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Teacher Education

University of Illinois at Springfield

Volume 7, Issue 6

Welcome to spring – finally! I think ... Well, at least the Spring 2014 semester is going by quickly, and that means that a group of new teachers is about to hit the job market! For those of you who are completing your programs, congratulations from everyone in the Department of Teacher Education!

From the Chair, Dr. Cindy Wilson:



For those of you who are still working your way through course work, this is advising time – time to get signed up for Summer and Fall classes. This summer we are offering two online courses: TEP 207 Foundations of American Education will be taught by Dr. Brian Kahn, and TEP 318 Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment will be taught by Dr. Traci Van Prooyen. (TEP 318 will require one on campus visit on June 28th.) This fall, we will be offering another new course, TEP 315 Managing the Diverse Classroom, which will also be taught by Dr. Traci Van Prooyen and will be taught on campus. (There will be an online section offered in Spring 2015.) This is a course that students have requested for years, and it is finally here!

In this newsletter, we highlight a couple of teacher candidates who have taken advantage of the professional development opportunities that abound here at UIS and in the local area. 'Life-long learner' is one of the most important characteristics of the best teachers, so it is never too early to get involved in professional organizations and mapping out how you will continue on your trajectory of continuous professional growth once you are licensed. We would like to see each and every teacher candidate involved in at least one professional organization by the time they leave UIS.

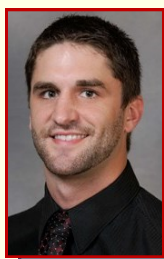
Last but not least, we are saying goodbye to our intrepid and dear Graduate Assistant of the last three years: Lucy Parker. If not for her, you would not be reading this newsletter. If not for her, I would be completely bald from pulling out my hair over data collection. If not for her, our entire department would be far less enriched by the gift of her personality, her kindness, her expertise, her hard work, her humor, and her friendship. We will miss you terribly, Lucy. Congratulations on completing your Master's Degree in Human Development Counseling, and best of luck in your future endeavors. Thank you for all you have done for us; I hope we will all be invited to the next graduation!



Two STAR Students' Stories



Chase Brinkley and Zack Morrissey are two outstanding TEP students who presented a project for our annual UIS StARS research symposium in April 2014.



Chase remarked: "During my second semester at UIS I was introduced to TEP advisor, Dr. Kahn. His experience as a teacher and passion for teaching changed my ideas of becoming an educator."

"This fall, during my pre-clinical observations in my TEP 438 course with Dr. Kahn, I had my first opportunity to teach a lesson to a middle school class. My instructions were to incorporate a primary source document into the lesson. The lesson was about the Progressive movement during the first part of the 20th century. I created this lesson because I remembered doing a

similar lesson in high school and enjoyed it. The majority of the students did well with this lesson and they all seemed to enjoy the change of pace."

"When asked if they had ever done an activity like this, the students said, "no" and they enjoyed "observing and interpreting photographs." Some students struggled with the activity, but once we discussed the worksheets as a class, those same students began to contribute some great thoughts. ***This lesson allowed students who were not great readers to realize there are more ways to learn and gave them a feeling of accomplishment.***"



Hello! ***My name is Zack Morrissey...*** Chase and I were both in TEP 438 last fall which was a social studies methods course for secondary candidates. The purpose of the course was to

show the interdisciplinary nature of the social studies through the use of primary sources obtained from the Library of Congress website archive. We were to find the primary sources, and then write our observations about them.

I myself have worked with primary sources before in my History classes here on campus, but I never really remembered working with them while I was in high school. Therefore, Chase and myself decided to use primary sources in the classrooms that we were observing in that semester. I was in a rural high school outside of Springfield, and I had the students use a Georgian woman's diary that lived through General Sherman's march to the sea during the Civil War. The students were to read the excerpt and then pull examples from the primary source to relate it to the lesson we were covering in class.

Thank you and congratulations on your participation in StARS!



TEP Investing in Research...



At the end of the Fall 2013 Semester, the TEP Department traveled to Hawaii to attend the *Hawaii International Conference on Education*. Dr. Wilson, Dr. Childs, Dr. Mitchell, and Dr. Van Prooyen all attended and presented various research projects including: *Using Portraiture to Understand: Going into Teaching in K-8 after Another Career*, and *Smiling Your Way Through Troubled Times: Moving from Burnout to Resilience*. Dr. Van Prooyen also solely presented her research project titled: *The Disposition and Character of a Teacher: Can Anyone Be a Great Teacher?* Dr. Kahn also contributed to these projects, but unfortunately was unable to travel and present.

When asked about their experience in Hawaii, they all responded with appreciation and enthusiasm. In fact, Dr. Mitchell, who is a newly hired full-time TEP professor this year said, "It is exciting when other educators want a copy of your dissertation, so that they can help their students write using the same methodology." She also mentions, "Presenting and spending time in Hawaii with my new colleagues was a great way to get to know them better. The conference was motivating for networking and asking questions of others who have published books and articles!"

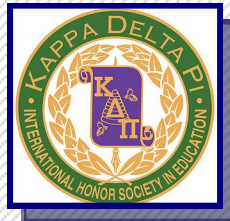


Dr. Van Prooyen, another outstanding newly hired faculty member, also commented about her experiences. "For me, it was the collaboration with other educators from around the globe who are passionate about education and who want to see the success of students who will be or are teachers, as well as for the students they teach." Furthermore, all of the TEP faculty expressed interest in this, and other ongoing projects, which they hope to continue to learn and present in the future!

Students and teacher candidates are also encouraged to explore their own research interests!

Welcome Kappa Delta Pi, the Alpha Alpha Gamma Chapter!

Dr. Van Prooyen has made a huge impact in regenerating the *UIS Alpha Alpha Gamma Chapter of the Kappa Delta Pi Student (KDP) Organization*. Kappa Delta Pi is one of the largest and most prestigious educational honor societies in the world, with over 600 chapters and more than 45,000 educators. *Kappa Delta Pi is dedicated to scholarship and education and is pledged to various ideals, including: scholarship and excellence in education, promoting development and dissemination of educational ideals and practices, enhancing continuous growth and leadership, fostering inquiry and reflection on significant educational issues and maintaining a high degree of professional leadership.*



tion profession. *For anyone interested in KDP, various benefits from membership include: professional development, publications, opportunities for scholarship, access to the Teacher Hotline, career and educational assistance, and discounts on selected products and services.* Both undergraduates and graduates may be eligible for membership. Please contact KDP Chapter Advisor, Dr. Van Prooyen, at tvpanp2@uis.edu for inquiries for membership. *New members are encouraged! KDP will hold an initiation ceremony and reception on Saturday, May 3rd, from 1pm-3pm in Conference Room G of the UIS Public Affairs Building. At this event, Dr. Jennifer Gill, the newly hired superintendent of Springfield Public Schools will be speaking. KDP is honored to have her as the guest speaker!*

KDP recognizes scholarly achievements and dedication to the educa-

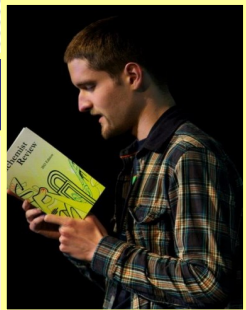
Student Spotlight: Robert Von Nordheim

Every semester, Teacher Education spotlights one or more students who excel ... This spring, TEP recognizes Robert Von Norheim.

After 5 years at UIS, I'd hope that my reputation precedes itself. In case it doesn't, the name's *Robert Von Nordheim*. I enrolled as a history major in '09, but quickly realized that my writing skills were more than average. Even my chemistry professor took notice, praising my lab reports (which were beautifully written, if a little short on science). I changed my major to English and picked up an education minor in Spring '10.

Since then, I've held some odd jobs and done some odd things on campus. I worked in the HSB art gallery for 2 years while my art major friends shelved books in Brookens (the irony wasn't lost on us). I wrote columns for the UIS Journal, hastily devoured a history double-minor; I published work in the Alchemist Review and later served as their fiction co-editor. My semester at our British sister school, the University of Hull, was probably the peak of my college years. I made friends from across the globe, learned to love Woolf and Orwell, and sincerely tried to enjoy soccer (that didn't take).

Seconds later, I turned 23 and came face-to-face with graduation. I'm about to end a smashing turn as a Southeast High student teacher; I'll move back to St. Louis and gear up for grad school when I'm through. My dream is to earn a PhD and become an English professor, but I know I'll stop by another high school on the way. *I chose to be a teacher because of my love for the content; there's so much to explore, and I still feel like a student. My summer reading is about to get serious.*



Robert Von Nordheim,



*Thank you for sharing, Robert!
Teacher Education is very proud of you and eager to see your continued passion as an educator and writer!*

TEP Spotlight

A Conversation with... *Cooperating Teacher, Ms. Martha Jett*

1. **What do you enjoy most about teaching?** I enjoy the kids! Every year they touch me in a special way. What I like best is when they see me in the hallway the next year and have to come up and give me a hug or say something to me. They might even leave me a note. I have received some emails. They remember me. The ones that gave you the most trouble can say something to you that melts your heart. They are glad to see you.
2. **If you had any advice for a student currently in the Teacher Education Program, what would you tell him or her?** My advice is to remember to show the children that you care about them. Let them know you believe in them, even if it is hard to do so. Remember tomorrow is a new day. You are shaping the children of today to be the adults of tomorrow. Let them see how excited you are about learning, even if it is not your favorite subject. Let the children know that you learn from them too. Their ideas are important. I have learned from my students, and they have come up with some of the best ideas to do in our classroom.
3. **Why did you become a teacher?** I became a teacher because I felt this was my calling. Really! I have a passion for children and their desire for learning. When I was young, I knew I wanted to be a teacher or a nurse. I used to bring other children over to my house, and we would play school. I have always loved working with children. My father was a Baptist minister and would bring home children that needed a place to stay. I would help my mother care for these children. I can remember one time we had 12 children in our home. Mother had to take them to the doctor's office. She volunteered me to help her. I began teaching when I was 13, in Sunday School. We had a blast. I still teach Sunday School today with the same excitement.
4. **What is your favorite subject to teach?** Reading is my favorite subject to teach. I enjoy watching students begin to understand how words are put together and creating Power Points to help them understand different reading skills. I think it is awesome to see a child find their "niche" in reading. Watching a child improve and get excited about what they are reading thrills my soul. I have seen children go to the school library and pick the same book that I just finished reading aloud or in the process of reading. That's cool to see. My heart soars when a child finds a word we have studied for vocabulary and they will use it in their writing or find it in another book. They will call me over and say, "Look I know that word!" "Yes you do." I want to instill into my students to become readers for life; not just in 3rd grade.



TEP Graduate Assistant Says, "Thank You!"

When walking into work this morning, I turned on the lights to BRK 341. As I sat in my rolling chair beside my cabinets filled with photos, drawings, notes from the other grad assistants, and my to do lists, I thought to myself: "There will be a time when this isn't my place." As I continued through my day, I pondered this thought several times over. I sat through our weekly department meeting, and as everyone greeted me and congratulated me on my acceptance into a doctoral program for counseling supervision and education, I replayed my sad existential realization in my mind. A small voice, compartmentalized somewhere in my subconscious, contradicted my thoughts of absolute loss. "No, this will always be my place, perhaps just not physically." When knowing I was going to write an article thanking the Department, I was unsure how to conceptualize all of the emotional, physical, and academic growth I have gained from my work here as the Teacher Education Graduate Assistant. From my simple cognitive reframe during my time in our weekly Wednesday meeting, I realized knowing that TEP will always be 'my place' speaks much louder than listing a multiplicity of facts and skills attained. Just as writers and poets reinforce today, "Home is where the heart is." TEP is one of my homes, and I am so sad to be leaving here physically, but will have each and every member in this Department still in my heart. TEP is a home of mine. With the mentors in the Teacher Education Department, my heart lies. I want to simply thank Dr. Wilson, Dr. Kahn, Dr. Childs, Dr. Mitchell, Dr. Van Prooyen, Ms. Shea Sims, Ms. Karina Moore, and Ms. Heather Nielsen for being lifelong mentors and facilitators. You have helped me so much, just as you help teacher candidates everyday, to fulfill our dreams! Thank you for this. Always! -Lucy



Project MSS

Project Midstate Student Support for Teaching From the Desk of the Director, *Dr. Ronda Mitchell*



Project Midstate Student Support (MSS) is preparing for its Graduation/Induction/Scholarship Ceremony on Sunday, May 11th in the PAC restaurant from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. We look forward to honoring graduate Nathan Peter at the banquet. He is an extraordinary student and is an excellent representative of MSS. He receives kudos for his professionalism and has a promising career as an educator. In the fall, a few more students will be inducted into MSS. We are excited to meet them.

Thank you to Dr. Traci Van Prooyen and Valerie Farmer for joining me on the Scholarship Committee in selecting this year's recipients. The students will be announced and honored as they receive scholarships from Michah and Peggy Barlett, Betty and Ralph Hurwitz, and Melinda and Alfred LaBarre.

This spring students had the opportunity to expand their knowledge of their future teaching careers as they observed in many of the local schools. A special thanks to Vachel Lindsay Elementary, Southeast High School, Glenwood Elementary, and Glenwood High School.

How do students get an appreciation for the arts? By attending either *Jersey Boys* or *Tao: Phoenix Rising*, which were both held in the Sangamon Auditorium.

We had several visitors this semester! Dr. Vicki Childs, a TEP professor, helped students with the mathematics portion of the required Test of Academic Proficiency (TAP). Representatives from the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the Counseling Center, and the Career Center spoke with the students to inform them of the services available to them on campus. The Career Center prepared them in the steps of resume writing. David Lewis, national known speaker from Bloomington Illinois, talked with them about reaching their goals. All of the speakers were helpful to the students as they continue along their journey through college and becoming teachers.

School Observations *Make Your Experience Purposeful!*

How can Project MSS students take a deeper look into the classrooms and critically evaluate the best teaching practices? By visiting many schools throughout the year. This semester students visited either Vachel Lindsay Elementary and Glenwood Elementary or Southeast High School and Glenwood High School, depending on which licensure program they are pursuing.

After visiting, students reflect on the different teaching strategies, philosophies, and styles that they observed. They begin to critically evaluate which teaching models they want to use in their classrooms.



TEP 202 and 203 students observing at Springfield Schools



Project MSS

Project Midstate Student Support for Teaching

Guest Speaker Motivates Students



Motivational Speaker and Independent Consultant, **David Lewis**, from Bloomington, Illinois spoke with Project MSS students about goal setting and the importance of fulfilling their dreams.

With creativity, a personable approach, and much humor, Lewis inspired students to work through their circumstances, set realistic goals and interactively taught them

the importance of speaking up and getting involved.

Lewis is known for his high energy and a program that is filled with practical and applicable content. As an award-winning speaker, trainer and facilitator, he has designed and delivered customized programs for educational organizations all over the United States.

Lewis is the author of three books and is in the process of writing a fourth. His passion to motivate and help others overcome obstacles is evident in his authentic presentations and his printed works.

**“A setback sets you up for a comeback.”
-David Lewis**

MSS students raved about his guest appearance, and said that they would like to hear him speak again. Maria Wiggins wants to help her students learn and engage more.

Rachel Ray said that Lewis was personable and his interactive exercises “blew her mind” with how interesting they were.

Valencia Swope reflected, “I learned that setting goals is a huge part of being successful—that’s what I want.”

Realizing that there are lots of things in life that we do not know and that we should try to learn something new every day, are just some of the pointers that Lewis left behind.

Getting a Taste of Classroom Teaching

“My time at Southeast Springfield High School has been an incredibly rewarding experience thus far. I’ve taken over three American History classes and one section of Advanced Case Studies, which examines the psychological backgrounds of infamous historical figures. We’ve been focusing on Adolf Hitler so far, and now we’re moving into mass murderers and serial killers. It’s certainly a dark subject matter, but it’s proven to be a very interesting elective and the students enjoy it.

In the American History sections, I have led the students through topics like Reconstruction, American imperialism, and World War 1.



Nate Peters in his classroom at Southeast High school, posing with Presidents Barak Obama and Ronald Regan

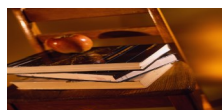
The most rewarding part of being at Southeast for the last several weeks hasn't been finding content or activities, but getting adjusted to the fact that each class is in itself a living, breathing thing. Over the course of the week, each class can have a good or bad day. Each class can bring too much or not enough energy, with students too eager to share their thoughts or not willing to talk at all. Rather than the creating activities and writing lesson plans, crafting and grading assignments, or dealing with the house-keeping things like passes, attendance, tardy slips, etc. Adjusting to each class' mood on a daily basis has been challenging, but it's forced me to put myself in the students' shoes and I think that is the most valuable lesson I've learned.”

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Important Dates:

Tuesday, May 3rd–
Kappa Delta Pi Induction
Ceremony (1pm-3pm)

Saturday, May 10th–
Last Day of Classes

Saturday, May 11th–
Midstate Student Support (MSS) for
Teaching Induction Dinner (2pm-4pm)

*Monday, May 12th to
Saturday, May 17th* –
Finals Week

Saturday, May 17th–
Commencement

Wednesday, May 21st–
Final Grading Deadline

Monday, June 2nd–
Summer Classes Begin

Saturday, July 26th–
Summer Classes End



***CONGRATULATIONS
SPRING 2014
STUDENT TEACHER
CANDIDATES!***

Elementary Spring 2014:

***Jason Hadley* Amy Hemphill*
*Laura Zulauf***

Secondary Spring 2014:

***Gretchen Addis* Fawn Ames*
Megan DeMaris James Doerfler*
Kelli Fitch Bernard Fraley*
Matthew Gomez Adam Heald*
*Michael Markwell *Terence Martey*
Jason Newburger Nathan Peter *
Robert Von Nordheim Haiping Yau***