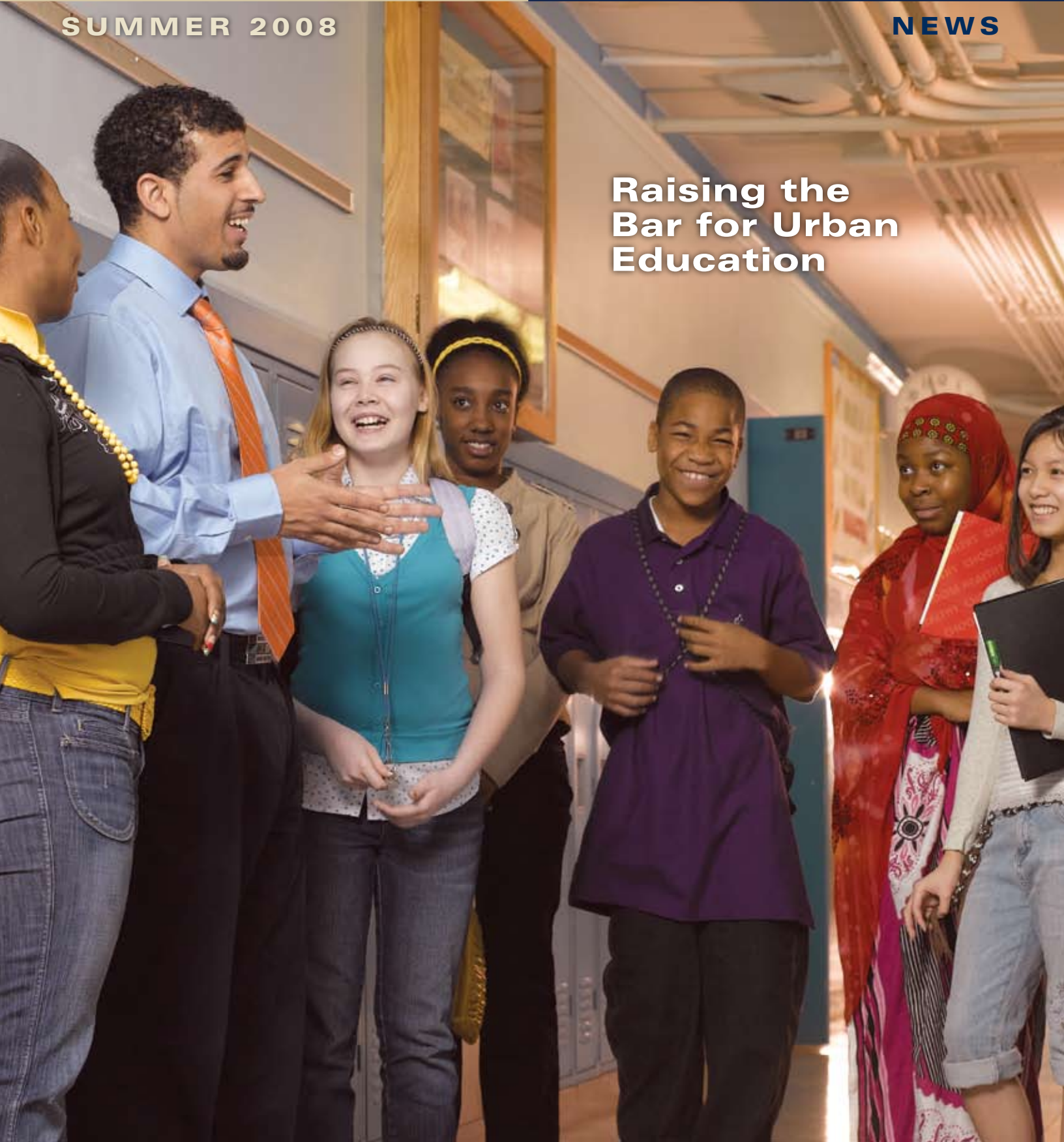


# UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

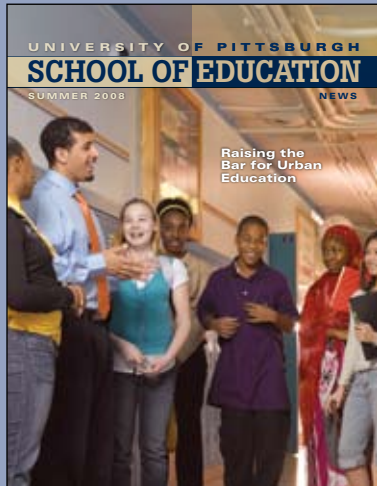
SUMMER 2008

NEWS

**Raising the  
Bar for Urban  
Education**







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Raising the Bar for Urban Education

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*From the Dean*

# The Next Research Challenge

Many of the School of Education's research efforts are concentrated in the cognitive sciences, the study of how people think. Such efforts aren't concentrated just at the University of Pittsburgh. Arguably, the Pittsburgh region has the strongest concentration in the world of cognitive science researchers, who long have studied how the brain performs mathematical and other tasks taught in school as well as the psychological nature of numeracy and literacy and how best to teach the most important concepts of the curriculum. Many of these researchers, however, are Pitt faculty—and they have helped to shape key national research reports about the cognitive sciences, including those reports produced by the National Research Council.

The science of instruction pioneered partly at Pitt is really the science of teaching people who want to learn—or who at least are willing to follow teachers' instructions. The key learning problem of our public school system today is engagement. Nothing our cognitive scientists have figured out tells us how to teach the child who is not paying attention, sees no reason to think hard, is unmotivated, or is too focused on avoiding peer cruelty to be able to attend to what is happening in class. And yet, the reality in too many schools is that many students are neither engaged nor motivated to learn.



It is common to blame this on someone else. Teachers say that students would learn if only the parents enforced appropriate discipline. Parents say their children would learn if only teachers understood the culture and life experiences of the students they teach. Others blame principals, superintendents, and anyone else who seems connected to the educational system.

This reminds me of the era before the recent advances in the cognitive sciences. We used to say that some children were smart and others were not. That variance in intelligence took the blame for our inability to teach some subjects to some children.

Today, we are more likely to say that intelligence is teachable and that we have figured out how to teach it. Instructional failures no longer reside in students' genes but rather in the design of the learning opportunities they are afforded.

When I look at the advances over the last several decades in behavioral science, cognitive science, and social psychology, I am hopeful that we will begin to see a science of student engagement coming forth from some of the broader thinkers in those fields. Take, for example, Mary Margaret Kerr, associate professor of psychology in education, who works in Pittsburgh's schools and helps teachers learn how to provide positive behavioral support while making schools safe and inviting. Her books on this topic are used widely by school systems trying to avoid or ameliorate school violence. Schools that are inviting and safe automatically have some of what is needed to engage students.

Just as there were always master teachers who could teach hard concepts even before cognitive scientists developed strong theory, so too are there schools that work today, schools that are inviting and in which students are strongly engaged in learning. However, there aren't enough of these, and we're not yet able completely to coach a teacher or principal to engage all students. But we're getting closer.

Some hints about how our current strengths can support these new research needs can be found within this issue of *School of Education News*. For example, Peg Smith, associate professor in the Department of Instruction and Learning, and Gabriel Stylianides, assistant professor of mathematics education, are working on ways to get students more engaged in mathematical reasoning.

Once equipped with the ability to perform strong reasoning, students automatically are more able to remain engaged in math and science because they have the skills needed to involve themselves in those subjects.

We at Pitt are dedicated to ensuring that, just as we now see intelligence as teachable, we will learn how to design schools in which students want to work hard at learning and in which teachers and school leaders are able to engage all students. ■

Alan Lesgold  
Professor and Dean

*On the cover: Pittsburgh Arsenal 6–8 students gather around social studies teacher Julian D'Angelo (MAT '06). From left to right are Cadazhia Perry, D'Angelo, Linsey Dawson, Leah Woodruff, Rayshad Allen, Fatuma Muya, and Lina Pham.*





At front, Pittsburgh Arsenal teacher Patti Camper, who also is a School of Education student, talks with Pittsburgh Arsenal students (left to right) Vernae Patrick, Matthew Kearns, and Parys Durham. In the background, Pittsburgh Arsenal teacher Amy Filipowski, also a School of Education student, teaches the morning lesson.

# Raising the Bar: Graduate Students Team Up with Urban Middle School to Gain Experience, Create Change



Arsenal 6–8 is raising the stakes for about 70 graduate students at the School

of Education in hopes that they, in turn, will raise the bar for urban education. As part of a partnership that involves four advanced courses, Pittsburgh Arsenal is providing academic and behavioral data for Pitt students to analyze with an eye toward identifying new interventions for the children and the school.

Known as the Interdisciplinary Course Project, the program represents a leap of faith for both the University and the middle school and draws upon their long history of collaboration. “I’m looking at it as a challenge, and I don’t mind being out there,” says Debra Rucki, Pittsburgh Arsenal’s principal and a School of Education alumnus.

Plainspoken, articulate, and clearly passionate about her job, Rucki is the type of principal who arrives to school early and stays well into the evening. She hopes the work produced by the graduate students will shed light on Arsenal in a way that will empower teachers and staff in a job that is often challenging.

To inspire the Pitt students, Rucki spent a winter Saturday early in the semester talking about her program and answering questions.

“It was really interesting, knowing [the students] had the opportunity to talk with a building principal who is right out there and willing to be as honest as possible,” Rucki says. “I’m hoping it will make a difference for them.”

## Searching for authenticity

The idea of using anonymous, real-time data from an actual school was borne from feedback from graduate students in earlier courses. After working all semester to analyze fictitious data, prepare recommendations, and create presentations, “they felt a certain disappointment that they couldn’t see an audience for all the work they had done,” says Mary Margaret Kerr, associate professor of psychology in education.

Kerr and Charlene Trovato, associate chair of administrative and policy studies, were at a conference in Houston, Texas, in November 2007 when they began to hatch a plan to create a more authentic project.

Not only did they want to create a more rewarding experience for the graduate students, they also wanted to foster a

collaboration between Trovato’s students, who are studying school leadership, and Kerr’s, who are studying behavior. The more the two professors thought about it, the more the two areas seemed to mesh.

Two other part-time instructors also are involved in the project: Tracy McCalla, a middle school principal, and Constance DeMore Palmer, a seventh-grade social studies teacher and curriculum coach of differentiated instruction. McCalla’s students in the project are working on literature searches and writing reviews, while Palmer’s students will suggest differentiated modes of instruction for the teachers at Pittsburgh Arsenal. Kerr also has a co-instructor, Sielke Caparelli, who supervised behavioral assessment at Craig Academy, a designated approved private school that is part of the

Watson Institute, Leet Township, Pa., an educational organization that specializes in educating children with special needs.

“Behavior and discipline repeatedly come out at the top of the list of concerns for teachers; school safety and discipline repeatedly head the list of parental priorities,” explains Kerr. So it would follow, she adds, that future school leaders “need a deep understanding of school discipline and behavioral interventions.”

Conversely, Kerr’s students need to learn what issues principals will be thinking about, Trovato says. The two contacted Rucki, who has known both Kerr and Trovato professionally for several years, to tell her about their proposal.

Continued on the next page



Charlene Trovato, Mary Margaret Kerr, and Debra Rucki are leading the Interdisciplinary Course Project that yields mutual benefits for students at both Arsenal and Pitt.



“I thought that it was an interesting scenario,” says Rucki. “It is real data, regarding real kids in an urban setting. To me, that’s going to be significant.”

## Empowering teachers

In addition to enriching the graduate students’ education, the project also is meant to make a legitimate difference in the lives of Pittsburgh Arsenal’s teachers and staff, who typically don’t have access to the same academic research that would be available in a university setting.

“There’s a huge gulf between a classroom teacher in an urban setting with very challenging responsibilities and an academic who is preparing research papers for journals,” explains Kerr. “Teachers often don’t get access to some really neat ideas because the ideas are either so buried in obscure locations or are buried inside a very fine research paper that they don’t have time to review.”

To help address that problem, the students will turn their research and analyses into teacher-friendly projects such as a DVD with seminars, complete with slides and study guides; newsletter-style presentations of best research practices; and capsule reviews of literature in areas identified by the data as crucial to the school.

“It makes a lot of information accessible to people who just don’t have time to interpret,” says Trovato.

Enthusiasm for the project was infectious, and it moved quickly from theory to practice. After Pittsburgh’s school board gave its approval, a letter was sent to students enrolled in each of the four spring semester courses taught by Kerr, Trovato, Palmer, and McCalla explaining the project



Pittsburgh Arsenal student Devonte Wilder

and the component for which each class would be responsible.

The letter also threw a curve ball to the students, most of whom are working teachers who are pursuing graduate degrees to enhance their careers. The students were asked to attend daylong sessions on two Saturdays—one in January, the other in April.

So dedicated were the students to the project that virtually all showed up for the first Saturday session, and they were “just spellbound” by Rucki’s presentation, says Trovato, who was pleased at the students’ willingness to be flexible in the name of an important project.

“That’s what they have to do to lead schools,” she says. “It’s real-world preparation. It’s embracing.”

## Fighting complacency

Rucki asks the questions that she hopes research will help answer: What kind of safety net does the school provide to help children who are falling behind? How does a teacher find time to help the child who needs more time? How do you teach a group of children with various levels of understanding?

What are appropriate limits and boundaries for student behavior?

Just the fact that those questions are being asked is a leap from when Rucki first started.

“Back in the day, we didn’t really talk about professional development,” she says. “You came into school, you got the curriculum, you got the pacing guide, you got the teacher’s edition, and that was it.”

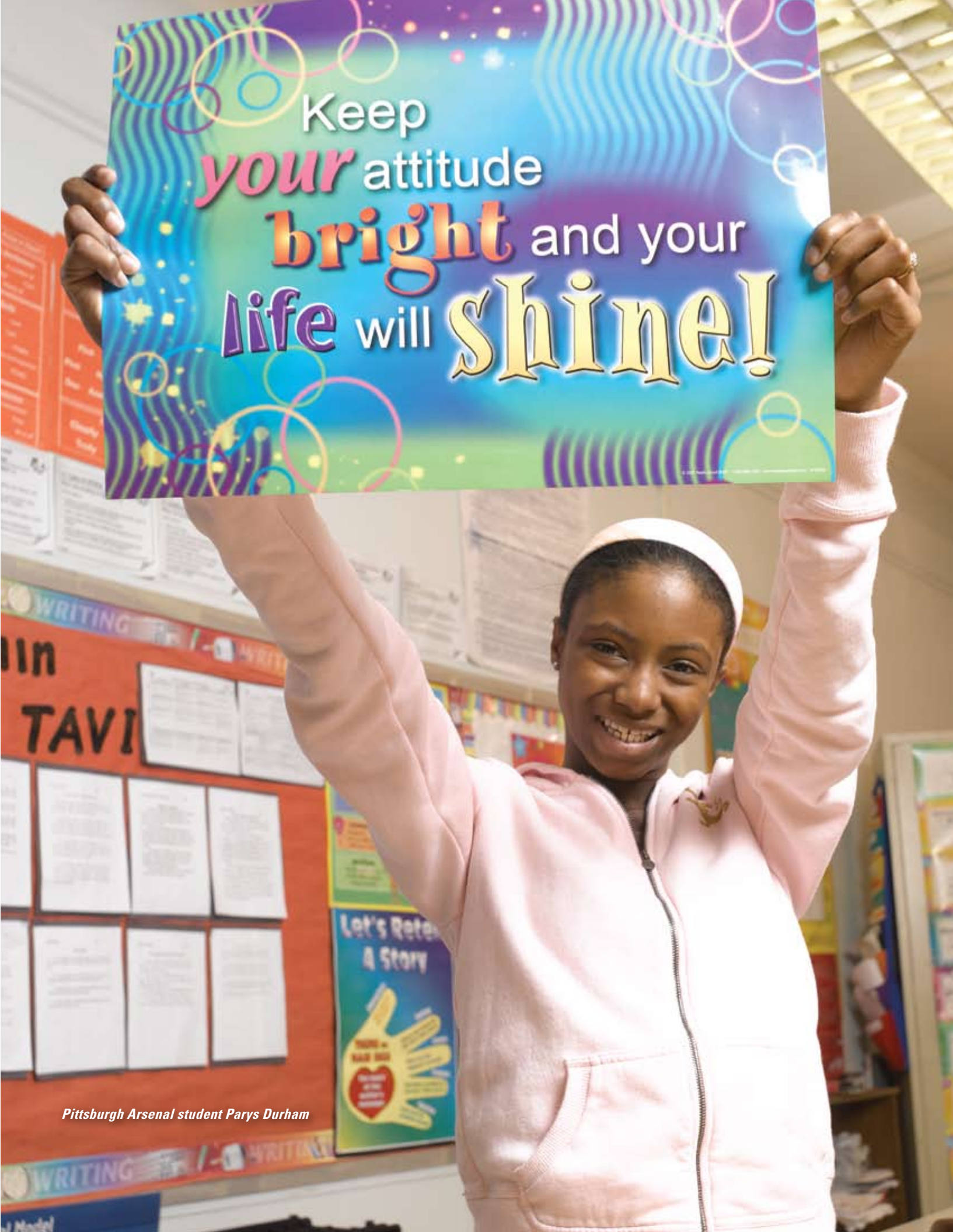
But nowadays, “you’ve got to be more global,” she says. “Our children need a much more rigorous education. The world today is just too competitive.”

The data that Pitt students analyze will be anonymous, and their recommendations, if applied, will happen after they’ve moved on either to graduate or to enter a new academic year. Even so, Kerr and Trovato say Pittsburgh Arsenal’s feedback will be crucial in helping them understand what was useful.

For her part, Rucki hopes the project will span multiple years. As a matter of fact, this project is the type of authentic learning experience students will engage in Pitt’s newly redesigned principal preparation program.

“I’m not looking at this as being a one-shot deal,” she says. “When we become satisfied, we become complacent. And complacency is not a good place to sit.” ■

*The bronze tablet (shown on page 4) hung in Pittsburgh Arsenal’s main foyer recognizes the 1862 fatal explosion at the Allegheny Arsenal, which formerly occupied land near Pittsburgh Arsenal. During the Civil War, the arsenal’s mostly female workforce produced artillery shells and cartridges for the Union Army.*



Pittsburgh Arsenal student Parys Durham



# Thinking Like a Mathematician: A New Journey in Teaching Mathematics



Peg Smith and Gabriel Stylianides

*The students in a third-grade class are investigating what happens when they add any two odd numbers. They check several examples, identify the pattern that the sum in all the examined cases is an even number, and formulate (with their teacher's help) the conjecture that the sum of any two odd numbers is even. The students are unsure about whether to accept the conjecture, and they develop different arguments. Many students argue that the conjecture is true because they verified it in many different particular cases (e.g.,  $1+5=6$ ,  $11+13=24$ ). However, other students observe that this argument does not show that the conjecture is always true. After some help from the teacher, who focused students' attention on their definitions of even and odd numbers, Betsy proposes the following proof for the*

*conjecture: "All odd numbers if you circle them by twos there's one left over. So, if you add two odd numbers, the two ones left over will group together and will make an even number. This is because all even numbers if you circle them by twos there's none left over."\**

Until recently, rote memorization dominated the teaching and learning of mathematics, a subject that is—perhaps ironically—predicated on reasoning and deductive thinking. New research suggests, however, that reasoning and proving—a concept traditionally reserved for mathematicians and high school geometry courses—can be advantageously applied to any mathematical curriculum at any educational juncture, from kindergarten to college. In this context, proofs are no longer restricted

to the traditional two-column format; they can be represented in any way that is mathematically appropriate and developmentally accessible to the students. As shown in the opening episode, even students in the early elementary grades can engage in identifying patterns, making conjectures, and developing arguments that may qualify as proofs, or what Peg Smith, associate professor in the School of Education Department of Instruction and Learning (DIL), and Gabriel Stylianides, assistant professor in DIL, refer to as reasoning and proving. Providing students with the opportunity to engage in such practices, especially during their earliest days of schooling, can be instrumental in helping them to develop a deeper understanding of mathematics and can strengthen their ability to make sense of mathematical concepts.

Together, Smith and Stylianides have taken the lead in helping prospective and practicing teachers of all educational levels, from K–12 to college, to realize the benefits of using reasoning and proving, a way of thinking shown to offer insight into a wide variety of phenomena. Although research suggests that reasoning and proving can be difficult for both teachers and students to internalize, Smith and Stylianides support the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' view that reasoning and proving should be a regular part of student–teacher discussion.

Both Smith and Stylianides stand committed to helping teachers develop

their capacity to engage in reasoning and proving tasks themselves and to promote such tasks in their own classrooms. If you walk by Stylianides' class for elementary teachers, you will find students interacting with each other and with Stylianides about important mathematical ideas, debating the truth of conjectures, and examining the validity of mathematical arguments proposed by different students. This is part of his plan to foster social interactions where students construct shared meaning. Also, because many of his students have misconceptions about reasoning and proving (as is typical of prospective elementary teachers), Stylianides plans for situations where his students' incorrect understandings do not hold, thus helping them to see an intellectual need to resolve the contradictions in their current understandings and develop new ones that better approximate conventional understandings.

Specifically, Stylianides' research centers on issues related to the teaching and learning of reasoning and proving in both school and teacher education settings. His two most recent projects in this area, both funded by the Spencer Foundation, focus on the teacher education level.

The first project was a multiyear experiment conducted in an undergraduate mathematics class for prospective elementary teachers. The study sought to create innovative instructional sequences to foster the development of prospective teachers' mathematical knowledge, with particular attention to their knowledge of reasoning and proving.

In his second Spencer Foundation-funded project, Stylianides examined the challenges that four of the prospective elementary teachers who took his undergraduate mathematics course faced as they tried to engage students in their mentor teachers' classrooms in reasoning and proving. His primary objective in this project was to offer insights into the complex relationship between the preparation of prospective elementary teachers for innovative mathematics teaching and the reality of existing classrooms where such teaching may be alien—and even unwelcome.

Smith's current grant, funded by the National Science Foundation, is focused on developing a curriculum for prospective and practicing secondary mathematics teachers that focuses on reasoning and proving. The project Cases of Reasoning and Proving, or CORP, brings together a group of national experts, including Stylianides, to design a set of activities that will help teachers to develop their own capacity related to reasoning and proving and hone their ability to foster the development of such processes in their own students. As School of Education Dean Alan Lesgold says, "The goal of this new program is to help high school math teachers better understand what they are teaching and how children understand math."

During the 2008 spring term, Smith, a 2006 recipient of the Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award, taught a course for secondary mathematics teachers in which she engaged local teachers in some of

the activities developed through CORP. This included having teachers solve mathematical tasks that highlighted different aspects of reasoning and proving along with analyzing narrative and video episodes of teaching that highlighted the ways teachers support learning through their actions and interactions. Also, examining solutions produced by students made salient the range of correct and incorrect ways students solve problems and what these solutions convey about students' understanding. While the activities proved challenging for the teachers, most recognized the importance of giving their students opportunities to engage in a broader range of mathematical activities.

Recognizing that mathematics education is critical to the future of children, Smith and Stylianides, along with the teachers and—ultimately—the students with whom they work, are blazing a new path for mathematics education, one that surely will lead to new trajectories and unexpected places. But, as the application of reasoning and proving suggests, even more important and exciting than the destination is the journey.

\* The opening anecdote was adapted from "Making mathematics reasonable in school," by D.L. Ball and H. Bass, in *A Research Companion to Principles and Standards for School Mathematics*, edited by J. Kilpatrick, W.G. Martin, and D. Schifter. ■



## Making the Most of Research Revelations

**Why does so much education research rarely get used?**

**Is it the quality of the research? The arcane way in which research is communicated? Or is it because there is little demand for research among educators and policymakers?**

For the past several years, Mary Kay Stein, founding director of the Learning Policy Center, part of the School of Education, and Cynthia Coburn of the University of California, Berkeley, have been leading a research project focusing on the relationship between research and educational practice. Their approach was first to identify examples of nationally visible research and development projects that positively changed the ways in which researchers and practitioners interacted. Ten research and development projects representing strategically different ways of combining research and practice were selected, including Learning Technologies in Urban Schools, Success for All, the National Writing Project, and Lesson Study.

Guided by a common set of questions, researchers commissioned by Stein and Coburn spent several years studying each project and writing case studies that focused on how researchers and practitioners worked together; the knowledge bases on which they drew and to which they contributed; and the role played by political, economic, and social contexts in shaping when and how research-practice interactions flourished.

Reviewed collectively, the cases suggest that the key impediment to more productive interaction between research and practice is the lack of established structures or policies to support consistent, ongoing interactions between them. In the absence of such an infrastructure, efforts that do occur must construct their own relationships between researchers and practitioners in order to do design work, provide implementation support, and scale up innovative practices. This presents challenges, as researchers and practitioners live in vastly different institutional worlds with different incentive systems and different statuses.

Another challenge is that conditions in schools and districts work against opportunities for teachers to learn new approaches, sustain research-based programs, and use research in their decision making in meaningful ways. High-quality research and innovation likely will miss the mark without attention to the environments for educator learning and decision making in public schools. The case studies provide models for how to create environments at the local, regional, and national levels that foster practitioners' capacities to search for, identify, and make productive use of research as part of their ongoing learning and decision making.

Finally, by highlighting different approaches to the creation and use of tools (e.g., curriculum materials, protocols, and technology), the case studies identify trade-offs among various ways of applying research know-

ledge toward school improvement. Although such tools have long been recognized for their abilities to embrace research and to reach large numbers of practitioners, there is a lack of critical analysis of the tools' features and how they can be used. These case studies analyze the benefits and costs of more-versus less-scripted versions of tools, including how those benefits and costs change over the life of a project.

This project was funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and a major grant from the Spencer Foundation. It was first conceived of by the MacArthur Network on Teaching and Learning, a group of leading national scholars and practitioners who not only study the relationship between research and practice but themselves lead research and development projects that actively combine the two. The MacArthur Network provided guidance in conceptualizing the project and selecting cases to study, and it served as the initial audience and critic for each of the completed case studies. In addition, two School of Education graduate students—Judith Touré and Mika Yamashita—participated in the project.

The case studies, along with cross-case insights and recommendations for policy, will be included in a book, titled *Research and Practice in Education: Building Alliances, Bridging the Divide*, to be published in spring 2009 by Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group. ■

## Weight Race Gives Students Real-world Experience



HPA student Eric Spielman and Tiffany Kinney

If you visited any of the University of Pittsburgh campuses over the winter and spring, you might have noticed a difference. Faculty and staff joined a competition—a competition to achieve better health by losing weight. The 12-week, University-wide MyHealth Weight Race kicked off in January 2008 through a collaborative effort by the University of Pittsburgh Fitness for Life program, UPMC Health Plan, and School of Education Department of Health and Physical Activity (HPA). Approximately 1,300 individuals constituting about 270 teams participated actively in the Weight Race.

While this program benefited primarily University faculty and staff, it also was an important program for students enrolled in the HPA curricula. In Research Assistant Professor Amy Otto's Behavior Change Strategies class, for example, students

learned how to facilitate weigh-ins properly and work professionally with individuals participating in a behavioral weight loss program. Then, as part of their training, students took these skills to the Weight Race weigh-ins, where they worked directly with participants in the program.

The students were counseled on giving appropriate, professional responses to participants, as they have learned in the classroom that weight is a "personal and private issue for many individuals," Otto says.

Learning how to communicate properly is key, as the majority of Otto's students will be working with obesity in some context when they graduate.

"Approximately 65 percent of the [U.S.] population is overweight right now," says Otto. Being involved in the Weight Race taught the students different methods of weight loss.

John Jakicic, professor and HPA chair, says that students are not just "going to be using fitness equipment to promote weight loss; they also could be campaigning for weight loss." For instance, through the Weight Race, students learned how to react professionally to participants' weight loss or gain.

Prior to the actual Weight Race, Otto had the students practice hypothetical ethical and unethical situations in the classroom in order for them to learn appropriate ways of responding to participants. These situations prepared the students for foreseeable

situations and, more importantly, made them think ahead of time how they should react to participants.

As exercise and sport science majors, most of these students are physically fit, and weight loss is not a struggle for them. Being involved in the weigh-ins and watching people struggle with their weight made the students more empathetic to people who fight this daily battle.

HPA graduate students supervised these undergraduate students. Jakicic explains that the graduate students "gained organizational and administrative experience" by managing other students in the competition.

Following the weigh-ins, the undergraduate students talked about their experiences. Many enjoyed the hands-on experience and the opportunity to interact with people experiencing personal challenges. Additionally, this competition reinforced in students that they must be professional, sensitive, and understanding when dealing with people's weight issues. HPA faculty members hope these students will apply the skills they have learned to their future careers.

These same faculty members are following up this program with a physical activity component that will help participants continue and maintain weight loss. ■

Background: Pitt faculty and staff members use their lunch hour to exercise.



## Excellence Continues

The University of Pittsburgh School of Education has placed 36th in *U.S. News & World Report's* "America's Best Graduate Schools 2009" rankings for education—maintaining its position among the nation's top 50 schools of education.

[www.education.pitt.edu](http://www.education.pitt.edu)



## Trailblazing Student Honored for Efforts



First Lady Laura Bush and Kakenya Ntaiya at the Vital Voices Global Leadership Awards

Kakenya Ntaiya, a PhD student in the Social and Comparative Analysis in Education program, has received the 2008 Rising Voices Award from Vital Voices Global Partnership. Vital Voices is dedicated to empowering women around the world.

Ntaiya received her award at the Vital Voices Global Leadership Awards at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., on April 7. Attendees included First Lady Laura Bush, New York Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, and actress and activist Angelina Jolie.

"Thank you, Vital Voices, for honoring me tonight. By honoring me, you have honored the women of Kenya and women throughout the world. You have also honored girls throughout the world who dare to wish for an education and a better life," Ntaiya said as she accepted her award.

Ntaiya is passionate about her goal of building a girls boarding school in Enoosaen, the Kenyan village where she grew up. In 2008, ground will be broken for the school that Ntaiya says will "be a center for empowerment, a place where many girls will set foot on their path to realizing their dreams." ■

## Pitt Research Professor Isabel Beck Elected to National Academy of Education



Isabel Beck

Isabel L. Beck, emeritus professor in the University of Pittsburgh School of Education and senior scientist in Pitt's Learning Research and Development Center (LRDC), has been elected to the National Academy of Education (NAEd).

"The academy is the highest-level body devoted to supporting and maintaining the very best educational research," said Alan Lesgold, School of Education dean. "This is truly U.S. education's highest honor, and we are extremely fortunate to have it bestowed on one of our best and dearest colleagues. Among the approximately 200 members of the academy are Pitt colleagues Bob Glaser, Jim Greeno, Lauren Resnick, and now Isabel."

Beck was an elementary school teacher before beginning her distinguished academic career. Internationally known for her research in reading, Beck has engaged in extensive research on decoding,

vocabulary, and comprehension and has published more than 100 articles and several books. *Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction* (The Guilford Press, 2002), with Margaret G. McKeown and Linda Kucan, has become a best seller.

Among Beck's publications are *Making Sense of Phonics: The Hows and Whys* (The Guilford Press, 2005); *Improving Comprehension with Questioning the Author: A Fresh and Expanded View of a Powerful Approach* (Theory and Practice, 2006), with McKeown; and *Creating Robust Vocabulary: Frequently Asked Questions and Extended Examples* (The Guilford Press, May 2008), with McKeown and Kucan, which responds to readers' feedback and interest by providing more examples and day-to-day strategies.

Her numerous awards include the National Reading Conference's 1988 Oscar S. Causey Award for outstanding research and the 2000 Contributing Researcher Award from the American Federation of Teachers for "bridging the gap between research and practice," which is Beck's hallmark. In 1995, she was inducted into the International Reading Association's Reading Hall of Fame and received its William S. Gray Award in 2002.

Beck earned her degrees in education—the Bachelor of Science in 1953, the Master of Science in 1963, and the PhD in 1973—all at the University of Pittsburgh.

The NAEd is dedicated to the advancement of the highest quality education research and its use in policy formulation and practice. Founded in 1965, the academy consists of up to 200 U.S. members and up to 25 foreign associates who are elected on the basis of outstanding scholarship or outstanding contributions to education. Since its establishment, the academy has undertaken numerous commissions and study panels that typically include both NAEd members and other scholars with expertise in a particular area of inquiry. ■

Reprinted in part with permission from the *Pitt Chronicle*, April 14, 2008



A sampling of books cowritten by Isabel Beck.

Faculty News

**Mary E. Duquin** was appointed associate professor emeritus.

**Michael J. Ford**, assistant professor, was selected from a competitive pool of nearly 200 applicants to be named a 2007 National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral fellow. Ford’s research project, A Dual-role Theory of Scientific Reasoning, is aimed at understanding how students learn science and will provide practical implications for designing curricular activities.

**Susan Gillis Kruman**, clinical instructor in the Department of Health and Physical Activity, was awarded the College/ University Dance Educator of the Year Award by the Eastern District Association of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. She also was honored by the New Hazlett Theater as part of Women in the Arts: Founders, Pioneers, Instigators.



Michael J. Ford

**Roger D. Klein**, associate professor of psychology in education, received the Pennsylvania Psychological Association 2007 Psychology in the Media Award.

**Jerry Longo**, visiting associate professor and senior fellow, received the Western Pennsylvania School Librarians Association 2007 Advocate Award.

**Gaea Leinhardt** was appointed professor emeritus.

**Amanda Thein**, assistant professor, was recognized as a 2007 Promising Researcher by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) for her study, She’s Not a Prostitute!: Re-reading Working-class Girls’ Responses to Literature through an Examination of Interpretive Practices. She was recognized at the NCTE Annual Convention in New York City in November 2007.



Susan Gillis Kruman

Professor Emeritus **Milton Seligman** and coauthor Rosalyn Benjamin Darling published the third edition of their book *Ordinary Families, Special Children: A Systems Guide to Childhood Disability* through Guilford Press. The book provides updated research, clinical, and family member perspectives on the profound impact childhood disability has on family life. Although much of the research in this field is based on mothers’ experiences, the book addresses the adjustment and coping of fathers, siblings, and grandparents as well as providing life cycle and developmental perspectives. Family coping during the initial diagnostic phase and subsequent developmental stages is discussed along with the challenging relationship between parents and professionals such as teachers and doctors. ■



Jerry Longo

Reading Faculty and Advisory Board Discuss Program Redesign

*Written by Jill Vandermolen, graduate student in the Department of Instruction and Learning*

A January meeting between University of Pittsburgh School of Education reading faculty and an advisory board addressed two critical questions: What is the role of reading specialists in today’s schools, and how well is Pitt preparing its graduates for this role? One of the purposes for this meeting was to solicit information that Pitt’s reading education faculty could consider in its efforts to redesign the reading specialist certification program.

The board is composed of key reading educators ranging from graduates of the program serving as coaches or specialists to administrators in local districts that employ Pitt graduates.

Board members stressed that schools need reading specialists and coaches who can work with a variety of teachers and administrators and who have in-depth knowledge of the reading process. Additionally, incoming reading specialists should expect multiple responsibilities, from instruction and assessment to co-teaching and providing professional development for teachers.

The board members agreed that Pitt has been very successful in preparing qualified graduates. They applauded Pitt graduates’ understanding of how to administer and analyze assessments as well as their grasp of instructional strategies for teaching reading. Extensive knowledge of early literacy also is a strong trait of Pitt grads.

“It is so great,” said one board member, whose district has two Pitt graduates as well as reading interns. “They come out of Pitt prepared and ready to share what they’ve learned.”

The board also discussed ideas that could help to strengthen the reading specialist program at Pitt: more emphasis on middle school and secondary literacy instruction, an increased understanding of how to differentiate instruction for both academically and culturally diverse populations, more inclusion of writing strategies in the program, and a greater emphasis on the coaching role of the reading specialist. ■

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## Young Woo Kang Honored as Distinguished Alumnus

Young Woo Kang (MEd '73, PhD '76), who was blinded when a soccer ball hit him as a child and has persevered through years of hardships, was the first blind Korean to earn a doctoral degree. In 2008, Kang joined the ranks of the University of Pittsburgh Distinguished Alumni Fellows.

In his letter nominating Kang for the honor, former U.S. Attorney General and Pennsylvania Governor Dick Thornburgh wrote, "His energy and perseverance have opened doors to many with all kinds of disability in his native Korea, and he serves with distinction on the U.S. National Council on Disability and the World Committee on Disability."

Having overcome extreme hardship as a child, Kang would not let adversity change his future. Despite his struggles, he pursued his dreams. Several churches and community clubs assisted him, as did a Girl Scout troop that had collected money to help him. It was through that troop that he met his future wife, Kyoung Suk. She began reading him books and volunteered as his guide. Inspired by her relationship with Kang, she moved to the United States to further her knowledge and understanding of working with individuals with visual impairment.

Kang sought to further his education and, after an initial denial of his request to sit for the entrance exam to a university, finally was allowed to take the exam and was admitted to Yonsei University. After graduating with honors, Kang wanted to

continue his education. Yet again he had to overcome obstacles. He lobbied the government to change the policy that prevented people with disabilities from studying abroad. Kyoung Suk, who was studying in Harrisburg, Pa., was able to secure funding through the Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarship for Kang to study at the University of Pittsburgh.

He came to Pitt in 1973 and earned a master's degree in special education as well as a doctorate degree in education. He was the first blind Korean to earn a doctoral degree.

Throughout his career, Kang has striven to open doors for other individuals with disabilities. He was the director of special education at the Indiana state Department of Education, a Distinguished Professor at Northeastern Illinois University, and dean and professor of international affairs at Taegu University in South Korea. Serving on the boards of Goodwill Industries International and the National Organization on Disability, Kang currently is a senior advisor to the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute and vice chair of the World Committee on Disability. In 2001, President George W. Bush nominated Kang to serve on the National Council on Disability. In this position, Kang has worked on a variety of issues, including the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in emergency planning, cultural differences, and the role of attitude in empowering individuals with disabilities.

Kang has authored three books: *The Wisdom-Driven Life: Seven Keys to Successful Living*, *My Disability—God's Ability: 7 Principles of Triumphant Life*, and *A Light in My Heart: Faith and Hope and the Handicapped*.

Says Thornburgh of Kang's accomplishments, "Dr. Kang has not only overcome his disability but [has] transformed it into a positive asset."

While Kyoung Suk was instrumental in helping Kang achieve his goals, she also made a difference throughout her 30 years of teaching students with visual impairments in the Gary, Ind., public school system.

Kyoung Suk and Kang are very proud of their two sons. Paul graduated from Harvard University, attended medical school, and completed his residency in ophthalmology at Duke University. He currently practices at University Ophthalmic Consultants of Washington in Chevy Chase, Md., and is an assistant clinical professor in the Department of Ophthalmology at Georgetown University School of Medicine. Christopher graduated from the University of Chicago and obtained a law degree from Duke University School of Law. He has worked for the U.S. Senate and is currently senior floor counsel for Senator Dick Durbin of Illinois. ■

*On the right: Young Woo Kang (left) and Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg*





# Alumni and Student Achievements Celebrated

On April 17, 2008, the School of Education honored alumni and students at its annual awards ceremony. The following individuals were recognized for their professional and academic accomplishments. A new award was added this year for an outstanding pre-K–12 educator.



Left to right: Donna Sanft, Nancy Bunt, Veronica Ent, Alan Lesgold, Nancy Ritcher Brzeski, Dale H. Curry, Madeleine Rybicki, Francesca Amati, Merle Griff, Richard L. Welsh, Regina Holley. Not present: Charlene Dukes

## 2008 Distinguished Alumni Awards

Nancy R. Bunt (MEd '74, EdD '97) and Richard L. Welsh (PhD '73) were recognized as the 2008 School of Education Distinguished Alumni.

Bunt is the program director for the Math and Science Partnership of Southwest Pennsylvania, part of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit. She was recognized for being the region's "voice" for science and math education reform and has been instrumental in reform initiatives for more than 13 years. In her current role, she has brought together hundreds of educators and business and community leaders to further the math and science education reform agenda.

Welsh, retired president of the former Greater Pittsburgh Guild for the Blind in Bridgeville and Pittsburgh Vision Services, which have since combined to form Blind and Vision Services of Rehabilitation Pittsburgh Vision, is a nationally and internationally recognized leader in the field of service to professionals who serve individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Welsh's influence led to the creation of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, the only international professional organization for people who serve individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

## Early Career Award

The 2008 Early Career Award was given to Veronica I. Ent (EdD '01), chair of the education department at Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, Pa. She also is a faculty fellow at the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College, a role in which she works collaboratively to align curricula and develop programs using the center's archives and resources. In 2004, she received Saint Vincent's Quentin Schaut Faculty Award. The award is presented to an outstanding junior faculty member.

## Pre-K–12 Educator Award

Regina B. Holley (MEd '80, PhD '88), principal of Pittsburgh Lincoln 6–8, received the 2008 Pre-K–12 Educator Award for her work in urban schools. Holley's students have a record of consistently high achievement, earning Holley praise from colleagues both locally and nationally. She has earned an exceptional level of respect from parents and members of the community in which her school is located. She also has been a consistent supporter of the School of Education through informal student recruitment.

## Departmental Alumni Awards

Departmental awards were given in administrative and policy studies, health and physical activity, and psychology in education.

## Department of Administrative and Policy Studies

Charlene M. Dukes (MEd '87, EdD '92) received the Department of Administrative and Policy Studies Distinguished Alumni Award. Dukes is the eighth—and first female—president of Prince George's Community College (PGCC) in Largo, Md. Previously, she served as dean of students at the Allegheny Campus of the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) in Pittsburgh and as an adjunct faculty member at PGCC and CCAC, and in the Community College Leadership Doctoral Program at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Md. Dukes recently was appointed by the governor to the Maryland State Board of Education, and she served on the Prince George's County Board of Education.

## Department of Health and Physical Activity

Donna Sanft (BS '74, MEd '89) received the Department of Health and Physical Activity Distinguished Alumni Award. Sanft is the executive associate athletic director for Pitt's Department of Athletics. In her current role, she works directly with University Director of Athletics Steve Pederson on all administrative aspects of the department. In 2007, Sanft was named a recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Staff Excellence for her service to the University. This award recognized Sanft's truly exceptional commitment and dedication to Pitt and its student-athletes.

## Department of Psychology in Education

Three individuals were recognized in the Department of Psychology in Education.

Dale H. Curry (MS '80) is a tenured associate professor of human development and family studies in the School

of Family & Consumer Studies at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. He is recognized nationally for his efforts and research in child and youth work and child welfare training, particularly in the area of transfer of training. Curry serves as the editor of *Training and Development in Human Services* and coeditor of *The Journal of Child and Youth Care Work*. He has served as a board member of the National Staff Development and Training Association and as president of the Ohio Association of Child and Youth Care Professionals, Inc.

Merle D. Griff (MS '76) created SarahCare Adult Day Care Centers, Inc., in Canton, Ohio, in 1985. She pioneered the notion of an intergenerational aspect to adult day care and currently serves as the organization's chief executive officer. Today, SarahCare is recognized as a model for adult day care services and has 22 locations across the country. Griff was named 2005–06 chair of the National Adult Day Services Association and was an Ohio delegate to the 2005 White House Conference on Aging.

Madeleine Rybicki (MS '71) is the director of training at Holy Family Institute in Pittsburgh. Recently, she played a major role in the pilot testing for certification of the Ohio Association of Child and Youth Care Professionals. Rybicki has received numerous awards, including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Staff Development and Training Association in recognition of her commitment to the profession of human services training. Over the years, Rybicki has taught courses for the Department of Psychology in Education, worked with its faculty, and been involved in its various child and youth work projects.

## Falk Laboratory School Outstanding Alumni Award

The Falk Laboratory School Outstanding Alumni Award was given to Nancy Richter Brzeski, an artist and teacher. Brzeski lives in Davis, Calif., and studied for many years at the University of California, Davis, with Wayne Thiebaud, Bob Arneson, Cornelia Schulz, Squeak Carnwath, William Wiley, and other artists associated with the university. Brzeski has presented at 12 juried art shows of the International Association for the Study of Dreams since 1987; has had three one-woman shows in Davis; and has participated in a group show in Oakland, Calif. She has offered innovative approaches to art and creative writing to children in grades K–12 in Davis. In 2007, she returned to Pittsburgh to teach a series of art and writing classes at Falk. Brzeski graduated from Falk in eighth grade in 1938.

## Student Leadership Award

Francesca Amati received the Student Leadership Award. Amati is a doctoral candidate in exercise physiology in the Department of Health and Physical Activity. Her doctoral studies are focused on three main areas: the preventive and therapeutic effects of exercise on insulin resistance, novel technologies and their use in noninvasive physiological measures, and the methodology of clinical research. Amati sits on a number of committees at the School of Education, including the research committee. She holds a BA degree from College Rousseau in Geneva, Switzerland, and an MD degree from the University of Geneva. ■



Alumni Updates

1960s

**C. Dianne Williams Colbert** (BS ‘68, MEd ‘71, EdD ‘73) has been named the director of the Pitt Engineering Career Access Program’s precollege component in the University’s Swanson School of Engineering. This program, also known as INVESTING NOW, is a pipeline for underrepresented students in the STEM— or science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine— majors. Participating students attend hands-on science workshops and receive tutoring and academic support counseling in advanced placement math and science classes. Colbert previously was a faculty member in Pitt’s School of Education, education services director with WQED tv13, and community relations director at the Community College of Allegheny County.

1970s

**Douglas McMillan** (BA ‘77) is in his third year of teaching English at Archbishop Curley High School in Baltimore, Md. He previously taught high school English for 19 years and served as chair of the English department for 18 years at Bishop Grimes Junior/Senior High School in East Syracuse, N.Y.

**Daryl J. DeLuca** (MEd ‘78) recently was promoted to assistant dean of students at Boston University. He previously held the position of director of judicial affairs.

1980s

**Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko** (BS ‘80) was sworn in as governor of Sokoto State in Nigeria in May 2007. After studying all around the world, he returned home to enter the field of politics.

**Alice Phillips** (MEd ‘82) has been an ordained Presbyterian pastor for the past 13 years and directs an after-school program at her church. Previously, she taught seventh- and eighth-grade students in the Delaware City Schools in Delaware, Ohio.

**Norman A. Stahl** (PhD ‘83), professor and chair of the Department of Literacy Education at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Ill., recently became the president of the National Reading Conference.

**Robert Land** (PhD ‘84) received an Outstanding Professor Award at California State University, Los Angeles, in October 2007. He also received the 2007 National Council of Teachers of English Alan C. Purves Award for his article in *Research in the Teaching of English*. He cowrote the article “A Cognitive Strategies Approach to Reading and Writing Instruction for English Language Learners in Secondary School.”

**Richard Joseph Herdlein** (PhD ‘85), associate professor at Buffalo State College in Buffalo, N.Y., has been appointed chair of the school’s student personnel administration department. He also was honored for his contributions to the profession by the College Student Personnel Association of New York State at its annual professional conference in Albany, N.Y., in October 2007. Herdlein has coauthored an article accepted by the *Journal of Negro Education*, “Deans of Women at Historically Black Colleges and Universities: A Story Left Untold.”

**James Joyce** (MEd ‘87) has edited a recently published book, titled *The Bicycle Book: Wit, Wisdom & Wanderings*. For the past 20 years, he has been an orientation and mobility instructor for the Pennsylvania Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services.

**Linda Norris** (MEd ‘87, PhD ‘92) won the 2007 National Council of Teachers of English Richard A. Meade Award for her book, *Unpacking the Loaded Teacher Matrix: Negotiating Space and Time between University and Secondary English Classrooms* (coauthored with S.J. Miller). The annual award recognizes the best published research investigating English/language arts teacher development. Norris is an associate professor of English education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

**William Stoddart** (BA ‘89) is an education services consultant with the Internal Revenue Service in the Pittsburgh training complex.

1990s

**Joseph Peters** (PhD ‘90) is one of the 2007–08 American Council on Education fellows being mentored by University of Florida President J. Bernard Machen. At the University of West Florida, Peters serves as the associate dean in the College of Professional Studies, coordinator of the university’s doctoral program, and the chair of teacher education.

**Burhanuddin Tola** (MA ‘90, EdD ‘98) recently was appointed the director of the Centre for Educational Assessment for the Ministry of Education of Indonesia.

**Michael Smith** (PhD ‘95), who teaches eighth-grade earth science at Wilmington Friends School in Wilmington, Del., was named the 2007 Outstanding Earth Science Teacher from Delaware by the National Association of Geoscience Teachers. He also was among 40 people selected in 2007 by GeoCorps, part of the Geological Society of America, to work as a geologist at the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument. During this time, he wrote a middle school earth science curriculum module called Geological Adventures at Parashant. It is available online at [www.nps.gov/para/forteachers/geoventures.htm](http://www.nps.gov/para/forteachers/geoventures.htm).

**Thomas Staszewski** (EdD ‘97) is the dean of academic services at Mercyhurst North East in North East, Pa. He recently authored the book *Total Teaching: Your Passion Makes It Happen*, which honors and celebrates the accomplishments of today’s educators.

2000s

**Joshua Irzyk** (MEd ‘01) is a teacher at the Maryland School for the Blind and is working on his EdD in educational leadership at the University of Phoenix School of Advanced Studies.

**Sara Jones Yoder** (MAT ‘03) was named one of the 2007–08 101 Honorees by the Teacher Excellence Center in Pittsburgh, Pa. The center received more than 3,000 nominations from 82 districts in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Yoder is teaching advanced placement psychology in the Beaver Area School District.

**Benjamin Cook** (MS ‘04) recently was recognized among the 2007 40 Under 40, a program cosponsored by the Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Project and *Pittsburgh Magazine* that recognizes individuals under the age of 40 who are working to enrich the Pittsburgh region through their professional or volunteer efforts. Cook, who was recognized for being a mentor for sexual minority teenagers, is a child advocacy specialist with KidsVoice, a nonprofit agency that assists children in the juvenile justice system.

**Chad Lowman** (BS ‘05) completed his doctoral degree in physical therapy at Chatham University. He is working in the skilled nursing/neurological rehabilitation department at Mercy Jeannette Hospital.

**Lashondra Renae Myles** (EdD ‘05) recently began her new position as the assistant athletics director and senior woman administrator at Southwest Baptist University.

**Kelly Green** (CERT ‘07) is teaching first grade at New Hope Academy in Landover Hills, Md. ■



# In Memoriam

**Deborah J. Aaron**, associate professor in the School of Education's Department of Health and Physical Activity, died April 23, 2008. Aaron, who was 51, had been battling cancer.



Aaron earned a master's degree in public health at Pitt in 1991 and added a PhD in epidemiology in 1994. She then served a postdoctoral fellowship in public health

and information technology with Ronald LaPorte and completed a master's degree in information science in 1997.

With LaPorte, Aaron was among the developers of the Supercourse online repository of public health lectures. His remembrances of her, along with a growing list of tributes, have been posted on the site at [www.pitt.edu/~super1/deb.htm](http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/deb.htm).

Jere Gallagher, associate dean in the School of Education, recalled Aaron's helpfulness and selfless concern for her fellow faculty members' progress. "She worked with everybody," Gallagher said. "She helped them get to the next level."

Epidemiology professor Andrea Kriska remembered Aaron as a truly kind person. "She never stepped on toes moving forward," Kriska said.

She also characterized Aaron as a solid researcher. "She knew her stuff and she spoke with data behind her," Kriska said.

Aaron wasn't afraid to dive into areas of research that others wouldn't, Kriska said, noting that among Aaron's research grants was funding for studies on lesbian health.

Nina Markovic of the School of Dental Medicine attended graduate school with Aaron, and they later became coprincipal investigators, working together on lesbian health research, including the Epidemiologic Study of Health Risk in Lesbians, or ESTHER. Markovic said that study was the first federally funded research project that included clinical data collection comparing cardiovascular risk factors between lesbian and heterosexual women.

Markovic said Aaron's work had global reach. In addition to the Supercourse project, which "influenced the health and well-being of people of every nation," Markovic said, their lesbian health research necessarily prompted them to make connections in other cities, including Boston, San Francisco, and Chicago.

Markovic said Aaron's illness forced the cancellation of a sabbatical this spring. She had planned to expand collaborations to Australia, where national health data that include sexual orientation are available.

On a personal level, Markovic said that Aaron "demonstrated it was okay just to be a nice person. She was a genuinely nice person."

Fellow research collaborator Michelle Danielson of the Department of Epidemiology said she and Aaron became fast friends as graduate students and that the friendship continued as their academic careers at Pitt developed in parallel.

She recalled Aaron as meticulous, organized, and a consummate professional as well as an effective mentor to many students—not only at Pitt, but also

those at other universities who had similar scholarly interests.

"She set the bar high and she was quite demanding, but she was fair and supportive. Her students were absolutely prepared," Danielson said, adding that Aaron's master's and PhD students were among the best to come out of the department.

As a mentor, Aaron gave her students opportunities to network and to present research at meetings, Danielson said. She shared her data so her students could write papers and "really fostered their growth," she said.

Beyond her career, Danielson said, Aaron loved to travel, loved her pet dogs and cats, and was very close to her family.

She is survived by her mother, Joyce A. (Marshall) Aaron, and sisters Sue A. Aaron, Teresa Fitzgerald, and Becky Park.

A memorial service was held on June 13 in Heinz Memorial Chapel; a reception was held afterwards at Wesley W. Posvar Hall.

Memorial donations can be made to support graduate students in the Department of Health and Physical Activity by contributing in Aaron's name to the University of Pittsburgh School of Education, Office of Development, 516 Wesley W. Posvar Hall, 230 South Bouquet Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15260. Donations also are suggested to the UPMC Cancer Centers Patient Assistance Fund, Development Department, UPMC Cancer Pavilion, Suite 1B, 5150 Centre Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15232.

Reprinted in part with permission from the *University Times*, May 1, 2008

**Frieda K. Hammermeister**, emerita professor in the School of Education, died Oct. 25, 2007. She was 81.

Hammermeister's career was devoted to education of people with hearing impairments. "She really developed the deaf ed program here at Pitt," noted Steven Lyon, associate professor of instruction and learning. Well known in a small field that is closely tied to the deaf community, "she did a lot of work locally and around the country to establish quality programs at the university level," he said.

Colleague and friend Ralph Peabody, professor emeritus, recalled Hammermeister as a charming person who was sharp, well schooled in her area of expertise, and well connected both locally and nationwide. "She was a well-respected administrator within the School of Education," he said.

Her talent in photography complemented her love for travel, Peabody said. "She always had to go someplace new," he said, adding that her office frequently was adorned by her travel photos.

Hammermeister received bachelor's degrees in English and German, master's degrees in English literature and special education, and a PhD in special education and rehabilitation, all at Pitt. After serving as a lecturer at a school for the hearing impaired in Bombay, India, Hammermeister taught at the Edgewood School and the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf before becoming a faculty member in Pitt's Department of Special Education. Later, as a professor in

the Department of Instruction and Learning, she also was coordinator for education of the hearing impaired.

Her administrative duties at Pitt also included coordinating grants for several programs and chairing the division of specialized development within the School of Education.

She retired from Pitt in 1992.

She is survived by a brother, Rudolf Hammermeister of Pittsburgh; three nieces and nephews; and great nieces and nephews.

The family requests memorials be made to a charity of the giver's choosing.

Reprinted with permission from the *University Times*, November 8, 2007

**Dorothy Morten** (BA '29), 99, passed away on November 21, 2007. Morten grew up in the Mount Oliver neighborhood of Pittsburgh and taught junior high school in North Braddock and Coraopolis, Pa.

**Tyrene Livingston**, a Pitt student working on a Master of Arts in Teaching degree in social studies, died in a car accident at the age of 21 in October 2007. Before the accident, she had been on her way to her internship at McKeesport Area High School, where she was teaching 11th-grade American cultures classes.

Livingston was loved by all who had the pleasure of knowing her. Friends described her as ambitious, confident, respectful, unselfish, encouraging, and a leader. She was an integral member of the organization Facilitating Opportunity and Climate for

Underrepresented Students, or FOCUS, an undergraduate student group founded to strengthen the retention rate among underrepresented students. Livingston was very supportive of other students, often setting up study sessions to help her and her classmates through their course work. She tried to motivate those around her to do their best, not only in school but also in life.



Through FOCUS, Livingston helped to coordinate a graduate school tour for underrepresented Pitt students. Even after beginning

graduate school, she kept in touch with the students involved in FOCUS and remained interested in what they were doing.

As a student teacher, Livingston was considered a role model. She was dedicated to her students and commanded their respect. She always went out of her way to help them and show them that they could be something wonderful.

Livingston earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology from Pitt in April 2007. She graduated from Holy Trinity Diocesan High School in Hicksville, N.Y., in 2003.

**Donna Johnson Stickler** (BS '71, MEd '74, MEd '85) passed away on November 14, 2007, in Sarasota, Fla.

**Jon Vincent Vecchio** (BS '98) died in December 2006. ■



# Get the latest on the School of Education

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*School of Education Dean Alan Lesgold enjoys an ice sculpture of himself at the 2008 School of Education graduation celebration.*



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