vanderbilt University in 2010 with a PhD in special education and behavior disorders. Her doctoral experience included a research fellowship at the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center, where she provided training and consultation in classwide behavior interventions. Robertson moved to Pittsburgh after receiving a postdoctoral fellowship at the Watson Institute in Sewickley. There, she conducted an evaluation study of the Watson Institute School-based Cyber Academy, a special education academic and behavioral program for children with high-functioning autism and Asperger’s syndrome. Robertson also served as a certified behavior analyst for Allegheny County and as an assistant professor in special education at Duquesne University. Robertson’s current research focuses on parent and teacher-implemented behavioral interventions for children with autism.

RACHEL E. ROBERTSON
Assistant Professor in Special Education
Department of Instruction and Learning

ASHLEY N. WOODSON has been named an assistant professor in social studies in the Department of Instruction and Learning. Woodson is a 2013 graduate of Michigan State University with a PhD in curriculum instruction and teacher education, with focal areas in history and social studies education; race, culture, and equity in education; and critical studies. She also completed an MA in African American and African studies (AAAS) at Michigan State, with a specialization in counseling, educational psychology, and special education. Woodson was the first student to graduate from Saginaw Valley State University with a minor in Black studies, paving the way for the continued development of the Black studies program at her undergraduate alma mater. Her groundbreaking path continued at Michigan State, where she helped to build the undergraduate program in AAAS. Woodson’s research and professional interests include critical race pedagogy, urban teacher preparation, student empowerment, and teaching about the African diaspora. She grew up in Toledo, Ohio.

ASHLEY N. WOODSON
Assistant Professor in Social Studies
Department of Instruction and Learning

DUKES REESE ROBERTSON has joined the Department of Instruction and Learning as an assistant professor in special education. Robertson graduated from Duquesne University. Robertson’s current research focuses on parent and teacher-implemented behavioral interventions for children with autism.
John Jakicic Contributed to Landmark 11-Year Study on Effect of Weight Loss on Heart Disease

A landmark study investigating the long-term effects of weight loss on the risks of cardiovascular disease among patients with type 2 diabetes has now concluded, with significant results published online in The New England Journal of Medicine. Conducted at the University of Pittsburgh and clinical facilities throughout the United States, the multicenter clinical trial investigated the effects of an intensive lifestyle intervention program, intended to achieve and maintain weight loss in overweight or obese people with type 2 diabetes, on rates of cardiovascular disease. Begun in 2001, the trial enrolled more than 5,000 people at 16 clinical centers across the United States and is the longest intervention study of its type ever undertaken for patients with diabetes.

John Jakicic, professor and chair of the Department of Health and Physical Activity, served as principal investigator for the University of Pittsburgh in the study. He, along with colleagues throughout the University, is among the researchers making up the national Look AHEAD (Action for Health in Diabetes) Research Group, which carried out the study and authored the New England Journal of Medicine paper. Among the study’s main findings is that weight loss by members of the study’s Intensive Lifestyle Intervention group, who were provided with a program of weight management and increased physical activity, resulted in no difference in heart attacks and strokes when compared with the study’s control group, the Diabetes Support and Education group, which was provided with only general health information and social support.

In December 2012, Jakicic was honored with the Albert J. Stunkard Founders Award for Outstanding Scientific Achievement in Obesity Research. The award is given biannually by the University of Pennsylvania in recognition of outstanding achievement in the field of obesity research. The recipient is expected to contribute to science at a level comparable to that of Stunkard, who founded Penn’s Center for Weight and Eating Disorders in 1957. Honorees typically have published in the prior year an outstanding article in a top-10 journal or have achieved lifetime accomplishment as a scientist, as reflected by a body of research cited 5,000 times or more (captured by the Science Citation Index). Jakicic has published three first-authored papers in The Journal of the American Medical Association, including one this past year concerning the intensity of lifestyle modification needed to achieve clinically significant weight loss.

Laurie Mulvey, director of the Division of Service Demonstrations in the Office of Child Development (OCD), was honored with the Community Human Services Corporation (CHS) Community Ally Award. CHS is a growing community-based nonprofit that provides shelter, supported housing, a food pantry, free medical and mental health services, outreach to the homeless, rental assistance, community support, and in-home help to adults with disabilities, with a focus on building assets to strengthen communities. The Community Ally Award was given to Mulvey for her nearly 40 years of leadership in family services, child welfare, mental health, juvenile justice, and education systems. CHS’s Chief Executive Officer Adrienne Valona says that “Laurie has been an unsung hero in the field of human services for decades. Rarely can you talk about innovation in human services without her name coming up. CHS was extremely lucky to have her at our agency and felt it was the right time to express our respect and admiration for her publicly.” At OCD for more than 20 years, Mulvey has provided leadership for projects designed to improve the lives of children and families. Mulvey also serves on the boards of several organizations and is an active member of the Pittsburgh community.
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION CELEBRATES ALUMNI WITH AWARDS RECEPTION

The School of Education celebrated its annual Alumni Awards on March 22, 2013, at the Pittsburgh Athletic Association in Oakland. Awards for the school’s departments and individual categories were presented at the reception.

2013 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

For nearly 50 years, Richard Goldman (MEd ’66, PhD ’70) has been an important leader in both pre-K–12 and higher education as both an educator and an entrepreneur. Recently retired, Goldman taught at the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Haiti, and Kent State University. He also served as dean at the Abraham S. Fischler School of Education at Nova Southeastern University, with his wife, Renee, and son, Brent, Goldman founded the Sagemont School, a premier and innovative college prep school located in Weston, Fla. With campuses for grades pre-K–5 and 6–12, the Sagemont School serves students from more than 35 countries and was among the nation’s first schools to have a laptop program and wireless Internet for all of its students.

2013 EARLY CAREER AWARD

Christine Carnevali (MAT ’10) is currently a teacher in the Wilkinsburg School District. While at Wilkinsburg High School, she noticed that her students needed more academic and artistic enrichment as well as more opportunities to become community leaders, so she founded the nonprofit group FUSE. FUSE is the only after-school program for teenagers in the area and serves 15–20 teens every afternoon.

As the program’s director, Carnevali has helped to get FUSE students to job interviews and cultural events, has made sure kids are fed every afternoon and have warm winter clothing, and has worked with the children to grow a garden. She also has worked with the larger community, establishing relationships with companies such as Google that have donated computers and equipment to FUSE. She has recruited volunteer tutors and teachers and lined up partnerships with organizations such as Pittsburgh Filmmakers and Carnegie Mellon University’s Community Robotics, Education, and Technology Empowerment lab.

2013 PRE-K–12 EDUCATOR AWARD

Pamela (Krokswski) Armstrong (MEd ’05, EdD ’04) is a faculty member at the University of Pittsburgh’s Fanny Edel Falk Laboratory School, where she has been teaching since 1991. Her area of curricular expertise is art education, specifically early childhood art education. Armstrong’s professional goals at the Falk School include increasing museum education for all students by incorporating local museum visits into the curriculum. She is the former president of both the Early Childhood Art Educators and National Art Education Association. Prior to her role at Falk, Armstrong was an art instructor at both the Carnegie Museum of Art and the Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children.

She is the former president of both the Early Childhood Art Educators and National Art Education Association. Prior to her role at Falk, Armstrong was an art instructor at both the Carnegie Museum of Art and the Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children.

2013 DEPARTMENTAL ALUMNI AWARDS

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLICY STUDIES

Carol Wooten (EdD ’93) recently retired as the superintendent and chief executive officer of Propel Charter Schools. Propel is a nationally recognized charter management organization serving a high school student population for families living in underserved neighborhoods. Propel currently operates nine urban charter schools in the Pittsburgh region. Prior to joining the Propel network, Wooten was superintendent of the South Side Area School District in Beaver County. She also was a middle school principal, curriculum supervisor, assistant superintendent, and teacher in both public and private schools. She has served as an adjunct professor at Robert Morris University and Point Park University and was a researcher at Pitt, where she documented and evaluated a program aimed at reducing the dropout rate and increasing degree completion rates in the Pittsburgh Public Schools.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Alan Utter (BS ’89, MS ’91, PhD ’95) is a professor at Appalachian State University in the Department of Health, Leisure and Exercise Science. He serves as director of the university’s Office of Student Research and of the health promotion and academic degree program. Utter is a fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), an ACSM-certified clinical exercise specialist for preventive and rehabilitative exercise programs, and an ACSM-registered clinical exercise physiologist. He served for 10 years as director of the ACSM health and fitness instructor workshop. Utter’s research focus is on body composition assessment; sport performance; and cardiovascular, metabolic, and perceptual responses to exercise.

DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTION AND LEARNING

Beverly Michael (MEd ’70, PhD ’76) has served the math education community nationally and internationally through publications, presentations, workshops, and the teaching of undergraduate math courses for more than 40 years. Michael began her career at Pitt in 1960 and serves as the Department of Mathematics’ liaison to the math education faculty in the School of Education.

While at Pitt, Michael started a teacher training course for math teaching assistants and was responsible for reorganizing the department’s precalculus courses to better align with students’ majors. Under her guidance, Pitt’s precalculus courses were among the first in the nation to use graphing calculators. Today, all precalculus courses use some form of computer tutor and/or automated homework software to support student learning.

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY IN EDUCATION

Natalie Kaplan (MEd ’53) has spent her career providing quality early childhood education and programming to children and families throughout the Pittsburgh region. She started as a nursery school teacher at the Frick Nursery School and then became a part-time teacher at the Moore-Prune Nursery School, where she taught for 15 years, eventually becoming director. Kaplan recognized the need for high-quality preschool services that cater to full-day programs. So, in 1974, she founded the Carriage House Children’s Center and served as its executive director. She later became involved with the Carnegie Mellon Child Care Center (now the Cjent Center for Early Education) and undertook the establishment of the Infant-Toddler Center of Squirrel Hill. Today, she serves as president and founding director of Carriage House and executive director of the Children’s Center of Pittsburgh.

2013 FALK SCHOOL OUTSTANDING ALUMNI AWARD

Edward Mason Anthony IV is a veteran journalist with the Associated Press (AP) and a leader within the news industry. He has reported from more than 20 countries and extensively covered past 9/11 conflicts in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iraq. His news roles have included national correspondent, assistant managing editor, political editor, China news editor, Iraq news editor, and many other key positions. A specialist in long-form storytelling about the changing American culture, his work has twice been nominated by the AP for a Pulitzer Prize and has won National Headliner Awards for feature writing, among other industry honors. Anthony also is the author of the award-winning cultural history book Chasing the Rising Sun: The Journey of an American Song.

2013 STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARD

Aaron Kessler (MAT ’06) is currently completing his doctoral work in science education at the School of Education. Since coming to Pitt, Kessler has done significant work in the area of how to integrate media—impacts learning in secondary, postsecondary, and nontraditional science education. Currently, Kessler is working on understanding how students’ varying forms of online and social media-based educational tasks relate to their performance on content-specific assessments.

Within the School of Education, Kessler serves as president of the Council of Graduate Students in Education. He also is a Learning Sciences and Policy representative, Technology Committee representative, assembly board member, and Communications Committee member for the Pitt Graduate and Professional Student Government.
ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT: NATALIE KAPLAN (MED ’53)

Natalie Kaplan’s Lifelong Labor of Love
FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN PITTSBURGH

Today, Carriage House still champions Kaplan’s groundbreaking trend by offering both full- and half-day programs that emphasize the importance of each child as a “unique and valued person.” The center is the highlight of Kaplan’s illustrious career in child development and her history of providing quality early childhood education and programming to children and families throughout the Pittsburgh region. Kaplan traces her professional roots back to the University of Pittsburgh and a letter she wrote to the famous pediatrician Benjamin Spock. Spock was known for The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care, a parenting book that’s sold more than 50 million copies.

He served as a professor of child development at the University from 1951 to 1955. During that time, Kaplan graduated from Pennsylvania State University with a degree in child development and eagerly wrote to Spock. She received a response from his colleague, Margaret McFarland, another distinguished faculty member (also known for her work with Fred Rogers), who would eventually become Kaplan’s mentor.

McFarland’s response described the Arsenal Family & Children’s Center, a new training site for the study of child development. Co-founded by McFarland and Spock in 1953 and located in the Lawrenceville neighborhood of Pittsburgh, the center served as Spock’s site for a longitudinal study of child growth and development across generations. Through her communications with McFarland, Kaplan obtained a graduate student assistantship to work on the study.

Kaplan describes her time at the University of Pittsburgh as a tremendous experience. Not only did she meet her husband in an elevator on her way to class, but McFarland’s guidance also helped to shape her life’s work. “There is nothing more rewarding than being around children and watching them grow. That is what life’s experience is all about,” Kaplan says. She would carry on this passion for child development and later revolutionize early childhood education throughout the Pittsburgh area.

Along with Carriage House, Kaplan established the Infant-Toddler Center of Squirrel Hill in 1961, the first facility of its kind in the neighborhood to offer infant and toddler care. Three years later, Kaplan helped to create the Children’s Center of Pittsburgh, an affiliate of Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC, and two years later, she moved Carriage House into the Wightman School Community Building (WSCB). The move was the dawn of a new era for the center, placing infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and kindergartners under one roof. Over the years, WSCB has made many improvements to its facility, including getting it LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified.

Kaplan currently serves as president and founding director of Carriage House Children’s Center. In this new role, she continues to be involved with both WSCB and the Pittsburgh early childhood education community. Next year, the center will celebrate its 40th anniversary, and Kaplan still has the same passion for the field she nurtured at the University of Pittsburgh all those years ago and still believe that “providing quality early childhood education and programming for young children is a labor of love.”

When it comes to child care in the city of Pittsburgh, Carriage House Children’s Center, Inc., is a model of developmental programming for children up to 6 years old. Founded by Natalie Kaplan in 1974, the center initially focused on the need for full-day preschool services in the city—a need that Kaplan discovered while serving as a part-time teacher at the Frick Nursery School. At the time, the nursery had the only full-time kindergarten in Pittsburgh. When it closed, Kaplan quickly filled the emerging need by establishing Carriage House Children’s Center.
1980s

ABDULLAH ALI AL-QATAEE (PhD ‘86) is vice president of the National Center for Assessment in Higher Education and chair of its Measurement and Research Division in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

KAY FERRELL (PhD ‘83) received the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB)’s prestigious Migel Medal Award for 2013. The award is the highest honor in the blindness field. Established in 1937 by M.C. Migel, the first chairperson of AFB, the award was created to honor professionals and volunteers whose dedication and achievements have improved the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired. Ferrell is professor of special education at the University of Northern Colorado. She is the author of Reach Out and Teach: Helping Your Child Who Is Visually Impaired Learn and Grow.

1990s

ADEL H. AL-MUBARAK (PhD ‘99) is assistant professor of counseling psychology in the College of Education at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

MICHAEL P. GHILANI (Med ‘96), principal of Upper St. Clair High School, was named 2013 Principal of the Year by the Pennsylvania Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals. Ghilani joined the district as high school assistant principal and dean of students in 2001 and became principal in 2006.

RANDAL LUTZ (EdS ’90, Med ’96, EdD ’04) was appointed superintendent at the Baldwin-Whitehall School District.

CINDY REED (EdD ’97) was elected president of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) at its annual conference. UCEA, the top professional organization for the educational leadership field, is an international consortium of major research universities with doctoral programs in educational leadership and policy. The dual mission of UCEA is to improve the preparation of educational leaders and to promote the development of professional knowledge in school improvement and administration. Reed is currently a professor at Auburn University and director of the Truman Pierce Institute, a research and outreach unit in Auburn’s College of Education.

2000s

LUTITIA CLIPPER (PhD ’06) was selected by the Pittsburgh Business Times to receive a 2013 BusinessWomen First Award. The publication honors the top women executives in Pittsburgh’s for-profit and nonprofit organizations. Clipper works at Peoples Natural Gas on clean energy-related projects and teaches part time.

TIMOTHY GLASSPOOL (EdD ’06) was appointed superintendent of the Plum Borough School District.

BRANDON KEAT (MAT ’07) received a 2013 Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence. The awards are given each year to projects that encourage and promote environmental stewardship. In the winter of 2009, Keat started a beekeeping club with a few students at Propel Andrew Street High School, and the group soon became an elective class due to increased student involvement. The honey produced is available for purchase, and sales of honey and hive-based products have made High School Beekeeping a self-sustaining class.

KAKENYA NTAIYA (PhD ‘11) was named a 2013 CNN Hero, an award featured in an annual television special. The network honors individuals who make extraordinary contributions to humanitarian aid and a real difference in their communities. Ntaiya is among 10 others from around the world to be chosen for the honor last year. In 2009, she opened the first primary school for girls in her native Kenyan village and today helps to provide education to 155 students. Ntaiya also spent her time in the United States promoting awareness of the issues affecting Kenyan girls. She was the first youth advisor to the United Nations Population Fund and traveled around the world to speak on the importance of educating girls, particularly as a means of fighting the practices of female genital mutilation and child marriage.

JOSEPH PASQUERILLA (EdD ’08) was appointed superintendent of the Northgate School District.

LAURA SCHARPHORN (MS ‘11, PhD ‘12) was a semifinalist for the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) program, which is organized by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management to help develop potential government leaders. The PMF program was created more than three decades ago by executive order and has gone through many changes over the years. While at Pitt, Scharphorn worked with Heather Bachman and Shannon Wanless on research investigating best practices for supporting the development of young children’s early social and academic skills.

WILLIAM STROPKAJ (EdD ’02) was appointed superintendent of the Keystone Oaks School District.

JOHN D. WILKINSON (EdD ’03) was appointed superintendent of the Belle Vernon Area School District.

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

SILVER FRANCIS OONYU (Med ’12)

Community. Animals. Family. Crops. And then for Silver Francis Oonyu, they all disappeared.

He had a short time to create a lifetime’s worth of memories, because at age 4 he lost his sight due to measles. However, 40 years later he traveled from his native Uganda to the United States (more specifically, to the University of Pittsburgh) to attend the School of Education and earn a master’s degree in instruction and learning. Oonyu’s goal was to start a school for orphans (ages 5-17) as well as the blind and visually impaired in his home country. Oonyu graduated in 2012 and shortly thereafter moved back to Uganda, where he’s begun teaching part time at St. Francis Secondary School for the Blind while meeting with friends and churches to procure funding for his school, which he plans on calling the Silverstone Education Centre. It will include 10 classrooms, a nursery, a teachers’ house, and a dining hall.

In his school proposal, Oonyu states, “Education is a right, not a privilege, and as such, it enables and facilitates all people, regardless of social status, to access other rights and equips vulnerable children with life skills, hence empowering them to live desirable lives. If we are to reduce vulnerability rates and ensure some light in the future of developing countries, advocacy, retention, and return of unfortunate children from poor families to school is a responsibility for us all.”

For more information or to assist Oonyu and the Silverstone Education Centre, contact Program Coordinator James Ojilong at oonavji@gmail.com.

Oonyu studies using assistive technology that translates print and Web text into an audio format.
Karen VanderVen Awarded 225th Anniversary Medallion

For more than 50 years, Professor Emeritus Karen VanderVen (PhD ’75) has advanced the field of child and youth work. The University of Pittsburgh recently honored her extraordinary work with a commemorative medallion awarded as part of the University’s 225th anniversary celebration. VanderVen received the medallion, which recognizes alumni who have made outstanding contributions to their professional fields and are still finding ways to contribute to the progress of Pitt and its students, at the School of Education’s 2013 Alumni Awards ceremony. (For the list of 2013 Alumni Award honorees, see page 20.)

The University of Pittsburgh presented its first anniversary medallions during its bicentennial in 1967. The 225th anniversary medallion was designed in keeping with the 1967 medallion by depicting the progress of Pitt “from a log cabin academy to a modern university with ambitions that match the soaring height of the Cathedral of Learning” on one side of the medallion, said Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg. On the other side of the medallion is VanderVen’s name as well as the likenesses of William Pitt and Hugh Henry Brackenridge. VanderVen’s tenure is a shining example of the progress referenced by the chancellor, marked by achievements that include her development of the child development program and its eventual relocation into the Applied Development Psychology program in the School of Education in Wesley P. Posvar Hall.

It was back in 1961 that VanderVen was accepted as a graduate student in the child development and child care program at the University of Pittsburgh. Seven years later, she joined the faculty, and she has since authored more than 400 published works, including reports; chapters, articles; columns; and her latest book, Promoting Positive Development in Early Childhood: Building Blocks for a Successful Start. Despite her recent retirement, she has remained professionally active and continues to facilitate her writer workshops and make philanthropic contributions to the School of Education. VanderVen’s charitable work has included the establishment of two scholarship funds: a professional development fund established in 2008 and a recently established leadership fund. She has always been a strong advocate for the field of early childhood education and has striven to professionalize and advance the nature of this work.

Mattingly received many awards during her career, including the Child Care Association of Pennsylvania’s Frances Vandiver Award for support and education of child, youth, and family workers in 1993; the Inter Association Child Care Conference’s Outstanding Child and Youth Care Award for outstanding service and dedication to the profession of child and youth work in 1994; and the Association for Child & Youth Care Practice, Inc. (ACYCP) Distinguished Service Award for outstanding contributions to the profession of child and youth care work in 2000. Mattingly left no immediate survivors. Memorial donations may be made to the Mattingly Scholarship Fund at www.cyccb.org/support or c/o ACYCP, 1701 Southwest Parkway, Suite 113, College Station, TX 77840.

Florence Ivler (BA ’67, PhD ’78) passed away on November 3, 2012. She earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees and finished with a doctoral degree in administrative and policy studies. She was a retired assistant superintendent for the Moon Area School District.

Jack Hardman (BS ’52, Med ’54) passed away on April 25, 2012. During his 43-year career, Hardman was a school counselor and summer camp director. He was a former president of the School of Education Alumni Society Executive Committee and involved in athletics.
Students in Pitt’s Child Development Association (CDA) held a donation drive to benefit victims of a five-alarm fire in South Oakland that left approximately a dozen students homeless and without belongings in March 2013. The donation drive was held over five days, and CDA received thousands of items. CDA members sorted through the donations and invited fire victims to come and choose whatever items they needed.