NET-Q MAKES WAVES IN METRO ATLANTA AND BEYOND
Dear COE Alumni and Friends,

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The Network for Enhancing Teacher Quality (NET-Q) project has extended our work in teacher development for Georgia’s children. We provide hands-on teacher training workshops throughout the state — training that reaches approximately 8,000 Pre-K teachers a year.

Our momentum is now too great to be slowed or deterred. Thank you for your part in getting us, and keeping us, on this cycle of accomplishment.

Our Best Practices training unit is the single most important ingredient for improving early child in Pre-K classrooms.

The quality of work that our faculty and students are doing is demonstrated by the work of our alumni. Harin Korb (M.S. ’03) has started a nationwide organization for young women and girls with disabilities that offers camps to promote healthy lifestyles and empowered choices. Ping-Tung Chang (Ph.D. ’77) is a Carnegie Foundation 2010 U.S. Professor of the Year (one of only four nation-wide to win this award). And David Sousa (M.Ed. ’06) is a career changer who, after working in the software industry for years, decided to get an education degree and pursue a career in teaching.

Norcross, Ga.

Our Best Practices training makes statewide impact.

Our international partnerships are thriving as evidenced by our initiatives, such as Leadership Residencies, Cross Career Learning Communities and our partnership with Georgia Public Broadcasting. Our international partnerships are thriving as evidenced by our conversation with peace activist Ela Gandhi, and our collaborations and initiatives in South Africa at Durban University of Technology, Stellenbosch University and University of Pretoria, among others.

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While in college, Kathryn Heller volunteered at an after-school program for students with physical and multiple disabilities such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida and muscular dystrophy. Now a registered nurse and professor in the Department of Educational Psychology and Special Education, she didn’t know much about special education at that time, but to her, the educational programming seemed lacking and she felt more could be done. That experience stayed with her, even as she pursued a career as a critical care nurse.

**Q:** What made you decide to leave critical care nursing and pursue a career in the education field?

**A:** Nurses often find new and novel ways to use their training and experience. I felt that I could have more of an effect by combining my nursing skills with special education and drawing on both disciplines. I wanted to educate others about children with physical and health disabilities and research effective methods of addressing children’s educational and health needs when physical disabilities are present.

**Q:** Why is it important for students to learn about assistive technology?

**A:** Assistive technology is critical for students with physical disabilities to increase their independence by enabling them to perform tasks that they would be unable to do otherwise. Teachers working with this population of students need to know how assistive technology can be used to increase their academic performance at school and their independence across environments. In addition to their courses, GSU students have an opportunity to gain hands-on experiences working with technology such as alternate keyboard and communication devices, specialized software programs and self-feeding devices, in an assistive technology lab I started years ago in the COE.

**Q:** What other research projects are you working on?

**A:** My primary research interest is in providing effective educational instruction and health care for students with physical or health disabilities. Currently, I am examining effective literacy instruction and assistive technology issues for students with physical disabilities. I am also starting on a new project with some colleagues on examining supports for teachers who have children with degenerative diseases or terminal illness.

**Q:** What’s the best part about your job?

**A:** Seeing my graduate students effectively address their students’ educational and health care needs and seeing the difference they are making in the lives of their students.

— Angela Turk
The College of Education began with a simple goal: To create a working relationship between the college and K-12 schools in the metro-Atlanta area so educators and those who teach them could have a mutual exchange of ideas.

This idea came to fruition through a five-year, $6.1 million Teacher Quality Enhancement grant that created Professional Development Schools. This grant, called the Professional Development School Partnerships Deliver Success project (PDS’), is a network of schools in six Atlanta-area counties plus two colleges that work with Georgia State University to share current research, professional development opportunities and strategies to improve student achievement.

But the College of Education didn’t stop there, according to Gwen Benson, associate dean for school and community partnerships and principal investigator for the grant.

In spring 2009, COE faculty and administrators, the PDS grant director, and district leaders met to discuss and apply for an even larger grant affecting many more institutions in both rural and urban settings.

From that, the Network for Enhancing Teacher Quality (NET-Q) project was born. “We leveraged our experience with PDS’ to obtain the NET-Q grant, which is the fifth largest of the 28 awards for this grant program in the United States,” said William Curlette, director of evaluation and research for both grants.

NET-Q, which is funded by a $13.5 million Teacher Quality Partnership grant from the U.S. Department of Education, is a collection of programs, partnerships, initiatives and incentives designed to not only prepare teachers for the demands of teaching high-need subjects in high-need schools but to give them the support they need once they set foot in their classrooms.

“We looked at everything we would want in an ideal partnership,” said Dee Taylor, project director for NET-Q. “We wanted to address high-need content areas and build a support system for new and veteran teachers, along with leaders.”

The COE is spearheading this task in true collaborative fashion, partnering with six metro-Atlanta school districts, 23 rural districts in south and west Georgia, four Georgia colleges, Georgia Public Broadcasting, and the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future in its efforts to train, support and retain quality teachers.

Many of NET-Q’s initiatives, including the Georgia Public Broadcasting Digital Partnership Collaborative, the Leadership Residency and the Cross Career Learning Communities, are making waves throughout the state and are sure to make an impact even beyond Georgia’s borders.
Maureen Corley, a scriptwriter from Georgia Public Broadcasting, asked about the teachers’ experiences in their first year of teaching — how they felt when they struggled, what they needed from their mentors in the field and how they communicated with their colleagues and their students.

She heard a number of stories about establishing relationships with mentor teachers and anecdotes about challenging classrooms and the pressures they faced in those first few months of teaching.

“When you first start, you’re expected to know and do what teachers who have been teaching for decades know and do,” one teacher explained.

“It takes a good six weeks from the first day to begin feeling comfortable at the front of the classroom,” another teacher chimed in.

All of these stories gave Corley an inside look at the issues new teachers face when they begin their teaching careers.

And they made it easier for her to tackle her next assignment: To create instructional videos for professional development on becoming a mentor teacher.

This collaboration, called the Georgia Public Broadcasting Digital Partnership Collaborative, seeks to reach out to teachers on a state and national scale through a series of online learning resources. By creating videos about building relationships between new teachers and their mentors, the Collaborative can offer training support to mentor teachers across Georgia and the country.

“These videos will cover different topic areas teacher mentors need to know,” said Caitlin McMunn Dooley, assistant professor in the COE’s Department of Early Childhood Education. “In discussing what subjects we would cover in these modules, we realized how much we needed teacher mentor training. This was in high demand at the school district level and is something we believe is worthwhile for a national audience.”

While teachers at Nesbit Elementary and faculty from the College of Education offered their classroom expertise, Corley and Meghan Welch, a College of Education doctoral student who works at GPB, brought their experience in writing and filming to the table.

They will take what they’ve learned from the meeting at Nesbit and from research publications, national experts and other resources at Georgia State and turn it into an informative and entertaining script with dialogue that sounds natural and engaging to the audience, Welch said.

Once the scripts are finalized, the team will scout schools in Georgia for the right location to film these videos. Each online video will tackle a different mentor teacher issue and will connect to discussion questions and print, video and audio resources for teachers to use.
The front office at most schools is the gateway to the principal, assistant principals and other staff members who help the school function on a daily basis.

But for College of Education post-graduate students Chris Canter and Emily Thomas, the front office is a training ground — the place where they are finding out what it really means to lead a school of teachers, staff and students.

During the 2010-2011 school year, Canter and Thomas are rotating among different elementary, middle and high schools and assisting principals and assistant principals with administrative duties, all thanks to NET-Q’s Leadership Residency Initiative.

This residency gives them a comprehensive understanding of all that’s involved in running a school, from the first day of classes to wrapping up the school year. Both Canter and Thomas function as part of the administrative team, but with a mentor to help them better learn and hone essential leadership skills.

“There’s plenty of literature on how teachers affect student achievement, but it’s less clear how leaders do so,” said Jami Berry, COE clinical assistant professor of educational leadership. “Through NET-Q, we are working closely with our partnering school systems to develop candidates who have strong skills and who are meeting the needs of their students.”

Canter, a former English teacher, has spent time in Mimosa Elementary School in Roswell, Ga., and McNair Middle School in Atlanta, working with the administrative staff and making a difference in how those schools are run.

One of his first tasks at Mimosa Elementary was to conduct ethics training, familiarizing the staff with the Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators as well as Fulton County policies and procedures. He has also participated in informal classroom observations, worked with teachers to create differentiated lesson plans, and formulated behavior plans for students.

Similarly, Thomas, a former assistant principal for instruction, spent her residency at two urban high schools in DeKalb County — Arabia Mountain High School in Lithonia and McNair High School in Atlanta — and contributed to several different administrative tasks, from developing an after-school program for students to monitoring classroom instruction and working with small groups of teachers. She worked with McNair’s Parent Center and has participated in several professional learning conferences at Georgia State University through the College of Education’s Principals Center.

As Thomas has observed, a leader residency program can have a domino effect, not just on the residents, but on the administrators, teachers and students in a school, and on universities by giving them a better understanding of how to train future school leaders.

“This component allows colleges to strengthen their teacher preparation programs since participants are able to work within real schools to confront real issues and challenges,” Thomas said. “The leadership residency ensures that school leaders will be prepared to use research-based practices to support teachers, which in turn improves student learning and academic success.”

With its variety of hands-on tasks and prolonged time in several different school settings, the year-long residency is giving Canter and Thomas the chance to hone their skill sets before going into the field.

“Too often, potential leaders are placed in positions without proper training,” Canter said. “They have great skills and abilities, but they have not had the opportunity to practice and refine them. It is necessary to know what you’re getting into and to have some experience handling all sorts of issues, challenges and job duties.”

Canter, who aspires to be an assistant principal, feels the leadership residency is giving him this vital experience.

“I know when I have finished this residency, I will have experienced many situations that will contribute to my ability to begin day one as an assistant principal with a good foot forward,” he said.
The best teachers — those who truly impact their students and whom students remember long after they’ve graduated — are the ones who know that learning is a lifelong process. These are the educators who reflect on the lessons they teach and identify the best ways to get their students to understand the material.

Teachers who want to improve their practice and start an honest dialogue about improving student achievement can do just that through NET-Q’s Cross Career Learning Communities (CCLCs) initiative. The College of Education first implemented CCLCs in professional development schools in the metro-Atlanta area as part of its PDS2 grant. Now, under the direction of Connie Parrish and Susan Taylor, CCLC coordinators for the NET-Q project, the college is partnering with Columbus State University and Albany State University to offer these same learning communities to teachers in nearby rural school districts, including Marion, Chattahoochee, Mitchell and Calhoun counties.

“It’s a professional learning group that provides a safe haven for teachers and administrators to bring their work together and look at ways of improving that work using specific protocols,” said Roger Hatcher, director of the Center for Quality Teaching and Learning at Columbus State University.

CCLC members attend regular meetings in their schools to discuss everything from achievement data and lesson plans to student work samples and professional dilemmas.

Gwen Williams is the NET-Q project coordinator who will help Albany State launch CCLCs in Mitchell and Calhoun counties this summer. “Teachers bring their work to the meetings and they are trying to figure out how to move their students forward academically,” she said. “All of the conversations about solving problems center on the work they’re doing in classrooms and determining the best practices to use.”

In CCLC meetings, members use a set of protocols for conversations about teaching and learning. These guidelines are used to structure discussions and help teachers address and find solutions to the issues they face in the classroom.

“This is the key to the various protocols that are used in these group meetings that protect the teachers’ integrity,” Hatcher said. “These communities are not meant to criticize teachers — they’re designed to give teachers a place to talk about what they need to improve.”

In addition to improving teaching skills and student achievement, CCLCs are designed to foster a culture of collaboration and give teachers a sense of community.

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This has already begun in Chattahoochee and Marion counties, where CCLCs affiliated with Columbus State have been in place for more than a year.

Sandi Veliz, assistant principal at Chattahoochee County High School, believes that CCLCs have given her faculty the chance to connect and solve problems in a structured environment.

“This type of professional development has brought our faculty closer as a group as well as allowed for individual and departmental growth,” she said. “Rarely do faculty have the opportunity for the reflection and collaboration that result in true growth.”

Above left: Gwen Williams, Susan Taylor and Connie Parrish, Cross Career Learning Communities coordinators, help schools develop structured discussions among teachers that address and find solutions to issues they face in the classroom.
IN MY OWN WORDS: Nicole White

Paris, Madrid, Cordoba, Seville, Grenada — these cities are places that students read about but rarely have the opportunity to experience.

As I boarded the plane to start my journey to France and Spain with the Early College Program, I thought about what I expected to gain from this trip.

The idea of visiting a different country was incredible in itself, but to really experience another culture was eye-opening.

During our journey in Paris, we saw famous paintings such as the Mona Lisa — artwork we had read about now on display before us. As we traveled south to Madrid, we experienced our first bullfight — an event we did not expect to be as gory and brutal as it was. These were activities that many of my peers dream of experiencing, and now we were living it.

I came back to the United States with a different appreciation of the smallest things, like the importance of learning about other cultures. We have so many opportunities offered to us at such a young age that we would be remiss and foolish not to take advantage of them. When life presents these opportunities to me in the future, I will try my very best to welcome them with open arms.

The Language of Mental Health

COE researchers help define psychological well-being in Mexico

How do you define a psychologically healthy child? The answer might depend on where you live. That’s why researchers from the College of Education’s School Psychology Program are participating in an international project to gather culture-specific information regarding mental health of youth around the world. The study, Promoting Psychological Well-Being Globally, is sponsored by the Society for the Study of School Psychology and the International School Psychology Association.

For their part in this effort, College of Education faculty Catherine Cadenhead and Kris Varjas, along with doctoral student Lisa Wells and COE graduates Catalina Morillas and Ashley Morris, traveled to Mexico, where nearly 32 percent of the population is under age 15.

“There is limited information regarding the mental health of these children,” says Cadenhead, associate professor of school psychology. “What we found in Mexico — and I think this is generally true for impoverished countries — is that psychological well-being is really on the back burner.”

In speaking with professionals from sociology, health, psychology and education, Cadenhead says, they found that terms such as “mental health” and “mental illness” were not typically used by the general population in Mexico.

“There’s not a very sophisticated language for talking about individuals who might have issues in terms of their psychological well-being,” Cadenhead said. “They don’t really talk about depression or anxiety or bipolar disorder or ADHD or any of those kinds of terms that we would use to label psychological issues.”

Not using specific terms for a wide range of conditions does not mean they don’t exist, however.

The study found that stressors influencing the mental health of children and adolescents in Mexico include family difficulties, homelessness, child labor, separation from adult caregivers and lack of human rights. And these conditions result in negative mental health outcomes such as depression, withdrawal, school truancy and behavioral aggression.

Factors affecting mental health assistance include marginalization, discrimination, poverty, lack of health insurance, social stigma and lack of adequate services.

The study found that schools in Mexico have limited mental health resources (e.g., counselors and psychologists), yet schools were still seen as a primary source of support for delivery of mental health services for youth.

Cadenhead says her group collected data in two phases. Results from the first phase with professional stakeholders will be published in School Psychology International. They are still in the process of analyzing results from the second phase, which included children, parents and school administrators.

“There’s a term in Mexico, simpatía, which in general refers to just being able to get along with people,” Cadenhead says. “The overall sense is that’s what they’re looking for — for people to be generally agreeable with others. The term and outcome are very culture-specific.”

Once the research is concluded, mental health professionals and educators in Mexico will have a more complete picture of how to better assist children with psychological issues based on their culture’s definition of mental health.
In middle school, Devin Thornton often spent his afternoons staying late after class to help, getting to know his teachers. But he didn’t truly consider becoming an educator himself until his eighth grade science teacher suggested it.

“I gave him a suggestion for how to decorate his classroom and he said to me, ‘You have the heart of a soldier with the brain to teach a nation,’” said Thornton, a graduate of the College of Education’s Department of Early Childhood Education. “I thought about what he said for a few days, and it just hit me — I wanted to be a teacher.”

Thornton had the opportunity to explore this career path further when he and 33 of his classmates attended the College of Education’s first Academy for Future Teachers (AFT) in 2004. The academy, which was funded by the National Science Foundation’s Partnership for Reform in the Instruction of Science and Mathematics (PRISM) grant, gave Thornton, then a rising junior at Booker T. Washington High School in Atlanta, the opportunity to learn about lesson planning and teaching math and science.

“It was a start,” he said. “It gave us all a good behind-the-scenes look at what teachers go through on a daily basis.”

Thornton continued to attend AFT summer workshops through his senior year, when he made the decision to attend Georgia State University to pursue education. And because he already knew the campus well through participation in AFT, the transition from high school to college that fall was easier than it might otherwise have been.

What he didn’t know was that he would continue to attend AFT — this time in an instructional capacity.

“The Atlanta Public Schools liaison for AFT e-mailed me and said she wanted me to be a team leader with the program,” Thornton said. “I’ve enjoyed that experience, and I’ve done it every year since. At first, it was a little challenging because I was only a year or two older than the participants at the time. But I was there to guide them and mentor them, and I always had a good time with the students.”

Thornton watched the program grow and change from the time he was in high school until now, and he believes it has only improved since its inception. High school students who participate in AFT now have the chance to teach in elementary, middle and high school settings and get an in-depth look at how to teach math and science.

In addition to working with AFT, Thornton recently finished his student teaching this semester in a fourth grade classroom at Centennial Place Elementary School in Atlanta. He hopes to join the faculty there or find a similar position at another elementary school in the Atlanta area — as long as he can develop meaningful relationships with his students and work with a supportive faculty like he has so far at Centennial.

“The principal and the staff at Centennial have made me feel like I was a part of the faculty,” he said. “And I’ve been able to develop a good rapport with the students. I’ve loved working there.”

For more information about the Academy for Future Teachers, visit: http://education.gsu.edu/AFT

— CLAIRE MILLER

FOLLOWING THE PATH TO EDUCATION

Devin Thornton was among the first group of high school students ever to attend the College of Education’s Academy for Future Teachers back in 2004.
David Sousa (M.Ed. ’06) had always intended to become a teacher. But it actually took more than 30 years to make it happen, thanks to a career track that led him to Rhode Island’s Providence College to study mathematics as an undergrad, on to the University of Notre Dame for a master’s degree and then straight into the private sector to design industrial software for companies like Eastman Kodak and Mobil Chemical.

By 2002, he had been running his own small software company for nearly a decade, and the idea of teaching had long fallen by the wayside. But when Sousa’s wife was offered a job with an Atlanta-based medical technology firm that would require extensive travel abroad just as their son was about to start kindergarten, it seemed like a good time to make a career change.

Enter Georgia State University’s TEEMS program (short for Teacher Education in English, ESOL, Mathematics, Middle Level Education, Social Studies and Science), which allowed Sousa to transition from the corporate world into the classroom in less than two years and gain teaching experience while earning his master’s in education.

“It really helped to be able to do it in such a short time,” says Sousa, who was hired after graduation to teach math in Norcross, Ga., at Meadowcreek High School, one of the most diverse schools in the state. “And I don’t regret making the change. The truth is, most of the software I wrote when I was in the private sector probably isn’t in use anymore. But teaching is a whole different thing. Who knows when you might change somebody’s life?”

Indeed, when it comes to education, some of the best moments come when you’re least expecting them. Like the time a former student knocked on Sousa’s door to tell him she got a perfect score on the math portion of the state’s high school graduation test.

“She wanted to tell me that,” he recalls. “And that was rewarding because she thought enough about me to let me know that she thought I’d contributed.”

— KARI CROOP

Best Practices trainees Tan Dukes and Rosanna Henderson play a simple game of toss that becomes increasingly complex to reflect the demands of their roles as early childhood educators.

‘YOU MIGHT CHANGE SOMEBODY’S LIFE’

S
tepping off the elevator onto the floor where the Department of Early Childhood Education conducts many of its Best Practices training sessions, you might at first wonder if you are in the right place. Is that the B-52’s “Love Shack” you hear?

Yes it is. That’s just one of the many tunes facilitators might use throughout the day to keep the atmosphere lively as they lead Georgia Pre-K and daycare teachers from one hands-on activity to the next.

But just as it is for children, what looks like play is actually serious business — learning. The overall goal is to ensure that early childhood education in Georgia goes well beyond compliance to quality.

Since 1996, the COE’s Best Practices Initiative, sponsored by the state of Georgia’s Bright from the Start program, has secured more than $20 million in funding to design and deliver mandatory training modules to approximately 8,000 lead and assistant teachers a year — in effect touching the lives of more than 80,000 children statewide.

In addition to conducting sessions at Georgia State, trainers travel several days a week, blanketing metro Atlanta and hitting all corners of the state, charting hundreds of boxes of materials and logging thousands of miles over the course of a training season.

Best Practices Director Sherry Howard, who leads a full-time staff of 22, said the program is continually evolving to stay current — not just with the most recent research and field-tested methods, but with technology.

“When we first started it was mainly workshops,” she said, “and we still do that.”

But now, she adds, the program supplements face-to-face training with videos, podcasts and online courses that reinforce lessons with assignments and an assessment component. “It’s really seen more as professional development for the teachers now,” Howard says.

For Best Practices trainer Maria Samot, there’s an “exponential benefit” to getting teachers together for training. “It’s really gratifying when teachers — and we get this quite a lot — e-mail us stories and pictures of things they’ve learned in training that they’ve implemented in their classrooms and how they might not have thought of this particular idea if they had not come to training,” she said. “That’s fabulous to see.”

— MARGARET TATE

OUTREACH

Inspiring Teachers

Best Practices training makes statewide impact in Pre-K classrooms
Doctoral student Jeremy Cole has seen firsthand how education — or the lack of a quality education — can make a difference in someone’s life.

When he moved to Atlanta, he started working with the refugee community in Clarkston, Ga., where individuals and families from all over the world come to start a new life. Many were fleeing social unrest and unreliable conditions in their home countries and needed to make a new life for their families.

Cole was hired to run after-school and summer programs by Refugee Family Services, a nonprofit organization that helps refugee families achieve self-sufficiency, and he quickly realized that the needs of many of these children were not being met by the public school system. “I saw both the promise of quality education among newly arrived refugees and the clear dangers of a poor education,” he explained. “I also saw the optimism, courage and persistence of these incredible children. Despite long odds — including huge gaps in their education, lack of proper nutrition or, in some cases, access to clean water — these children were hopeful and ready for a better future. And yet, our public school system was not adapting to our rapidly globalizing world and I wanted to know why.”

Cole worked with Refugee Family Services for eight years in various capacities, from tutoring students to serving as a camp counselor in the summer to working with at-risk kids in the juvenile justice system. This experience, on top of his previous social work, prompted Cole to go back to school to study the educational system and look for ways to improve it.

As a doctoral student in the College of Education’s Social Foundations of Education Program, Cole is studying the philosophy and practice of education and how it links to broader social and economic issues such as race, gender, economics and globalization. He hopes to begin writing his doctoral dissertation in early 2012 and will likely focus on international education, which would go hand in hand with the work he’s done thus far.

“Education that helps prepare children to understand and tackle the urgent problems of injustice and unsustainability in our global world is necessary in a geography that is increasingly without borders,” Cole said. “Justice for children — which includes a quality education for all — should be the baseline from which we proceed in all of our national and international policy-making.”
**SYLLABUS**

**EDMT 8420**

Experiencing Ethnomathematics: A Cultural Immersion

The streets in cities like Beirut, Lebanon, Fez, Morocco, and Durban, South Africa, teem with street vendors and craftspeople selling their handmade wares to passersby. Kiosks employ people as young as 8 years old and offer everything from fruits and vegetables to baskets, beadwork, fabrics and ceramics.

These cityscapes reveal indigenous cultures that took root hundreds of years ago, the vestiges of a society where a great many people earn their living with nothing but a few raw materials, their bare hands and pride in the cultural heritage passed on by their ancestors.

It was in this environment that College of Education Assistant Professor Iman Chahine’s passion for education blossomed — where she observed the kinds of lessons people learn outside of the classroom.

In her first year in the COE, Chahine created a study abroad course in which math education students travel to cultural sites in Morocco and/or South Africa and spend time with apprentices and master craftspeople — many of whom have no formal education — to study how they use mathematics in everyday life.

“Imagine students from the math education program seeing mathematics in action with people who have never been to school before,” Chahine said. “It’s good for our college students and students in our schools to see how problem solving evolves. We want the teachers to go and have unique experiences examining the power of mathematics in the lives of ordinary people and to bring back with them tasks that they can use in their own classrooms.”

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**Professor**

Iman Chahine earned her bachelor’s degree in mathematics and her master’s degree in mathematics education from the American University of Beirut in 1985 and 1992, respectively. In her master’s program, she studied street vendors in Lebanon to see how they learned their computation skills. She received her Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota in 2008.

**Prerequisites**

This study abroad course is open to all undergraduate and graduate students, as well as non-credit and transient students. Registration in the course is competitive and high priority is given to early applicants.

**Course Work**

Students will study several examples of mathematical ideas that come from activities such as art and decoration, divination, counting schemes and creating calendars. The course will also touch on the connections between ethnomathematics and mathematics education in schools. Following their time with craftspeople in Morocco and/or South Africa, students will reflect on what they learned from seeing mathematics in practice.

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For more information, visit: [http://education.gsu.edu/international](http://education.gsu.edu/international)

— CLAIRE MILLER

“IT’S GOOD FOR OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS AND STUDENTS IN OUR SCHOOLS TO SEE HOW PROBLEM SOLVING EVOLVES. WE WANT THE TEACHERS TO GO AND HAVE UNIQUE EXPERIENCES EXAMINING THE POWER OF MATHEMATICS IN THE LIVES OF ORDINARY PEOPLE AND TO BRING BACK WITH THEM TASKS THAT THEY CAN USE IN THEIR OWN CLASSROOMS.”

— Dr. Iman Chahine
Bombardier demonstrates the proper techniques for catching and throwing a Frisbee and explains the basic rules of the game.

“In 1968, a group of high school students started the first ultimate Frisbee game,” he tells students before giving them Frisbees to try out.

Bombardier and his daughter, Allison, get ready to leave home for the day. Between taking classes and studying on campus and traveling off campus for a field experience, he’ll tackle a lot before returning home. But he believes planning ahead and keeping track of his schedule make all the difference. “When you have so many things going on during the day, you can miss something if you’re not organized,” he said.

Not that long ago, Dave Bombardier was firmly entrenched in the business world, excelling as a regional sales manager for an international company. But in the back of his mind, he couldn’t shake the idea of becoming a physical education teacher — the other career path he had seriously considered.

As a student in the Department of Kinesiology and Health and head of the health and physical education majors club, Bombardier has quite the busy schedule. His classes take him into metro-Atlanta schools and challenge him to find the most effective ways to teach health and physical education.

The College of Education followed Bombardier around for a day to get a glimpse into his busy life.
Elgin Andrews, a doctoral student in exercise physiology in the Department of Kinesiology and Health, studies programs like the After-school All-stars (ASAS) to assess how they can be geared toward urban youth to increase their overall health.

This comprehensive after-school program, at 10 schools in and around Atlanta, at two of Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed’s Centers of Hope, and at the City of Refuge in partnership with Georgia State University’s College of Education, has had a significant and measurable impact on participating students’ academic performance, and Andrews wants to help these programs promote physical health as well.

“Working with ASAS has allowed me to see how public policy is made, to work with organizations that serve deserving but academically challenged youth and to learn from professionals in the field of nutrition and physical activity,” he said.

For more information on After-school All-stars, visit www.atlafterschoolallstars.org.
A Conversation with
Ela Gandhi

An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind. — Mahatma Gandhi

Above: Ela Gandhi meets Rep. John Lewis, one of the civil rights activists who worked with Martin Luther King Jr. in the 1960s. Right: Ela Gandhi pays homage to Martin Luther King Jr. by laying a bouquet of flowers at his crypt at The King Center in Atlanta. Far Right: Ela Gandhi speaks with COE faculty and guests at a reception held in her honor in the College of Education. Bottom: Ela Gandhi talks with attendees following the Benjamin E. Mays Lecture in October 2010.

In Aug. 15, 1947, 7-year-old Ela Gandhi stood by her grandfather, Mahatma Gandhi, and raised the Indian flag to celebrate the country’s independence from the British. This is just one of the moments that stand out from her three-month stay with her grandfather in India. She easily recalls his warm, loving nature and how much he cared about her and her family.

“My grandfather was a stickler for time and his days were scheduled, but he made time for children,” she said. “One of the things I remember most was the respect he showed us. He didn’t just speak at the top of our heads — he listened and paid attention to us. It was wonderful that a person of his capacity, with the amount of work he had and with all the worries of the world that he carried, he still had that time to pay attention to little kids. To me, those three months were crucial.”

That three-month trip was the only prolonged contact she had with her grandfather before he died in 1948, but his message of peaceful resistance and freedom for all people resonates with her to this day.
Gandhi, a peace activist who serves as chancellor of the Durban University School of Technology in South Africa, was raised in the famed Phoenix Settlement, a communal living settlement in South Africa that her grandfather founded in 1904, and she witnessed firsthand the effects of apartheid, a crippling system of segregation whose name came from the Afrikaans word meaning “separate.”

She learned from an early age to respect all people, regardless of race, gender or religious affiliation, and to fight for freedom from segregation and discrimination.

Her life’s work reflects that commitment to equality — she was elected vice president of the Natal Indian Congress in the 1970s and helped rewrite her country’s constitution after becoming a Member of Parliament in 1994. She also participated in support groups assisting people who had been in prison and spent 15 years as a social worker with Verulam Child Welfare and the Durban Indian Child and Family Welfare Society.

But she’s quick to credit her grandfather and leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela before admitting to her own tremendous impact in South Africa.

“Mahatma Gandhi was an inspiration for both the movement in South Africa and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States,” Gandhi said. “I consider myself very fortunate both for being born in the family and for having the experience of living in the Phoenix Settlement.”

Gandhi had an opportunity to explore the history of King and the Civil Rights Movement in the South — a time in America’s history that closely parallels her experiences with apartheid in South Africa — when she served as keynote speaker for the College of Education’s 22nd annual Benjamin E. Mays Lecture in October 2010.

On her trip to Atlanta, Gandhi toured the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, observing the exhibits about her grandfather and King and even adorning a statue of her grandfather with a garland of red flowers.

“For me, coming from South Africa and seeing the struggle for equality and seeing it both there and in the U.S., there’s a common heritage, a shared history between us,” she said. “Going to Dr. King’s memorial was an emotional and educational experience. Now I’ve seen where it all started.”

The trip to Atlanta was not the first time she’d interacted with the College of Education. In 2009, she met with COE faculty, staff and students who were on a trip to South Africa as part of Georgia State’s Early College Program, which allows high school students to earn college credits before graduation.

COE faculty and staff also traveled to Durban University in summer 2010 to conduct an education symposium on partnerships, leadership training, deaf education and research methods. Faculty and staff from the College of Education and Durban University encouraged collaboration among the South African K-12 principals and university leaders to ensure students receive the best education from infancy through college. The COE plans to continue its collaboration with Gandhi and Durban University to help give schools the resources they need to conduct research.

“Education is an important part of society — you can’t bring about change without it,” Gandhi said.

“I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent.”

— Mahatma Gandhi

“And you can’t look at university-level education and not be concerned with education for children. A child grows and is educated each year to reach the university level, and if there’s a breakdown at any of those levels, they won’t be able to do much when entering college. So we have to find interventions at every level.”

— CLAIRE MILLER

Far Left: Ela Gandhi adorns a statue of her grandfather, peace activist Mahatma Gandhi, located at the National Park Service’s Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site in Atlanta. Right: Ela Gandhi speaks about her work as a peace activist in South Africa with 11Alive News education reporter Donna Lowry during the 2010 Benjamin E. Mays Lecture at Georgia State University. Middle: The Rev. Bernice King, daughter of Martin Luther King Jr. and COE Dean Randy Kamphaus meet Ela Gandhi as a welcome dinner in her honor on Oct. 6, 2010. Bottom: Ela Gandhi stands with representatives from the College of Education, the Gandhi Foundation of USA and other guests in front of the statue of her grandfather.
Within a few days of going live with the site, Gibson received a flood of responses, not only from her loved ones but also from high school classmates she had not seen for more than a decade and even complete strangers. “I received a third of the funds for my trip on the first day,” said Gibson, who graduated from the College of Education’s Birth Through Five Program. “I was blown away by the support I got. It was really humbling to see this outpouring of love.”

By Christmas Day, Gibson had raised enough money to go abroad in the spring. She believes the trip was invaluable in broadening her perspective on teaching. “It’s exciting to learn from other cultures,” she said. “I was there teaching, learning about their pedagogy and seeing how their children learn.”

The study abroad program took Gibson and 12 of her fellow early childhood education classmates to Sichuan Normal University in Chengdu, China. They taught English classes, learned more about the Chinese language and culture and visited several elementary schools and historical sites.

JANNA GIBSON took a creative approach to raising the money she needed for a College of Education study abroad trip that would allow her to complete her last few weeks of student teaching in China. At Morningside Elementary School in Atlanta and took her final classes in the College of Education.

As part of her class assignment, she collected books to donate to underprivileged children in China and even had her kindergarten class participate in the book drive. Gibson’s path to education was by no means direct — she earned an associate’s degree in business from Georgia Perimeter College in 2007 and worked as an executive assistant for a few years before deciding to change her career path — but now her way is clear. She has graduated from a program that has fostered her passion for teaching.

“The Early Childhood Education Department and the Birth Through Five Program in particular have been a perfect fit for me,” Gibson said. “It’s such a tight-knit group and my professors have been supportive and encouraging every step of the way.”

For more information about Gibson’s trip to China, visit: http://helpmeteachinchina.weebly.com/index.html.

To read her blog about her travels, visit: http://happyrails2u.tumblr.com.

— CLAIRE MILLER
I TREAT MY STUDENTS LIKE FRIENDS

When Ping-Tung “P.T.” Chang (Ph.D. ’77) was in high school, his teacher bluntly told him he was not “math material,” making his point with an angry order that Chang re-write the formula he had botched in class 2,000 times so he would never get it wrong again. But that daunting experience didn’t scare Chang away from the subject. Quite the opposite: It pushed him to become the kind of math teacher who would help students instead of humiliate them. And today, he says, he’s living his dream.

“I’m not a big shot though,” he adds with a laugh. “I’m just doing my job.”

The standards Chang sets for himself aren’t typical, however. On weekdays, his alarm goes off at 4 a.m. so he can be in the office by 5 a.m. to grade papers or serve as a liaison to other programs and classes for group exercise as part of an exercise program that devotes its time to raising funds for various nonprofit organizations.

Ping-Tung “P.T.” Chang (Ph.D. ’77), one of only four professors to be named a 2010 U.S. Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation, likes to get his students “talking and laughing about math” and thinking beyond solving the problems in their textbook.

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Karin Korb (M.S. ‘03), herself an inspiration as the one-time No. 1-ranked women’s wheelchair tennis player in the U.S., uses her renown as a platform to promote physical and spiritual wellness, especially among young women and military veterans with disabilities.

‘THE WORK I DO THERE IS SACRED’

Karin Korb (M.S. ‘03), was an active do-gooder long before she devoted her adult life to lifting others up — the kind of person who, as a child, invited the homeless to her house for meals, became the first altar girl in the state of New Jersey and even thought about becoming a nun. But when she broke her back at 17 while practicing a routine gymnastics vault and lost the use of both of her legs, it cemented the notion that her life would have a special purpose. “If you have a platform, I believe you have a social responsibility to facilitate change,” explains Korb, who went on to become the No. 1-ranked women’s wheelchair tennis player in the United States and has used her notoriety to promote physical and spiritual wellness. “And you know what?” Korb says. “If I’m the only person with a discernable disability that you will ever meet in your life, I’d better represent.”

These days, in addition to motivational speaking, Korb is pouring her infectious positivity and seemingly limitless energy into “Divability: Mine, Yours, Ours,” an organization she founded to empower young women and girls with disabilities. She also partners with the Lima Foxtrot Program and the U.S. Paralympic Military Program to work with severely disabled military veterans who have suffered traumatic brain injuries, limb loss and paralysis and actively volunteers with terminally ill patients at the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Home hospice in Atlanta.

At first, Korb’s hospice work was a way to honor her father, who died in 2005 of a rare form of cancer. But the patients she’s met — and the profound insights they’ve shared with her in their final moments — have helped her see her own journey in a whole new light. “The work I do there is sacred, but there’s a duality to it,” she says. “To honor life the way I do is to also honor death the way I do — and everything in between.”

Why I Give

The College of Education has enriched my life immeasurably through the years, and so it is my pleasure to support this institution in every way I can. As a recent graduate of another outstanding university, I began Georgia State to gain a master’s degree in early childhood education. Though I had been well prepared for this advanced degree, I was challenged beyond my expectations in every single class I took. Not only did I learn skills that were specifically applicable to my daily teaching, but more importantly, I gained a love of learning far greater than I had ever possessed. No price tag can be placed on that tremendous gift! I later re-enrolled in Georgia State to study school counseling. It was truly a life-changing experience for me, and with this degree I embarked on a journey of counseling at two outstanding independent schools in the Atlanta area. I give great credit to the professors who shared years of personal experience while encouraging me to be a lifelong learner. I felt well prepared to understand and deal with the diverse situations I encountered in my counseling experiences through the years.

Today, I admire the college for its outstanding professors, its relationships with universities around the world, and its outreach programs, which are touching the lives of many children in the inner city of Atlanta. I am privileged to be able to contribute to the educational experiences of our present students who are called to be the teachers of the next generation.

— KARI CROOP

Vesta Jones  (M.Ed. ’73) Retired Director of Guidance Whitefield Academy
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Hi,

My name is Christine Eckoff and I am the Senior Director of Gift Planning at Georgia State University.

We would like to recognize those who have pledged or donated $100 or more from July 1 through December 31, 2010. We would like to acknowledge their generosity and support of the College of Education.

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Dr. Joe Richardson
Donor and College of Education Emeritus
The College of Education hosted 22 teaching fellows from 10 different countries this spring through the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program.

The program, which is funded by a grant from the International Research and Exchange Board, offers participants an opportunity to pair with a U.S. host teacher and observe classrooms in Atlanta-area schools, develop and teach lessons, and promote international collaboration among educators. The teaching fellows also take part in cultural events and activities, which this year included visits to the High Museum of Art, the Georgia Aquarium, the Fox Theatre and the Martin Luther King Jr. Center.

Abdoullah El Assri, a teacher from Morocco, observes and discusses classroom lessons with Maria Strzelecki, a geography teacher at Cross Keys High School in Atlanta.

For more information about the college and its programs, visit http://education.gsu.edu.