On August 25th 2008 I officially began as Dean of the College of Education at Kean University. Virtually everyone I have come in contact with here at Kean has been extremely welcoming and helpful. Having completed my first semester as Dean, I can say with great pride (and of course, with no bias) that the College of Education is truly a wonderful organization with a myriad of interesting opportunities for growth and development.

There is much to be proud about in the College of Education. First and foremost, we continue to be one of the largest producers of teachers for the state of New Jersey, a statement that is underscored by a commitment to excellence fostered by our faculty, our curricula, and our clinical experiences. It is these clinical partnerships we have with our local school districts, especially our PDS schools, which bring so much to our programs. The Teaching Performance Center, its outreach to local districts, its careful monitoring of students and field supervisors and the integral role it plays with respect to accountability for over 1300 students in the field is extraordinary. Our NCATE Unit Assessment System does exactly what it was designed to do, provide continuous feedback for improvement about the efficacy of the various aspects of our teacher development programs and highlights areas where we need to improve. Our Early Childhood Department is moving forward with some grant ideas that will establish Kean as a resource and training site for Head Start and Early Head Start Programs. An online P-3 endorsement

(Continued on page 5)
Secondary Education in NJ: An Upgrade for the 21st Century

Dr. Gail Hilliard-Nelson, Director, NJ Consortium for Middle Schools

In August of 2006 the New Jersey High School Redesign Steering Committee was commissioned by Governor Corzine to study the critical issues impacting academic achievement in secondary education in NJ. The impetus for this action was a growing concern for the academic requirements of freshman classes, as determined by the ACCUPLACER Computerized Placement Test. This phenomenon is being repeated in institutions of higher education across the state and throughout the country.

The Steering Committee collected data and input from key stakeholders at many levels and geographically across the state. Although there were indicators of strength in Advanced Placement courses and graduation rates, they still found significant areas of concern. In particular, a high number of students don’t complete high school and those who do are inadequately prepared for college and the workplace. On April 25, 2008 the Steering Committee released its findings in a report, NJ STEPS Redesigning Education in NJ for the 21st Century: A Policy Report of the New Jersey High School Redesign Steering Committee.

The Key Recommendations Were:

1. Align New Jersey high school standards and graduation requirements to college and workforce entry requirements.
2. Align assessment with the content students would learn through the proposed NJ STEPS Graduation Requirements.
3. Develop a partnership with key stakeholders to research, identify, and implement appropriate recruitment initiatives for teachers and education leaders.
4. Redesign high schools as “learning communities” that utilize personalized learning approaches to prepare and support students in meeting the new standards and high school graduation requirements.
5. Create a P-16 Council that would work to ensure a seamless and aligned system of public education from preschool through four years of college.

With great passion when presenting these findings to the State Board of Education. She stated that “The Steering Committee has a clear vision for public education in New Jersey, which is to educate all students to prepare them to lead productive, fulfilling lives. The recommendations set forth in this policy paper are the result of extensive research, in-depth consultation with many organizations and individuals throughout the state, and careful consideration of the issues.”

Forty PDSs listened intently to Edward Yergalanis, Assistant Superintendent, speak of his personal journey as a teacher candidate. He described the visibility of a clinical instructor on site for two or more days each week. Each clinical instructor is a certified teacher and administrator experienced in the working vocabulary of schools and learning, who understands the essence of carefully prepared and thoughtful entry level teachers. In the tradition of partnerships, each clinical instructor is selected jointly by a committee of school and university personnel. University students receive intensive weekly supervision, seminars, individualized instruction, mentoring and coaching from the clinical instructor.

Last semester principals and clinical instructors of the Kean PDS Network met for breakfast and discussion. Forty PDSs listened intently to Edward Yergalanis, Assistant Superintendent, speak of his personal journey as a teacher candidate. WHAT’S IN IT FOR US? Mr. Yergalanis believes that the PDS in Rahway High School has led to its culture change brought about by hiring practices, professional development, teacher empowerment, and a changing conversation focused on education. With at least 2 interns in the building at any moment, cooperating teachers, many of whom completed their own Kean internship at Rahway, implement and are committed to best practice in their classrooms.

Nine years later PDSs are alive and well and living in New Jersey. There is much work to continue; each year another component is attempted, expanding the work of the professional development school movement. Spring semester 2009 will bring to a PDS EDUC 4000: Teacher and the Classroom. Nineteen (19) students have enrolled forming a secondary school cohort and providing an other vehicle for the professional development of cooperating teachers, co-instructing with campus faculty, a new element of the university-school partnership.

Partnerships: Building Excellence in Teacher Education

What’s in it for us?” Rahway High School’s teachers asked.


Printed References

Dr. Susan Polirstok Dean of the University’s College of Education

Last summer, Kean University President Dawood Farahi named Dr. Susan Polirstok Dean of the University's College of Education.

“Dr. Polirstok is a recognized leader in the field of higher education and possesses a broad range of experience,” said Dr. Farahi. “She is an excellent candidate to lead our College of Education in our ongoing efforts to train and to prepare the best and the brightest for teaching and administrative positions in the schools of our state and nation.”

Prior to arriving at Kean, Dr. Polirstok, a resident of Fair Lawn, New Jersey, served as Acting Dean and Associate Dean of the Division of Education, as well as a professor of special education, at Lehman College of the City University of New York. A member of the Lehman faculty since 1981, she also formerly served in numerous other leadership capacities, including as chair of the Department of Specialized Services in Education. She also developed courses, designed the curriculum and served as co-ordinator of the graduate programs in Bilingual Special Education, Emotional Handicaps, Mental Retardation and Early Special Education.

Active in many committees at the department, division and college-wide levels, Dr. Polirstok most recently served as chair of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Assessment Committee. She was also a longstanding member of the Division of Education Council, NCATE Steering Committee and the Professional Education Advisory Committee.

A pre-eminent authority on special education and behavioral issues and a prolific researcher, editor and writer, Dr. Polirstok has published on a broad range of special education issues, parent advocacy, and faculty development. She has also been a longitudinal consultant for staff development, as well as former behavioral and special education consultant, for the New York City Department of Education and the Osi Institute in Troina, Sicily. Dr. Polirstok has also served as a manuscript reviewer for Educational Psychology Review; a member of the national editorial board for Exceptional Children; the journal of the New York Association of Colleges of Teacher Education; and a former member of the International Scientific Committee and Editorial Board of Exceptional Children and Disabilities (International Journalal: Learning and Disability).

Dr. Polirstok has also been a frequent presenter and panelist at local, state and national conferences, including the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education National Conference, and the Young Adult Institute International Conference on Individual with Challenges Across the Life-span.

She holds an Ed.D. in Special Education from Columbia University Teachers College, an M.S. in Education with a concentration in Special Education from the City College of New York and a B.A. in English Education from City College of New York.

According to the staff in the Dean's Office, Dr. Polirstok hit the ground running. The consensus is that Dr. Polirstok is engaging, insightful and possesses an engaging sense of humor. She brought with her a great deal of positive energy, optimism and knowledge...and the future looks promising!

The Diversity Council

Joy Prescott

The Diversity Council began as an outgrowth of a teacher education conference in spring 1990 (comprised of Kean University administrators, teachers, and national authors on multicultural education) and a two-day education conference in spring of 1992 (that also included public school administrators and teachers), and was established with an initial membership of 14 public school districts.

Today, the Diversity Council of Kean University is a partnership of over 70 school districts, both public and private, the Holocaust Resource Center, and the Kean University College of Education. It is dedicated to promoting human harmony, understanding and mutual support of issues dealing with diversity and prejudice reduction.

The mission of the Diversity Council of Kean University is to promote the development of just and caring individuals in a diverse democratic society through providing professional development programs for educators and the community on issues of multicultural education, prejudice reduction, Holocaust/genocide education, and human rights. It sponsors five free graduate courses, conducted at urban/suburban school sites and also on Kean’s campus, for teachers from member districts; it sponsors - trips to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, high school student and middle school student conferences for its member districts, and an annual teacher conference featuring national presenters. There are 4 executive committee meet-ings each school year where members brainstorm ideas/suggestions for future programs; these ideas/suggestions are brought to the 4 general membership meetings for dis-cussion each year where representatives also share what is happening in their districts.

The Council continues to support the active efforts of its members and the community by providing knowledge, pro-

Message From The Dean

(continued from page 1)

certificate program is slated to be initiated this coming summer. The Child Care Center is moving forward with adopting the Reggio Emilia model and growing its enrollment by bringing in more children from the larger community. With a new administration in Washington, we look forward to greater investments in early childhood education and services and Kean will be well positioned to be a leader in this area.

Our Departments of Elementary and Bilingual Education as well as Middle and Secondary Education have moved into newly rehabilitated office space in Hutchinson Hall, 3rd Floor. These new department and faculty offices represent a recognition of the numbers of students with whom our faculty work and how this work is valued on the University campus. Our Special Education programs are more and more in demand as district superintendents and school principal-ains are asking our aspiring teachers to come to them with multiple teaching credentials to address the complex needs of children in our schools. The interest on campus in autism services provides a wonderful opportunity for the faculty in this department to take a leadership role with respect to training of teachers, parents, community workers, etc. Our Counselor Education Department is involved in an important grant which recruits teams of counselors and other professionals from various schools to evaluate how effectively their schools sever students and to determine the kinds of changes that will enhance service delivery and student performance. Our Communication Disorders and Deafness Department is currently working on developing a sign language interpreting major for the Kean at Ocean Campus Campus, as changes in licensing requirements will soon mandate a four year degree. We have begun to move forward with the development of a new department of Global Education and Innovation, which will seek to establish a 5 year Bachelors-Masters Program in Global Studies (leading to a teaching certificate in social studies), world languages (Arabic, Hindi and Mandarin), leading to a teacher of foreign language certificate; and world literatures (leading to an English education certificate) which integrates 21st century pedagogy and abroad travel.

There are countless opportunities for professional development taking place at Kean University through our Center for Innovative Education. I have asked the CIE to make professional development opportunities available to College of Education faculty. We can’t ask teachers to make a commitment to continue to grow professionally if we don’t ask the same of ourselves! Finally, I will be starting up a Research and Writer’s Group for the College of Education to help faculty with getting their work published; meeting days and times will be sent out via e-mail.

All in all, I look forward to working collaboratively with the faculty to strengthen our programs and create opportunities for new projects! Let me thank you again for making me feel so welcome here in the College of Education.
Secondary Education in NJ: An Upgrade for the 21st Century

(continued from page 2)

The NJ Department of Education is beginning the process of implementing these recommendations. Last September Commissioner Davy conducted an overall orientation on the redesign of secondary education in NJ, including a process and timeline for the transformation. Then several sessions were conducted for High School Principals, one of which was held here at Kean on October 24, 2008. The Commissioner shared her vision for this transformation and the urgent need for change at the secondary level. The administrators in attendance were also given professional development on Authentic Education by Grant Wiggins, a concept considered a cornerstone in the redesign implementation. Dr. Polirstok, Dean of Kean’s College of Education, welcomed the Commissioner to our campus. She reflected that “The assessment component should provide specific guidance for teachers to improve instruction and student achievement. We welcome the opportunity to participate in this transformation.”

The New Jersey Consortium for Middle Schools and the New Jersey Middle School Association are in agreement that the report and findings of the Steering Committee seem to neglect the middle grades. A letter to the Commissioner pointed out that “there are significant implications for the preparation of students in the middle grades,” especially as the NJDOE includes grades 6-8 in its definition of secondary education. It is hoped that the P-16 Council to be established through the educational process.

NCATE REMINDERS

New NCATE Office Location Hennings Hall Rm 320
For SPA Program Report Submission

TIME LINES & RESPONSIBILITIES

So that the NCATE Office can best assist departments in the processes of researching, evaluating, writing and submitting SPA Reports, please note the deadline dates for submission of the online drafts for each section of the program reports.

Program reports are due in their final submission form to NCATE by September 15, 2009.

In order to meet the final submission date, a calendar for online draft submission of the various sections of the Program Report for Dr. Hoffman to review is on the next page.

All SPA Program Review narrative and documentation must be submitted online and via the NCATE: Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS). Directions to access AIMS and to enter information are included in the SPA Program Review binder. Hands-on training sessions will be held on March 3rd and 5th from 3:15-4:30pm in CSS 104. Attendance for at least one of these sessions is required.

If you have any questions, please contact Jo Hoffman or Pat Klein at 908-737-4266 or jhoffman@kean.edu or pklein@kean.edu

NCATE DEADLINES

Program Review Section

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Dr. Adams is currently teaching biomechanics, kinesiology, and evaluation in physical education on both the Ocean and Union campuses. She strives to apply her practical experiences as a researcher, teacher, coach, and fitness instructor to add a practical component to these scientific courses. Dr. Adams has recently resurrected the Physical Education Majors Club that now has active membership on both the Union and Ocean campuses. Serving as the Student Advisor of the Academic Board of the New Jersey Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (NJAHPERD) has provided her students with a wealth of professional development opportunities. Dr. Adams is also responsible for the Physical Education program and the students at the Kean University Childcare Center. The Physical Education Majors at Kean University have taken full advantage of every opportunity presented to them. Her students are currently involved in research, writing, professional presentations, and various other professional development opportunities.

Students involved in the Majors’ Club play an active role in Dr. Adams’ research and scholarly activity. This year Pam Krimmel, Ray Lepski, Brian Rosania, and Mark Risoa, undergraduate students under Dr. Adams’ advisement, were scheduled to give presentations at “Hands on Health” and the “NJAHPERD Annual State Convention.” Ashley Krug and Pam Krimmel will serve as presiders for presentations at the Eastern District Association of the American Alliance of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance. Ashley and Pam have also assisted with several professional development programs offered to Health and Physical Education teachers in local school districts. Pam Krimmel and Sara Steinman take turns as lead teacher during the weekly preschool Physical Education program. Senior William Sperduto is currently co-authoring an article with Dr. Adams.

Dr. Adams’ success at Kean has been largely due to the conviction of her students and support of fellow faculty and staff. The enthusiasm of her students is infectious. They are always eager for the next professional development opportunity. She has found veteran faculty in her department to be available and willing to provide professional guidance, especially Dr. Bakker and Dr. Palgi. The professional development office and the Tenure Track Faculty Network have also been a source of support and encouragement as a new faculty member at Kean University.

Dr. Nora Pollard always knew she would be a teacher and began working with children with disabilities while in junior high school by volunteering at a Saturday program and summer camp. Coming to Kean University as an eager undergraduate student she began to learn the realities of being a teacher and was even more convinced that she had made the right career choice. The excitement of seeing the children receiving special education services at the Campus School is one of her Kean memories, as were the challenges she faced in completing her degree and getting her first job. Dr. Pollard fondly remembers some of her professors (some of whom are still here) and is thrilled to be working with them in this new phase of her career.

After completing her undergraduate degree and receiving her Teacher of the Handicapped certification, Dr. Pollard began teaching children with disabilities. Always looking for a challenge, she chose to move to some of the private schools for the disabled in New Jersey. Her experiences took her from student teaching with preschoolers with disabilities at the Kohler Development Center (then in Winfield Park) to teaching cognitively impaired adolescents at McAuley School in Watchung. For her next challenge, Dr. Pollard changed positions and began working with children with learning as well as behavior disorders. This was certainly a time of growth and learning, as she also enrolled in a graduate program at Georgian Court University in Lakewood, New Jersey.

With her master’s completed and two new certifications in hand (Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant and Supervisor), Dr. Pollard began working in a public school as a Learning Consultant with responsibilities to diagnose children with learning disabilities and help plan programs that would meet their special learning needs.

Being the “professional student” in her family, Dr. Pollard felt the pull to return to school and was drawn to a program at the Pennsylvania State University. Being awarded a fellowship to study with Dr. Jack Neisworth, one of the biggest names in early childhood special education, sweetened the deal and off she moved to State College, PA, or as it is called “Happy Valley.” The specialized program that Dr. Pollard entered, “Collaborative Leadership in Early Childhood Special Education,” provided training for special educators and school psychologists to work collaboratively to provide services for young children from birth through age eight with special needs. Opportunities abounded during this time in Happy Valley and Dr. Pollard became further involved with her department by supervising undergraduate students in their field placements. In her final year at Penn State, she was given the opportunity to join the faculty as an instructor responsible for supervising special education student teachers and running their seminar sessions. In a record breaking three years, Dr. Pollard defended her dissertation on May 19, 1998 and was awarded her Ph.D. that August.

Coming home to New Jersey was the next move that Dr. Pollard happily made. Since returning to her home state, Dr. Pollard has continued her involvement in special education in various ways. She served for three years as the Director of Special Education in a public school district, and as County Supervisor of Child Study with the State Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. A teacher at heart, Dr. Pollard is happy to be back in academia helping to prepare future special education teachers and learning consultants.

Away from the university, Dr. Pollard loves going into New York City for theater and ballet events. She also enjoys traveling and has visited England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Austria, and Iceland, as well as many states in the United States. She is eager to return to Europe for another vacation.
Physical Education Majors Play an Active Role in Professional Development

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College of Education Digest

Dr. Jessica Adams

Student leaders in the Physical Education Department at Kean University have displayed dedication to professional development, serving students and professionals alike. “I believe professional development activities are a wonderful experience for students to become involved and to demonstrate a sense of commitment. It gives them an chance to network and to take the next step in becoming a Physical Educator. I’m glad that our students under the direction of Dr. Jessica Adams have had that opportunity,” commented Dr. Richard Bakker Chairperson, PERH.

The officers of the Major’s Club have provided our students with the opportunity to order Kean University Physical Education apparel. “Wearing Kean University PE polo shirts allows us to look and feel more confident and professional when representing our school,” said Brian Rosania, past president of the KU PE Major’s Club, during his student teaching.

Physical Education is always represented by students during University events such as the Future Teacher’s Academy, New Student Orientation, Choose a Major Day. This year club officers, Pam Krimmel, Ashley Leoniy, Ashley Krug, and Kyle Dabkowski have teamed up to provide student contact at these events in addition to traditional flyers and program information. They have asked personal touches including photos of club events and invitations to future club activities. Assisting Dr. Bakker in presenting to high school students about the PE Department at Kean University and running a question and answer session for the Future Teacher’s Academy was a rewarding experience. It gave me an opportunity to share my college experience with high school students,” said Ashley Krug a junior in the PE Department.

Since its re-instatement last year by Dr. Adams, the PE Major’s Club has worked hard to provide a variety of professional development opportunities on both the Union and Ocean campuses. Dr. Palgi commented, “the Major’s Club provides a lot of opportunities for our students.” Ray Lepski and Kelly Goodhand volunteered their time on both campuses to present Wii Fit technology to enhance the personal fitness components of physical education. Another joint campus venture in conjunction with student organizations, was our bus trip to Bodies: The Exhibition in New York City. The club has supported presentations by motivational, and sports psychologists with the help of student government and physical education organizations. A free streaming video was provided to all of our majors. This program aligns an alternative physical activity with state and national physical education standards. Since both students and faculty are involved in the activities, these events provide interaction outside of the classroom.

Fellow students have followed the lead of Kyle Dabkowski and Pam Krimmel by playing an active role in our state professional organization. Kyle is currently VP-Elect of the Future Professionals Division of the New Jersey Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (NJ-APHERD) and Pam is President of the Physical Education Major’s Club. In addition to the 26 Kean students who spent their Sunday at the Future Professional’s Workshop this past November, several PE Majors elected to represent Kean as volunteers. Michele Gancedo, Andrew Hollander, Pam Krimmel, Tiffany Kenny, Joe Higley, and Ashley Krug volunteered to run cooperative activity stations for a portion of the program. “Serving as VP-Elect of the future professional’s division has given me experience planning, organizing, and speaking at professional events in addition to working with a lot of great professionals in the field,” said Kyle Dabkowski vice president of the Major’s Club.

Several students are taking professional development to the next level by giving professional presentations this year under the supervision of faculty. Pam Krimmel is giving a presentation on Assessing Weight Related Health Risk in the Classroom at this year’s “Hands on Health Conference.” Students Brian Rosania and Mark Risola are also giving a presentation on Fitness: Making It Personal. This presentation is the culmination of the “Students Partnering With Faculty, Research Award” received by Mark and Brian. Ray Lepski, another senior in the program, is presenting Technology as a window into the heart and Mark and Brian are presenting Evolution of the FIT Program at this year’s NJ-APHERD state convention. “Having the opportunity to attend and present at professional meetings has made me feel like a true professional. I get to learn new and exciting methods of teaching and share knowledge and activities that I have learned at Kean with other professionals in the field,” said Ray Lepski a senior in the Physical Education Department.

Pam Krimmel and Ashley Krug have assisted with professional development sessions for Physical Education Teachers. Fitness: Making It Personal was presented as a full day lecture/workshop at Jefferson Township Public Schools. Physical Education: A Conceptual Approach was presented in a similar format to the K-8 physical education teachers at Manalapan-Englishtown Regional Schools. “I am extremely impressed with the professionalism and enthusiasm of Ashley and Pam. They should be proud of their accomplishments already as just undergraduates, we are confident that they will turn out to be fantastic Physical Education teachers in the future,” stated John Spalthoff, Assistant Principal and Physical Education Supervisor of Manalapan-Englishtown Regional Schools following a professional development presentation.

Thanks to Pam Krimmel and Sara Steinhman, seniors in the PE Department, the KU Childcare Center PE Program has continued for a 2nd year. This program has been able to provide developmentally appropriate physical education to our pre-school students and a positive experience for our future professionals. “It’s a win-win situation. We are able to share our experience with these children while providing a positive experience for future teachers,” commented Dr. Bakker Chair of the Physical Education Department.

The Physical Education Majors have enthusiastically taken advantage of every professional development opportunity provided to them. I am very proud to share that each time we give a presentation someone always asks in disbelief, “Are they really undergraduates? But, they are so professional.” I have received this comment from school administrators and teachers alike. My response is always full of pride and with a proud smile, “yes, they have devoted a great deal of time outside of the classroom and you can clearly see that they love what they do.”

Dr. Jessica Adams is a 2nd year faculty member in the Physical Education Department. She is also the Faculty Adviser to the Physical Education Major’s Club and Co-Adviser to the Future Professional’s Division of NJ-APHERD.

An Occurrence at Glen Rock: Classroom Educators Learn More About Teaching and Learning From the Arts

An article entitled “An Occurrence at Glen Rock: Classroom Educators Learn More About Teaching and Learning From the Arts” by Dr. Joseph Amorino, Art Education Program Coordinator, appears in the November 2008 issue of Phi Delta Kappan. One of the leading and most highly regarded international journals in the field of education, Phi Delta Kappan holds a 95% rejection rate on all submitted articles and rates in the top ten educational and psychological journals in eleven of twelve categories by the American Educational Research Association. Dr. Amorino’s article describes an extended professional development program for k-12 arts and non-arts classroom teachers which he designed and administered when he taught at Columbia University Teachers College. The article demonstrates that the arts represent a complex intellectual engagement which speaks to many of the concerns that face present day educators who are challenged to design instruction which integrates emotional, sensory, kinesthetic, and cognitive processes. The article also repositions the arts as critical, core, and central to global intelligence and suggests the profound insights they can provide as second majors for classroom teachers as well as for future arts/specialist teachers.
Notes from the NTLS
Dr. Michael Seearson
The National Technology Leadership Summit (NTLS) comprises education leaders from across the US (and beyond), representing the areas of educational technology and teacher education. Key organizations that participate include the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), America Educational Research Association (AERA), and the Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE). Additionally, numerous professional teacher associations in content areas, including language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, send representatives to provide valuable input into the two-day discourse.

No fewer than eight academic journals are represented by their editors, who provide Summit participants with background information on their publications and calls for paper submissions. A more comprehensive listing of Summit participants can be found at the following link: http://ntls.info/participants.htm.

Each year special organizations are invited to update summit leaders on the latest news and trends in their areas. For example, this year Lee Ranie, Director of the Pew Internet and American Life Project, presented timely information about contemporary use of emergent media. Also, for the second straight year, the National Science Foundation sent representatives from various grant programs to inform participants on the latest opportunities for funding of new projects.

A major mission of NTLS is to give participants a glimpse into key trends likely to impact educators and education technologists in the near future. This year, the focus of NTLS was informal learning, and what educators and researchers have to say about its potential impact on classroom practice. Educators should expect to see more in-upcoming conferences and journal articles about informal learning, which has long tradition in areas such as cognitive psychology and cultural anthropology, and how they can benefit from the research that has been conducted in these areas.

Another function of NTLS is to provide participants with the latest legislative updates. As it turns out, many members of NTLS are involved in sustained legislative and advocacy activities, and some of them helped to create a recent grant program entitled “Preparing Teachers for Digital Age Learners,” which was signed off by President Bush last summer. Legislative news in Fall 2008 covered the most recent details on “Teacher Quality Enhancement Act” and “No Child Left Behind.” Some NTLS representatives attended a congressional dinner the evening before that honored key legislators who have long supported educational initiatives. This year the dinner, hosted by the Committee for Educational Funding, honored, among others, Senator Robert Byrd and Mrs. Eunice Kennedy Shriver.

In Fall 2008, as part of its tenth-year celebration, NTLS made a special effort to provide broad participation and access to all its members through the use of a variety of Web 2.0 tools, such as blogs and wikis. These tools were used by NTLS participants to plan for the events and to carry out activities prior to, during, and after the summit. As the summit concluded, NTLS participants identified specific activities, such as NTLS Wiki, and conference proceedings submissions, they would commit to in the upcoming year. Many of these activities would be based on inter-institution partnerships, some of which were formed during the summit.

Dr. Michael Seearson is SITE VP and liaison to the NTLS

TOURETTE SYNDROME ASSOCIATION TO CONDUCT WORKSHOP
AT KEAN UNIVERSITY IN SPRING 2009

The College of Education has received a grant from the Tourette Syndrome Association that will enable us to present a 2-hour workshop about Tourette Syndrome and to distribute resource materials at no cost to participating TSA provides essential TS information to educators and families on how to manage Tourette Syndrome in the educational environment. TSA Education Advocacy Program gives families and advocates the tools they need when pursuing the best program options and services for children. The workshop is scheduled for March 11, 2009 from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM in the Wilkins Theater. Faculty members are encouraged to bring their classes to this event. While admission is free, reservations are needed. Please contact the Dean’s Office in the College of Education to make reservations at 908-737-3750 or by email to Maria DeVincentis at mdevince@kean.edu.

New Jersey Distinguished Student Teachers
Dr. Martha M. Mobley
More than 5,000 initially certified teachers graduate from New Jersey’s teacher preparation programs, seven ready and eager to instruct students in their own classrooms.

Among these newly minted teachers were two 2008 Kean University candidates who were restive as distinguished student teachers by the New Jersey Department of Education. Cynthia Ovalle, a graduate Early Childhood major, was nominated for her passionate commitment and dedication to the success of her students. Kate Lynn Walker exemplifies genuine professionalism with ideals, abilities to innovate and implement, and who possesses flexibility and insights to make things happen.

Teacher Work Sample methodology at Kean, a COE requirement, demonstrates teaching performance in relation to the implementation of standards-based instructional unit. Cynthia focused her first graders’ attention on houses people live in while Kate Lynn centered her lessons on America’s poetry in which she downloaded Robert Frost’s poetry in his own pants.

Teaching Student Teachers
Cynthia Ovalle, a graduate Early Childhood major, was nominated for her passion for teaching and dedication to the success of her students.

Kate Lynn Walker was nominated for her knowledge of English content, demonstration of instructional skills, and engaging interpersonal manner.

The College of Education faculty and staff congratulate their new colleagues on this outstanding recognition.

Acting Associate Dean Jo Hoffman
Dr. Jo Hoffman is an associate professor of early childhood education and was named the Acting Associate Dean of Kean’s College of Education in October 2008. From beginning her teaching career in 1991 as a kindergarten and then middle grade teacher to her current post as a teacher educator, her research interest has been in developmentally appropriate practice in the primary grades. Most recently her research interest is in the emerging field that is examining the emotional well-being of the first generation that has grown up with rapidly accelerating demands of digital technology. By investigating this group of young adults, we may better prepare our next digital generation for what seems to lie ahead for them as they make the kinds of choices they’ll need to make as adults in the 21st Century.

Dr. Hoffman is a member of the National Technology Leadership Summit (NTLS) of the International Society for Technology in Education. As a former Site VP for the NTLS and liaison for the Summit to the College of Education, she provides valuable input into the Summit’s activities, including her role as CoE. “One of the best things about being Associate Dean is the wide range of interaction I have with so many dedicated and professional teacher education and liberal arts and sciences colleagues.” This is also true in her work as NCATE Coordinator.

Besides her work here at Kean, Jo is a mother of a son who is a senior at University of Vermont and a daughter who graduated from Kean in January 06 and is teaching in Bridgewater. She lives in Clinton, NJ with her husband who is a longtime broadcast engineer and now has his own business, HiTech Environments. “If I had to pick one thing personally (besides my family) I’d say was interesting about my life outside of Kean it would be in athletics…playing soccer competitively for the last 15 years, running everyday, and skiing – I’ve been a ski instructor and intend to go back to it once NCAE 2010 has passed!”

COE. "One of the best things about being Associate Dean is the wide range of interaction I have with so many dedicated and professional teacher education and liberal arts and sciences colleagues." This is also true in her work as NCATE Coordinator.

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The Inaugural From Dr. Carol Goodman’s Perspective

Where can you go to be with a million other people in a relatively confined space and not have one arrest? The Inauguration Ceremonies of President Barack Obama, that’s where. I had the privilege and honor of being selected to serve as one of about twelve sign language interpreters for the Inaugural festivities, including the Opening Ceremonies, Swearing-In Ceremony, and the Parade. It was truly a spiritual experience that transcended party lines, race and color, and age differences.

Upon receipt of an invitation to apply for the opportunity to interpret, I immediately forwarded my credentials and recommendations and was delighted to be confirmed. On the preceding Saturday, I walked the “mall” and surrounding areas in D.C. to check out where I would be the following day for Opening Ceremonies. It was electric. The city sprang to life Sunday morning though when hordes of people flocked to get as close as possible to the action and commence the next three days of festivities.

The first time I interpreted for Obama, he spoke to a group of parishioners at a church here in New Jersey. At the time, I remember being impressed with his apparent sincerity, concern for others, sense of humor, humility and eloquence. Had I known at the time that he would one day become President, I would have gotten his autograph and worked harder to make a lasting impression, because there was certainly no getting near him during the Inauguration!

What struck me most about being a part of this historical event was the camaraderie amongst all the participants. When I cut-in amongst the group of people who had been waiting for over an hour to get through the metal detector, for example, I was offered hand-warmers — not the typical response, at all. I also met people from all over the country who shared stories of their experiences, such as picking cotton and churning butter or driving from Oklahoma with two kids in tow.

The first initiative I interpreted for was a Deaf man who attended my very first interpreting assignment in 1981!

Young or Old, Black, White or Asian, Democratic or Republican, Hispanic or European, Jewish, Muslim or Christian, Introverted or Extroverted, Gay or Straight — nothing seemed to matter. People talked openly with one another and truly demonstrated an atmosphere of unity…something I never thought possible in my lifetime. It was, in its own way, a spiritual experience of which I feel grateful to have been a participant.

Systemic Reform of School Counseling: Help for All Students

Comprehensive reform of School Counseling in New Jersey has been addressed over the past twenty years, with the first initiative preceding the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Standards, beginning in 1988. Many components of the first initiative and model published in 1991 were incorporated into the ASCA Model. New Jersey was among the original states to attempt reform through its professional associations, the New Jersey Counseling Association (NJCA) and the New Jersey School Counselor Association (NJSCA).

New Jersey Initiatives

The first initiative, was a grass roots effort received with minimal support from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), beyond mild recognition and endorsement. Between 1989 and 1991, the associations sponsored training sessions at colleges and universities to help schools implement the Comprehensive Guidelines and Counseling Initiative. The principal authors, Dr. Jane Webber, Dr. Barry Mascari, and Mr. Jim Lukach (1991) were each honored with the ASCA Researcher-Writer of the Year Award in 1992 because the documents provided an expanded concept of counselor role and responsibility. While the Initiative brought school counselors together at trainings and workshops, and showed considerable attention, interest, and collegial support from NJDOE, the initiative did not have economic and regulatory clout to move forward. Although the initiative did “catch on” in a number of schools, the vast majority continued business as usual. Without any mandate in Administrative Code, districts remained free to choose whether or not to implement a comprehensive program.

A second wave initiative from 1999-2002 received funding from the NJDOE and used the ASCA Standards and the developing ASCA Model draft as the overarching framework with less focus on the local emphasis of the original initiative. Many schools that had retooled their programs in the 1988-1992 effort were not involved in this new initiative and a new group of schools were selected as pilot sites. During this initiative a critical link with the graduate faculty of school counselor preparation programs using curricula that failed to address the unique issues of school counselors was not addressed. Counselor Ed faculty remained a significant untapped resource.

This training problem, combined with the shift away from local implementation strategies toward generic methods, did not result in rapid implementation. Students’ Unmet Needs: Recent Studies in New Jersey

New Jersey’s students, particularly in high school, have a broad range of educational, career and personal needs that are not systematically addressed. The 562 school districts are as diverse as the State’s geography and population. With high school as a pivotal opportunity for New Jersey students to prepare for post-high school education and careers, there is an unmet need for systemic reform in school guidance and counseling programs. There are particular needs in gateway cities such as Elizabeth, Newark, Bayonne, and Camden where undocumented students find themselves shut out of college financial aid and admission to higher education.

Even with the impact of national initiatives toward improving school counseling and advocacy for students, there is little evidence that the career and educational needs of all New Jersey students have been met. New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:8.32 mandates a developmental career guidance and career awareness program; however, implementation has been slow and fragmented. In a recent study
Students need strong programs to help them become productive and successful workers after high school and/or college. Looking at best practices among New Jersey High Schools, only a handful of schools in the last few years were cited for best practices in guidance and counseling, or career education. One high school’s program worked to assure that before graduation all students established a career and developmental plan to achieve their goals, used their unique talents, interests abilities and multiple intelligences, took the most challenging courses, benefited from parents/guardians and other adults who positively influenced their career goals, and had real life career experiences in their community. All students in every high school should have access to these experiences in order to raise their aspirations and focus their future careers and identify key supports and resources.

Although NJAC 6A:19-13 broadly defines what school counselors “do,” few school counselors have the structure or programmatic organization in their schools to accomplish these tasks. In a study of 245 school counselors in New Jersey, Webber (2004) found that only 28% of the respondents reported using a school counseling program model extensively in their school, and 66% followed a model to some degree. Sixty percent of counselors who used a model said that it improved their counseling, 48% reported increased control over their jobs, and 54% reported that using a comprehensive model increased their job satisfaction.

According to the National Center for School Counseling Research at the University of Massachusetts, schools with more fully implemented school counseling programs show higher academic achievement, higher graduation rates, improved school climate, higher student self-efficacy, higher student career and educational aspirations, more equitable distribution of services to all students, lower dropout rates, and broader implications for post-secondary planning.

Research suggests that high quality school counseling services can have long-term effects on a child’s well-being and can prevent a student from turning to violence or drug and alcohol abuse. Studies on the effects of school counseling have shown positive impact on students’ grades, reduced classroom disruptions, and enhanced teachers’ abilities to manage classroom behavior. High quality school counseling services can help address students’ mental health needs (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, p. 117).

NJAC 6A:10A (b) states that “Abbott school districts shall plan for the creation of smaller and more personalized learning environments for students in grades six through 12. The goal of this work is to implement the standards and practices that are incorporated herein by reference as Appendix B to this chapter, leading to the implementation of small learning communities or small schools in the 2008-2009 academic year.” This initiative is consistent with the systemic reform of school guidance and counseling initiatives using small learning communities. The NJDOE recognizes that, if student-counselor ratios cannot be lowered to allow for increased student contact, other vehicles such as teacher-advisor programs will be necessary. Appendix B of the aforementioned NJAC 6:10A mandates that “Districts will work with school counseling professionals to develop a Student and Family Advocacy Program which may reflect national school counseling standards and pursuant to N.J.C.A. 6A:3-2.” The purpose of these regular meetings will be to “assist in the preparation of an academic plan for each student that incorporates mastery of college-preparatory academics with the goal of graduation and notes any non-instructional needs. This plan shall be a part of each student’s permanent academic record.”

Research suggests that small learning communities (caring communities) and advisory programs (adviser/advisee) have success in increasing student involvement in learning and positive attitudes toward school. Although the research on advisories has been primarily focused on middle school, studies show the need is strong in high schools, although advises may be more difficult to implement in high school environments without restructuring into small learning communities.

Barbee (2007) studied middle school pilot advisory programs in an inner-city district in northern New Jersey with 42,000 students. The study was conducted in six middle schools with 633 middle school students participating. The majority (327) of participants were in seventh grade; 162 students were in fifth grade, 126 students participated in sixth grade, and 19 students were in eighth grade. At the end of six months in the program, students completed a school climate survey that assessed student perceptions of the school environment, educational quality, involvement in class, perceptions of the school as a community. An analysis of the data showed that students perceived the school as more supportive and not as demanding as schools that did not have advisory programs. Students perceived the school as more “of the time” or “always,” such as “My teachers and my parents work together to help me learn” and “My teachers help me when I don’t understand.”

More than 70% strongly agreed with statements indicating positive attitudes toward school, such as “I am willing to learn in my school environment.” Eighty percent responded to statements about the quality of education as “most of the time” or “always,” such as “My teachers and my parents work together to help me learn” and “My teachers help me when I don’t understand.” Negative attitude toward learning, such as “Class time is disturbed by student arguing” were considered by 26-30% as somewhat of a problem. Fifty percent responded to statements about being involved in class “most of the time” and “always.” Statements included “In my class students have a say in deciding what goes on” or “In my class student are willing to help me if I am having trouble.” Negative attitudes regarding student involvement in class clustered around 50% for responses consisting of “never” or “almost never,” such as “In my class the teacher and the students plan together what we will do,” or “In my class I get to do the things that I like to do.” Eighty percent rated positive attitude statements about their school as a community at “most of the time” or “always” such as “Staff and students treat each other with respect in this school” or “I feel my teacher really cares about me.”

According to a study by Burns (1996), advisory programs improved the learning climate; increased young adolescents’ sense of community; fostered student attachment to school, increased attendance, reduced truancy, and risk taking behaviors. Burns concluded that advisory programs are the most effective and foundational programs for middle schools. Wentzel (1998) found that perceived care and support from teachers predicts greater interest in class, adherence to class rules and norms, and stronger pursuit of goals.

In an earlier study, Wentzel (1997) showed that peer acceptance indirectly increased the level of student interest in school and directly increased emotional well being. Elias, Tobias, and Friedlander (2000) reported that adolescents with less connections to parents, family and schools had higher risk taking behaviors. Burns concluded that advisory programs are the most effective and foundational programs for middle schools. Wentzel (1998) found that perceived care and support from teachers predicts greater interest in class, adherence to class rules and norms, and stronger pursuit of goals.

Conclusion: Systemic Reform and the Perfect Storm

The 2007 NJDOE grant funded Systemic Reform of School Guidance and Counseling is yet another attempt to impact school counseling programs. While slightly ahead of the New Jersey high school reform movement, its goals are consistent with this movement and may be caught in the perfect storm – being in the right place at the right time. Regulations currently being introduced require that all students have a “personalized learning plan” and implement programs to “personalize high schools.” The New Jersey Center for the Advancement of School Counseling at Kean University has been involved in these efforts to help their counseling teams to help reinvent their programs to reflect the direction the NJDOE has finally provided. Data collection from this grant project may yield additional information about how educators and students receive the quality and breadth of school counseling and postsecondary decision making processes beneficial to their future.
Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol
Barbara Tedesco, SIOP Instructor

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) is the result of a seven year research project by Jana Echevarria, Mary Ellen Vogt and Deborah J. Short that was conducted for the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE), funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Educational Research and Improvement and the National Institute for the Education of All Children with Disabilities. The SIOP Model was developed to provide general education teachers with a well-articulated, practical model of sheltered instruction (SI). SI is defined as an approach for teaching academic content to English language learners (ELLs) in ways that make the subject matter concepts comprehensible while promoting the students’ English language development when in the mainstream classes. The SIOP Model is currently used in most of the 50 states and in hundreds of schools across the U.S. as well as in several other countries.

Kean University is one of three sites that has been awarded a grant by the NJ Department of Education–Office of Student Achievement and Accountability since 2003. New Jersey City University and Rowan University are the other two institutions.

The SIOP model includes eight components and forty critical features: teacher preparation, and instructional indicators such as comprehensible input and the building of background knowledge. It comprises strategies for classroom organization and delivery of instruction. The intention of the model is to facilitate high-quality instruction for students in sheltered classes whose teachers were unfamiliar with the model.

A school district commits to sending a team of teachers representing the content areas of math, science, social studies and language arts with an ESL or bilingual teacher for 4 full days of training. In addition, there are 3 execu- tion meetings at which the participants deliberate about their utilization of the model as well as get further support in becoming trainer of trainers (TOT). Each teacher is observed once in the classroom to ensure that the model is implemented accurately according to the protocol. In a study examining the effects of the SIOP model on student achievement, students whose teachers implemented the SIOP model to a high degree in middle school classes outperformed the students in sheltered classes whose teachers were unfamiliar with the model.

Resources:
Mike Miru, Maine Center for meaningful engaged learning ESL standards for pre-K-12 students (TESOL, 1997)
http://www.cail.org/crede/si.htm

Expanding Services in the Center for Communication Disorders
Dr. Shereen Reese

In January of 2008, the Center for Communication Disorders opened the doors to its new, spacious speech and hearing clinic. Now that we had this wonderful facility, we developed a mission to expand our services to members of the community at large who had communication disorders. Our first, and very successful, venture was to open an institute for adults who were experiencing voice and speech disorders such as stroke, Parkinson’s disease, traumatic brain injury and the like. This fall, we held an open house and support a new, local chapter of the National Stuttering Association.

ELLs in the core content area taught in order to prepare them to high standards. The SIOP Model is not an "add-on" program, but rather it is a framework that can bring together a school’s instructional program by organizing methods and techniques, and ensuring that effective practices are implemented.

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My first meeting with Dr. Reese was memorable. I was extremely nervous not knowing what to expect. When I entered her office, she greeted me with open arms and was very compassionate towards my perceptions about stuttering.

When Dr. Reese told me I was going to work with her graduate students in the speech clinic, I must admit I was very skeptical. I had attended speech therapy prior to the Kean Speech Clinic but I did not see improvement with my speech. I thought if a professional Speech Language Pathologist couldn’t help me with my stutter, how could a graduate student help me with the abilities to read out loud, make phone calls, participate in classroom presentations and etc?

Dr. Reese invited me to attend her graduate class to meet other people who stutter (PWS). Being in her graduate class really helped me because I got the opportunity to meet other people with my same problem. It was comforting to hear other people who stutter.

Dr. Reese fully explained the procedures I’d be experiencing during my first semester at speech therapy at Kean University. Prior to my first speech session at Kean University, Joanne explained to me what was my assigned speech therapist, called to inform me about the agenda for the first session. During the first session, Joanne asked me to perform one of my dreaded activities: reading out loud. With the combination of fear, being anxious and stuttering, this was an extremely difficult task for me. After a disappointing first session, I truly believed speech therapy was not for me and I was wasting my time. Joanne helped me with my confidence and reminded me that I have to work hard. I really have to work hard to overcome my stuttering problem.

Joanne asked me to list my own goals for the summer session. My priorities included making phone calls, reading out loud, being able to do oral presentations and maintain a fluent conversation with a person. I knew if I wanted to reach my goals, it was going to take a lot of hard work from Joanne and myself.

When reading out loud, I learned helpful techniques from Joanne and Dr. Reese, which included easy onset, continuous voicing, pausing and phrasing and light contact. All of the techniques become helpful in certain situations. When practicing at home, easy onset is the best technique to use to control my stuttering. While reading with Joanne, I learned to use all of the techniques on different syllables and voces.

Oral presentations were my hardest task because of the fear of having people focusing on my speech. Joanne worked really hard with a positive attitude that I wanted to reach my goals, it was going to take a lot of hard work from Joanne and myself. I was fascinated to see how people can be successful in life despite their stutter.

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New Jersey Educators Go Global

Carol James, Co-Director of the Center for Innovative Education

Nearly one hundred educators from throughout New Jersey gathered at Kean University on September 29th to launch a unique statewide pilot that uses the power of the Internet to develop online professional learning communities. The pilot cohort is made up of 15 school district teams, 2 university teams, a State Leadership Team comprised of NJDOE educational leaders and instructional technology specialists, leaders from educational organizations and leaders from the Center for Innovative Education at Kean University. See list below.

School Districts - Union City, Springfield, Sayreville, Jersey City, Passaic Valley Regional H.S., Bound Brook, Vineland, Kearns, Perth Amboy, Long Branch, Carteret, Hопatcong

Higher Education - Kean University

State Level - Department of Education, NJ Principals and Supervisors Association/Foundation for Educational Administration, NJ Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NJ Association of School Administrators, NJ Education Association

The model guiding this effort is called Powerful Learning Practice (PLP) and was developed by Sheryl Naussbaum-Beach and Will Richardson, both internationally renowned experts in the educational use of the Internet and development of online professional learning communities. PLP is currently enabling hundreds of educators around the country to experience the transformative potential of social Web tools to build global learning communities and re-envision their own personal learning practice.

The PLP model is based on a highly successful Microsoft grant-funded pilot carried out in Alabama over the last three years. It has recently been adopted by a number of school districts in New York, Georgia, Tennessee, North Carolina and South Carolina. The Center for Innovative Education (CIE) at Kean University has partnered with Powerful Learning practice to bring PLP to New Jersey in the form of a comprehensive statewide effort.

PLP uses a cohort model that is a blend of face-to-face and online curriculum to connect small teams of educators from forward-thinking schools and institutions and grows those connections over the course of an academic year. Through immersion in multimedia social networking sites, such as Ning, Delicious, Blogs and Wikis, participants learn how to interact asynchronously with other cohort members and with expert voices recruited from around the globe by the project leaders. They also share discussions, photos, audio, video and hyperlinks to connect to relevant resources. Teams in the New Jersey PLP pilot will create and implement projects for their schools, institutions, and organizations using these Web 2.0 tools, and will share them with the entire cohort at the culminating face-to-face session on May 21st at Kean University. Finally, the PLP project will prepare the cohort to move forward in systemic ways after the one-year commitment ends by laying the groundwork for three and five-year community building project plans.

These collaborative online spaces are important for educators to understand in a world where more and more content is being co-constructed both inside and outside of the classroom.

“If we are to prepare our students to live and learn in a globally connected environment, we as educators must first understand these environments for our selves.” Sheryl Naussbaum-Beach

PLP directly supports New Jersey Department of Education’s commitment to preparing its students to live and work in the 21st Century Skills. Moreover, NJ Governor Jon Corzine’s Partnership for 21st Century Learning: Going Global is excited to learn more about military recreation and the vast opportunities for students to become better acquainted with the scope of current Park, Recreation, and Therapeutic Recreation programs and practices in the country and to have the opportunity to interact with Olympic and Paralympics Committee members and to attend career development sessions and educational workshops. Each student brought back a unique life lesson from the experience. Lindsay Litland, enrolled in the Therapeutic Recreation option, said that the conference helped her to recognize how important it is to have a philosophy and a clear understanding of professional practice. Keith Novack, in the Community Recreation option, was impressed by the many opportunities for networking and the generosity of professionals who offered support and suggestions for internships and job possibilities. Elizabeth Buckley, a senior in the Commercial Recreation option, was accepted as a leadership state in the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. Moreover, NJ Governor Jon Corzine’s Economic Growth Strategy for the State of New Jersey 2007 identifies as one of its six priority areas to: “Develop a world-class workforce by assisting the state’s students and job seekers to obtain the skills and education needed in a competitive global economy.”

Carol James, Co-Director, Center for Innovative Education, Kean University:

Kean Recreation Administration Majors Attend National Conference

Dr. Fran Stavola-Daly

In October of 2008, eleven Recreation Administration undergraduate students attended the three-day National Recreation and Park Association Annual Conference held in Baltimore, Maryland. Students who attended the conference included Patrick J. Reyes, Casey Coppinger, Andrew Eades, Damien Serfaro, Kristina Staiano, Meghan Maloney, Keith Novack, Lindsay Litland, Barbara Barone, Nick Panetta, and Elisabeth Buckley. Student attendance was made possible by support through the Benson Cummings Fund, established in memory of former faculty member Benson Cummings. This fund, administered by the Kean University Foundation, provides financial assistance for students to attend national conferences and meetings conducted by professional Recreation organizations.

This annual conference is the largest meeting of Recreation professionals in the nation and attracts eight-thousand participants from every state and includes international representatives as well. For the eleven Kean students, this was their first national conference experience. Among the highlights was a keynote address by environmentalist Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. who spoke about the urgent need for preserving America’s waterways and for all of us to be engaged in actively protecting our environment. The Kean students also had the opportunity to interact with Olympic and Paralympics Committee Co-Founder Powerful Learning Practice, Chief Learning Officer, Connective Learning, Flemington, NJ: weblogged@gmail.com

CIE hopes to plant the seeds for online professional and personal learning networks at Kean through the participation of two teams that include: Melissa Tomich, Gail Verdi, John Hevrick, and Fran Stavola-Daly from the COE, Fred Finch and Charles Nelson from the COHSS, Librarian Craig Anderson, and Carol James, Bob Weiner and Michael Searson from CIE. To follow the evolution of this year long pilot go to:

http://njplp.wikispaces.com/

The NJ PLP was featured at the “21st Century Learning: Going Global” conference being hosted at Kean University on Dec. 5 & 6.

For more information on the NJPLP please contact:

Carol James, Co-Director, Center for Innovative Education, Kean University:

http://plpnetwork.com/
ON THE ROAD TO REGGIO

Kathy Berkowitz,
Director, Child Care Center

The children at the Kean University Child Care and Development Center have been very busy this semester. Our year started off with a visit to Liberty Hall where we picked apples in the orchard. The children were fascinated by the long handled “apple picker” that was used to pick the perfect apple from the highest point on the tree. Using the “picker” was no easy task, especially since it was bigger than the children! It took cooperation and teamwork to position the pole in the precise spot in order to get the apple. They were delighted when the “picker” and apple simultaneously met and the apple landed in the “pocket” which was then added to their heaping piles. After apple picking, the children enjoyed climbing on the antique fire truck. It was a most satisfying day!

Other events that took us out and about this fall included a trip to Longstreet Farm in Holmdel with pumpkin picking, weekly physical education games at the Harwood gym, shows at Williams Theater, trolley rides and a visit to the Kean planetarium. These valuable experiences can lead to exciting possibilities that may spark an interest for the children.

Back in the classroom, the children play an active role in their learning based on their interests. These interests become the springboard for a topic, also called a “project.” These projects are then studied and developed in-depth with the teacher, co-constructing knowledge and representing their thinking symbolically through drawing, sculpting, painting, etc. These projects then develop as the emergent curriculum. This approach is based on the principles of Reggio Emilia early childhood education.

Presently, the children are working with maps. This interest arose from riding on the trolley and planning out a neighborhood walk. A city has been built with unit blocks, roads constructed with electrical tape, and drawings and clay models were created to represent favorite landmarks. Maps are being drawn of their replica city or room. The children are making meaning out of their world.

As we continue to work with the co-inquiry concept, we will begin to study the documentation process. Conversations are recorded for repeated words or ideas that may be a catalyst for a project. Photos are used to reflect the work of the child and much conversation occurs to determine the next step. It also gives parents feedback on what their child is doing in school and is a way to make learning visible.

Abramson, S. (Spring, 2006). Documentation – Communication. College of Education Digest, Volume XII, Issue 6 Page 23

Voting at Harrison Elementary School

Nicole Campo
Kean University COE Sophomore

As a sophomore, I am currently taking EMSE 2800 with Professor Tomich. The first school I observed was Harrison Elementary in Roselle. I was placed in a third grade classroom and instantly fell in love with the teacher and the students.

The Presidential Election was quickly approaching and this was an important topic during Social Studies. Prior to my second observation, the teacher, the bilingual aide, and I were discussing what they could prepare for the children as an activity for the Presidential Election.

The teacher decided she wanted to perform a mock election in the classroom. I work at the Union County Board of Elections in Elizabeth as a seasonal worker and instantly fell in love with the teacher and the students.

The point of the mock election was to allow students to have the full experience of what it is like to vote on Election Day. As a result Obama was the winner for the 3rd grade mock election. The day was a success and I was happy that I could arrange this learning opportunity for students.
role of the pancreas in metabolism, and the existence of insulin was not fully clarified until 1921, when Frederick Banting and Charles Best managed to isolate the hormone insulin which led to the availability of an effective treatment – insulin injections. For this, Banting et al. received the Nobel Prize in Physiology in 1923. Throughout the 20th century, treatment and understanding of the disease has advanced significantly. Diabetes Mellitus is a group of metabolic diseases characterized by an inability to produce insulin or to use it properly resulting in hyperglycemia (Hyper=high, glyc= sugar,emia= blood). Insulin, a hormone produced by the B-cells of the Pancreas, is needed by muscle, fat, and the liver to utilize glucose. The glucose is used as fuel for cellular functions.

The hyperglycemia resulting from diabetes places people with this disease at risk for developing Macrovascular disease, Microvascular disease and Neuropathy. The chronic complications are described in the following three categories:

- **Macrovascular** (large vessel or atherosclerotic) disease, which includes coronary artery disease with or without angina, myocardial infarction, cerebrovascular accident, and peripheral arterial disease
- **Microvascular** (small vessel) disease, which includes diabetic retinopathy (eye disease) and diabetic nephropathy (kidney disease)
- **Neuropathy** that involves both the peripheral and autonomic nervous systems

### Signs and Symptoms

The symptoms of diabetes include excessive thirst (Polydipsia), frequent urination (Polyuria), unexplained weight loss, infections and cuts that are slow to heal, blurry vision and fatigue. Many who develop Type 1 Diabetes have some or all of these symptoms, but those with Type 2 Diabetes may remain asymptomatic. The fact that 5.7 million of the population with diabetes do not know they have the disease underscores the lack of symptoms experienced by many.

### Evaluation

The American Diabetes Association recommends that all people over the age of 45 years be tested for diabetes. Three criteria are used to diagnose diabetes:

- **Symptoms of diabetes plus casual plasma glucose concentration ≥200 m/dl (11.1 mmol L⁻¹)**
- **Fasting plasma glucose ≥126 mg.dl⁻¹ (7.0 mmol.L⁻¹)**. Fasting is defined as no caloric intake for at least 8 hr.
- **Two-hour plasma glucose 200 mg.dl⁻¹ (11.1 mmol.L⁻¹)** during oral glucose tolerance test. The test should be performed as described by the World Health Organization (2), using a glucose load containing the equivalent of 75 g of anhydrous glucose dissolved in water.

Approximately 24 million (8% of the population) children and adults in the United States have diabetes. One quarter of these (5.7 million) are undiagnosed (people who don’t know) and 57 million are pre-diabetes. In 2021, 23.1% are 60 years old or older, 11.2% are men aged 20 years or older, 10.2% are women aged 20 years or older, 9.8% of all non-Hispanic Whites aged 20 years or older, and 14.7% of all non-Hispanic Blacks 20 years or older.

The American Diabetes Association estimates that diabetes accounts for 178,000 deaths, 54,000 amputees and 12,000-12,000 cases of blindness annually. Some scientists proposed that by the year 2010, diabetes will exceed both heart disease and cancer as the leading cause of death through its many complications. A study by doctors from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently startled people with the finding that the prevalence of diagnosed cases of diabetes had increased 33% over the past 8 years. So, there is a need to be concerned!

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention consider diabetes to be at epidemic proportions in the United States. The reasons for this are likely three-fold.

1. An increasingly sedentary lifestyle
2. The increase in high-risk ethnic populations in the United States
3. Aging of the population

The economic impact of diabetes is staggering. The total annual economic cost of diabetes in 2007 was estimated to be $174 billion. Medical expenditure totaled $116 billion and were comprised of $27 billion for diabetes care, $60 billion for excess general medical costs, and $31 billion for indirect costs resulting from increased absenteeism, reduced productivity, disease-related unemployment disability, and loss of productive capacity due to early mortality totaling $58 billion.

What will the future bring? Although there are no definitive preventive measures that can be taken against diabetes at this time, except for identifying persons at high risk and encouraging appropriate dietary and exercise guidelines, research continues to provide the possibility of new cures. Several new drugs were recently developed. An inhaled form of insulin under development appears to be ready for wide scale application. In the future it may also be possible to administer insulin in the form of a patch. Scientists project that there will be improved strategies for glucose control in insulin dependent diabetes. This will include use of mechanical devices which will involve both implantable glucose sensors and implantable insulin infusion systems, and pancreas beta cell transplantation. One day diabetes may be a thing of the past. In the meantime, scientists and researchers are working on new earlier diagnosis, more aggressive treatment, prevention and a cure.
Recent Publications of the Faculty of the College of Education

HOT OFF THE PRESS:

Dr. Consuelo Bonilla

Dr. Jennifer Chen

Dr. Linda Constantanzo Cahir

Dr. Sonja de Groot Kim

Dr. Cynthia Garnett

Dr. Jo Hoffman

Dr. J.B. Mascari

Dr. Susan Polirstok

Dr. Gail Verdi

Dr. Jerry Weiner
Poet’s Corner
Social Insecurity

Socks can be a source of trouble,
Traveling only one way - double, Scorning always those left single,
Standing strong, refuse to mingle
White with colors, varied shades; Sport with fancy, different grades;
Thick with thin or young with old;
Male with female, I’ve been told. Sneaker socks and anklets, crew, Support and knee-hi, roll-top, too.
All at work so close to earth - yet Such a snobbish view of worth!

External Revenue

The time has come for common sense,
Conserv[e] some effort and expense-Keep all socks in one big pile, with Striped or solid, ribbed, Argyle;
Wear them as they come by chance, No one sees them under pants.

Pedigree

Hal TOES is, sweat and grime, Beset some socks in their prime:
But a dose of good detergent
Cures the ill if given, Urgent!
Snags and runs, signs of strife
Need not mean the end of life. Surgery is called for - often, Saves
the holy from the coffin.

By Dr. Myra Weiger

The World Gets Flatter for New Jersey Educators
Carol James, Co-Director of Center for Innovative Education (CIE)

“Global Education” and “21st Century Skills” took front
and center stage at the Center for Innovative Education’s
21st Century Learning: Going Global conference on December 5 & 6th. About 250 New Jersey educators had an opportunity
to learn about two of the most pressing issues our state and
nation are grappling with in order to stay competitive in a
global economy.

Going Global offered an outstanding array of world-class
speakers typical of a national level conference. Milton Chen,
Executive Director of the George Lucas Educational Foun-
dation emphasized that in order for education in the US to
remain relevant and effective, it needs to focus on globaliz-
ing the curriculum, engaging students in project-based learn-
ing, and fostering cooperative and collaborative learning op-
portunities. Participants were challenged to re-conceptualize
what written communication might look like in a digital age
by Humanities Chair, Richard Miller and Writers House Di-
rector, Paul Hammond of Rutgers University. Michael

Furdyk, Co-Founder and Director of Technology for Tak-
ingITGlobal.org, and Ed Gragert, Director of PEARN-USA
provided examples of how social networks are linking stu-
dents around the globe, promoting collaboration on projects
that both enhance learning and improve the quality of life on
the planet. Shari Albright from the Asia Society, and Janis
Jensen, Director of Curriculum and Standards at NJDOE,
gave nuts and bolts advice on how districts could globalize
their curriculum.

Filtering in a Web 2.0 World, Digital Choices that De-
fine a Generation, and the iTunes U K-12 Statewide Initia-
tive rounded out a series of Panel discussions. An excellent
selection of presentations, and hands-on sessions com-
pleted a conference experience that was quoted by many as
being the best conference of the year in New Jersey.
EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING:
DEFINITIONS, ASSESSMENT, AND EDUCATION / INTERVENTION
Presented by George McCloskey, Ph.D.
Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

Symposium Summary
Dr. Marie Segal, Director, Institute of Child Study
Christina Mass, Graduate Assistant
On Wednesday, October 29th, The Institute of Child Study at Kean University and the New Jersey Division of Learning Disabilities held its 25th Annual Kathryn Albert Gasorek Memorial Fall Symposium. Our guest speaker was Dr. George McCloskey from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. McCloskey gave a detailed and informed presentation on executive functioning. The symposium was open to the public. Attendees included teachers, LDTCs, Directors of Special Services, and Kean alumni. Special guests included the Dean of the College of Education, Dr. Susan Polinostok, who gave the opening remarks. We would like to thank Dean Polinostok for her support.

The presentation took its audience on a journey through the arena of executive functioning, including the exploration of how issues in this functional domain can affect learning and development as well as day-to-day tasks. Dr. McCloskey introduced the topic by defining executive functioning and explained how it differed from intelligence. He debunked common misconceptions about the role of executive functioning, and metaphorically compared the role of executive functioning to a “team of coaches” rather than the “head coach.” Dr. McCloskey discussed clinical diagnosis and disorders that often accompany executive functioning issues such as ADD/ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorders including Asperger Syndrome, Depression, Anxiety, and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, to name a few. Mental processes governed by executive functioning such as perception, initiation, focusing, organization, association, storage and retrieval of information, pace and time, were discussed among others.

Relevance to day-to-day classroom practice was examined in the second half of the presentation. Dr. McCloskey described characteristics of learners and positive instruction with regard to helping students with executive functioning deficits. Tips were included on how to accurately recognize behaviors presented as a result of executive functioning defects including those that are often mistaken to be the result of an alternate cause. Characteristics of effective teachers were noted as well. Dr. McCloskey provided his audience with implementation strategies for addressing this type of learning problem, including strategies for helping students to self-regulate and develop internal control.

The end of the presentation was followed by an informative question and answer session. Dr. McCloskey proved an excellent speaker and the knowledge gained by the symposium’s attendees was more than valuable. The entire presentation is available on tape, and can be viewed at the Institute of Child Study by appointment.

The 26th Annual Kathryn Albert Gasorek Memorial Spring Symposium, will be held on Wednesday, March 25th, 2009. The topic will be “Understanding the Needs of Individuals with Autism – Part II,” presented by Ms. Ann Holmes of the Eden Family of Services. Registration has already begun! Please contact the Institute of Child Study at 908-737-5480 for more information.

A CHARter SCHOOL GROWS IN JERSEY CITY

Art Friedman, University Supervisor
Jersey City, New Jersey, located between the Hudson River and Newark Bay, is the site of a powerful confluence of cultures—financial gurus and working class residents living in diverse enclaves. Wall Street West started to boom at the same time as the Charter School Movement. This article describes the origin and philosophy of Soaring Heights, a fully functioning charter school located in a small corner of Jersey City called Greenville.

Jersey City is a pre-Revolutionary War site that embraces the State’s oldest house, built in 1740, and is proud to be adjacent to Ellis Island, through which so many immigrants entered this nation. Three quarters of a century ago, around the time the baseball color barrier was broken by Jackie Robinson in Jersey City’s Roosevelt Stadium, former Australian bush nurse, Sister Elizabeth Kenny, administered her revolutionary polio treatment to victims at Jersey City’s Medical Center. She saved the lives of countless children and their families in a horrific epidemic in the 1940s.

In September 1962, a young Jersey City native began a career working in the public schools of Jersey City as a sixth grade teacher. Little did Claudia Zuorick realize that she would, one day, with the help of many Jersey City public school educators, develop a teaching model to prove that urban education can survive and thrive . . . even in a harsh and mobile polyglot population.

Decades later, this forward thinking classroom teacher was reassigned as a Guidance Counselor at a middle and high school for special education students. Coincidentally, she commenced studies at the New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis. Claudia stated, “At the Institute, I was gaining insights that could easily bring clarity to these classrooms filled with pain. I witnessed the unusually, disrespectful behaviors which were expressions of pain and rage flowing from these children and directed at the teachers. The teachers just didn’t know how to manage it. Their previous training did not address the behaviors they were confronting. And more importantly, no mention was made of the impact the children’s anger had on the emotional experiences of the teachers each day.”

Eventually Claudia worked with a group of teachers in the district, and they developed Project Safe Harbor. Although her work began with special education teachers, it quickly grew to include elementary and high school teachers of general education students. This grass roots initiative provided training to fight urban teacher burnout, as well as help teachers become more skillful in managing the emotional dynamics in classrooms. Through her real life experience talking with teachers in Project Safe Harbor, Claudia learned about the growing number of traumatized and numb teachers who were working with general education students. Teachers spoke about the shock and distress they experienced when a single, low key request to pay attention would result in a child’s rage bursting out of control. The teacher became the target. Claudia continues, “I heard about these kinds of occurrences daily, often several times within the day. There was so little time and energy left for teaching.” An outburst of angst was everywhere.

In order to survive emotionally, many teachers sheltered themselves against their environments and merely went through the motions each day. They seemed depressed and used thick layers of sarcastic humor and cynical comments as a way to protect themselves from the cruelty all around them. Instinctively, teachers began using wartime combat idioms in their conversations. They considered themselves to be “on the front lines,” “in the trenches,” “in the line of fire.” Professional educators were reduced to relying on these coping mechanisms as angry student behaviors became common.

Teacher survival strategies trumped student learning. Claudia recognized the wasted energy diverted from instruction as teachers struggled to manage the emotional climate in their classrooms. Eventually, she began to intercede by sharing aspects of what she was learning at the New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis, especially methods to create respectful, loving environments. “I learned to identify the emotions I was experiencing in the classroom, that was a powerful, life-changing experience for me, a journey that continues to take me deep into the heart of classrooms and schools, and a journey that has provided me with an opportunity to feel useful beyond anything I could have imagined.”
Soon, the Jersey City Board of Education would fund Project Safe Harbor, a program that functioned for six years in School No. 32.

**Project Safe Harbor** was a grass-roots movement composed of teachers from schools throughout Jersey City, and it signaled the start of the realization of a dream. These struggling educators felt validated because they were integral parts in a new and hopeful process to help the most needy students, as well as themselves.

Among countless cases of students progressing from dysfunctional to productive, one particular situation comes to Claudia’s mind. Donna, a teacher, worked extensively with the classified population, including a 13-year-old student who was strongly disliked by all of his classmates, his guardian, and other teachers. Donna had hoped to provide him with acceptance, but to her horror, she also found herself dislike him.

She recounted how Kevin always came toward her from the back of the room to tell her something, and she would react by saying, “Not now. Go back to your seat.” Every time he did this she felt embarrassed by him and angry at herself.

Donna had to recognize that his annoying behavior caused her to push him away, and she felt very guilty about that.

Certainly Kevin did not want people to push him away, yet he did not know how to cultivate the love and acceptance he sought. Like most people, Kevin recreated the emotional scenes he knew best—being pushed away. He came from a home in which his mother rejected him because she was not able to cope with his complex needs. Donna also came to realize that people frequently will induce in others reactions they are used to, not necessarily reactions they want. This is what Kevin was doing with Donna.

Donna and Claudia reviewed his complex behavior pattern and Donna’s instinct to reject him. Claudia recalls, “I worked with Donna to help her recognize that his reactions to his behaviors were reasonable. Kevin saw Donna as a parental authority figure and wanted her love and admiration. Donna was replicating his mother’s behavior.” When Donna grasped Kevin’s classroom behavior in the context of his life experience, she was able to step outside of this cycle of rejection.

Donna’s reaction to his intrusions would now include a positive, low key statement: “I don’t think you and I spend enough time together. We should work together more often.” Kevin seemed to relax when she said this. Indeed, this was the object of his cry for attention from an important adult. Donna’s validation that fact in a kind and understanding way. Over time, Donna accepted him, because she understood his unique needs.

Donna’s work with Kevin thrived after that. She became confident and felt empowered and useful with her growing understanding and skills. The emotional climate in her class changed. Under Donna’s tutelage, Kevin changed. His classmates accepted him, and his guardian, who had informed the Division of Youth and Family Services that she wanted to get him out of the house in a month, agreed to keep him for eight months which allowed him to graduate with his class. Everyone changed!

Another teacher, Joan, taught English to Melony, an extremely angry, verbally abusive high school student who harassed Joan daily and let her know she was “... the worst teacher I ever had.” After a few months, because Joan felt she had nothing to lose, she decided to use an intervention Claudia suggested. The next day in class, when Melony began her tirade of insults, Joan responded calmly and without sarcasm: “It must be awful to have me for a teacher. I’m so terrible.” Melony’s rage crumbled. “Oh no,” she said, “You’re not a terrible teacher. You’re the best teacher I ever had.”

From that day forward, the relationship slowly changed and learning began. Joan concluded, “As we unraveled the painful messages contained in Melony’s words, we searched for responses aimed at helping her feel understood and relaxed.”

**Project Safe Harbor Finds a New Home**

Early in 1996, Marie entered a Project Safe Harbor group meeting one afternoon, filled with exciting news that New Jersey was going to establish charter schools throughout the state. She had learned that New Jersey passed legislation and joined the ranks of other states to approve the operation of charter schools.

With enthusiasm that was instantly contagious, Marie proposed that the Project Safe Harbor educators apply for a charter.

Her suggestion met with strong support, and many people became part of the effort to create a charter school. This group of educators, who knew a great deal about teaching, set out to start a school, and, in the process, learned about business, law, building codes, and areas that previously had been foreign to them. In January, 1997, 13 charter schools in New Jersey were approved to open in September of that year, and Soaring Heights, the school founded by the Project Safe Harbor educators, was one of these. In preparation, parents, teachers and organizations were among those who founded charter schools. Each school sought to implement an innovative approach to education that was defined by its charter. The essence of Soaring Heights Charter School is found in the first paragraph of its charter: “We carefully examine all forms of communication. We are unique in that our program focuses on the relationship between student and teacher as the basis for educational reform. Within a constructive relationship, better, faster and more meaningful learning takes place.”

Today, Soaring Heights Charter School is a K-8 school with 211 students and an extensive waiting list. From its beginning, Soaring Heights has been rooted in the same beliefs developed in Project Safe Harbor: Effective communi-
cation and empathy among all members of the school community foster more effective education. Claudia Zauorick developed this urban and elegant education model on the hardscrabble streets of Jersey City, just west of Kennedy Boulevard, in a former automotive repair shop.

The school has been successful in identifying how much communication in schools is filled with blame, sarcasm, cynicism, preaching and threats on the part of both teach-
ers and students. Soaring Heights has been able to greatly reduce such behaviors, and staff is learning to move be-
yond such expressions to places of observation, under-
standing and compassion. Learning thrives in an atmos-
phere that is calm. Soaring Heights provides teachers with a positive and nurturing environment, and every staff member joins a communication group for consistent and constant training and self-evaluation. All of this prepares the teachers to provide nurturing and supportive environments in class-
rooms.

Jackie, a founder of the school and the eighth grade teacher, puts this way: “I’ve learned to look inside myself so I can figure out how to best meet the needs of the children. I see how the emotional climate set by the teachers impacts the chil-
dren and the learning environment. And most importantly, when I recognize how what is happening in my classroom in-
fluences me, I am able to respond and not react to the children in my care.”

Stacy, a second-year teacher, has already experienced enough of the communication training to provide her with a sophisticated perception of the value of the work. “Until I came to Soaring Heights, I didn’t think I needed to learn about myself. I thought that I covered my difficult emotions, but I’ve learned that unless I study them, they come through in the classroom and can be a problem. I’m a better teacher because I have a better handle on myself.”

Claudia reflects: “This is a school in which we have been able to implement ideas that were born in the Jersey City school district. As a result of the charter school movement, these ideas are continuing to develop the wonderful potential for partnerships that exists between school districts and char-
ter schools. Perhaps the combination of the Jersey City school

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**Two New Departments in the COE**

Gila Del Risco, Chairperson, EEBB:

On January 1, 2008 the academic department formerly known as Elementary, Middle and Secondary Education (EMSE) reorganized into two departments. The first is the Department of Elementary and Bilingual Education (EEBEB) which includes the following programs:

- **Elementary Education K-5**
- **Bilingual Elementary Education K-5**
- **Bilingual Elementary Education K-5—5-8 (non-bilingual)**

In addition, the EEBEB department houses some of the graduate program options leading to the MA Degree in Instruction and Curriculum. These include:

- **Option: Bilingual/Blicultural Education**
- **Bilingual/Blicultural Education (Certification Only)**

The remaining programs are included in the Department of Middle and Secondary Education (MS):

- **Elementary Education K-5—5-8 (non-bilingual)**
- **The secondary education components of academic programs in 12 departments that lead to Teacher Certification K-12**
- **The program of Liberal Studies in Math, Science and Technology**
- **Graduate program options leading to the MA Degree in Instruction and Curriculum, including:**
  - **Option: Classroom Instruction**
  - **Option: Mastery at Teaching**

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**Teacher George Hodnett instructs students**
district's willingness to allow the growth of this work will come to fruition in a small charter school with a staff very appreciative of the opportunity.” Claudia continues: “The independent status of the charter school has been helpful. We have joined together and created the culture of the school. The school is rich in possibilities. These rich possibilities exist because years ago experienced educators at all levels of the Jersey City school district were willing to give Project Safe Harbor credibility, which included the financial support it needed to begin.”

Along with the assistance of the Jersey City school district, help also came from the Jersey City Education Association and the New Jersey Education Association. Both of these organizations provided direction and introduced these teachers to an awareness of budgetary requirements. The staff learned how to acquire union membership, and both organizations were very responsive to questions. Soaring Heights is successful today because of so many individuals and groups. Indeed, it takes a village to produce structural change in bureaucracy.

Through the efforts of many people and organizations, who long ago extended themselves and believed in the message of Soaring Heights, children, teachers and parents come together and thrive within its walls. Cynthia, a parent with three children in the school, puts it this way: “I tell other parents that I’ve named Soaring Heights ‘mini-Harvard’ because when I walk into the school, you can hear learning going on. You may not always understand the way things are done in the beginning, but then you see the approach, and it brings results. I tell other parents that most schools just identify problems. This staff gets involved in solving them. The name of the school is appropriate because when your kids go there, you see them start to soar.”

Certainly Dewey, Kilpatrick, Piaget, Maslow, Bruner and many others have laid the foundation of our educational system and our understanding of human needs. To move forward, it is important to build upon this foundation to meet the requirements of an ever-changing society. Indeed, the team of educators who built Soaring Heights Charter School is working to create an educational system that will address the concerns of education today and tomorrow. They understand that if schools are to provide optimal teaching/learning environments, they can only do so when the emotional experiences of teachers in classrooms are studied and addressed. For when this happens, the teaching staff develops increased confidence and a greater sense of value. Who better to teach our children than confident educators with a sense of their own self-worth?

The world is changing rapidly. Among the evolving challenges which Claudia sees are spiraling mobility rates, new health concerns, widespread presence of drugs and firearms in homes, gang identity, and world terrorism. Children’s lives are more complex due to emerging health challenges including autism, neurological impairments, immunosuppressed diseases, environmental hazards, and sexual behaviors. To address these issues, Claudia and the Soaring Heights team believe classrooms must be populated by educational leaders who have been specifically trained to develop self-confidence and a sense of their own unique value. Claudia Zuorick and Soaring Heights staff are “educational leaders.” They have built upon traditional palliative practices and found new solutions. They understand that human existential growth should be measured in the context of a world of rapid societal and cultural change. The school’s environment should lead to student and staff improvement on personal and academic levels. Claudia is proud of Soaring Heights Charter School, the embodiment of dreams, in the city by the bay.

Printed References


Professional Impact NJ

By Aimee Gelnaw, Director of Professional Impact New Jersey (PINJ)

Professional Impact NJ, located at Kean University, is a statewide initiative implementing systems to enhance preparation and continuing education of early childhood and out-of-school time practitioners. In partnership with NJ Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NJACCRRA), Professional Impact NJ distributes scholarship and reimbursement dollars from funding made possible through the NJ Department of Human Services, Division of Family Development.

Professional Impact NJ serves individuals who work with children (birth – 13 yrs.) including:

• Preschool and nursery school teachers, teacher assistants and aides
• Public and private school teachers (K-3rd grade)
• Staff of early childhood programs, including administrators, directors, head teachers, group teachers, teacher assistants and aides
• Family child care providers
• Staff in out-of-school time programs
• Early childhood education students (93 > 58)

Quality early experiences, whether in centers, family child care homes, or in extended care, depends upon knowledgeable and skilled practitioners. Research consistently affirms a direct correlation between the quality of early experiences and the realization of human potential. Healthy, happy, productive children become healthy, happy, productive members of society. Professional Impact NJ is committed to improving availability and accessibility of quality teacher preparation and continuing professional education opportunities as a means to this end.

At Professional Impact NJ we commit ourselves and our resources to:

• Representing an eclectic constituency with a unified vision of quality care for children and families
• Building integrated systems with our partner agencies throughout the state
• Influencing policies reflective of the realities of our workforce
• Ensuring that practice reflects policy
• Building seamless systems of delivery

Making New Jersey the best it can be for our children and families and the workforce that:

• Representing an eclectic constituency with a unified vision of quality care for children and families
• Building integrated systems with our partner agencies throughout the state
• Influencing policies reflective of the realities of our workforce
• Ensuring that practice reflects policy
• Building seamless systems of delivery
• Making New Jersey the best it can be for our children and families and the workforce that takes care of them.

Our key programs include:

• Scholarships
• Accreditation Fulfillment Projects
• Infant/Toddler Credential
• The NJ Registry
• The Directors’ Academy
• Regional Impact Centers

Our office is located in Willis Hall 300. For more information please visit our website at www.pinj.org or call us at (908)737-4240
Transforming Lives: The Campaign for Kean University

Kean University is in the midst of an unprecedented campaign to raise a minimum of $30 million from private philanthropic sources. Since its public launch at the Gala in June 2007, Transforming Lives: the Campaign for Kean University has raised more than $26 million, which is already playing a critical part in the University’s funding of its plans to bring to fruition the next generation of educational programs, scholarship and fellowship initiatives, endowment components and other capital endeavors.

Kean University seeks to be a unique public university, a learning environment for the 21st Century that blazes new territories with inventive, educational programs in technologically advanced facilities. Kean seeks to make this quality higher education comparable to the great universities in the region, while maintaining its accessibility and availability.

Globalization, diversity, competition, and technological complexity have inspired institutions of higher learning to adjust quickly to stay relevant. As these challenges continue to evolve, so does the opportunity for Kean to forge a new paradigm for public education in New Jersey.

Thank you for supporting the College of Education

Generosity is the cornerstone upon which excellence is built. Gifts to the Dean’s Fund for Excellence – College of Education are a perfect illustration of this concept in action.

Your contributions provide vital support to the College’s academic programs. A heartfelt thank you to the many College of Education alumni who answered our phonathon students’ request for support or replied to our year-end appeal – we are truly grateful.

If you are interested in providing philanthropic support to Kean University, please use our online giving at www.keanfoundation.org and click on the “Make a Gift Now” icon. You can also call the Foundation Office at (908) 737-3460.