

College of Education *Quarterly*

Creating Opportunities For Excellence

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Video Conferencing Now In High Definition

The Center for Quality Teaching and Learning (CQTL) has acquired a High Definition Polycom Video Conferencing unit. CSU administrators and faculty—among them President Timothy Mescon and Education Dean David Rock—have already taken advantage of the new system.

HD video conferencing includes two 42-inch plasma displays that deliver images, sound, and content with enhanced quality. With this technology, educators can engage in the best virtual experience in almost any environment with superior video and audio clarity. According to Dr. Larry Moore of the center, “Whether you want to connect your classroom to NASA for an interactive space simulation, attend a conference without leaving campus, or participate in a meeting anywhere in the world, video conferencing is probably the most efficient and effective solution.”

In late September, Mescon participated in a global meeting originating from Bucharest, Romania. Afterwards, he commented, “I presented my co-authored paper on Entrepreneurship in Eastern Europe and CSU’s technology platform placed me right in the middle of the conference, live from the Cunningham Center. This is a most important resource.”

Rock of the COE has used the system as a productive and cost-effective mechanism to attend regional and national meetings. Rock exclaims, “Awesome use of technology! The video and audio quality during my conferences was wonderful. The Polycom has saved me at least 10 hours of travel time in the past month! The world has truly become flat.”

Since Polycom technology is Internet-based, any distant site that has similar equipment can be easily connected via an IP address. Many colleges and universities



Romania calling? President Mescon connects through HD video conferencing.

around the world have Polycom compatible units on their campuses. One can also find this technology in K-12 schools, health centers, and business and government organizations.

With decreases in funding sources and the need to offer more classes in a virtual

environment, educators are weighing the pros and cons of synchronous video conferencing. It seems clear that the possibilities of the HD conferencing system are limited only by accessibility at remote sites.

New Faces In The College of Education

The fall semester kicked off with five well-qualified new faculty in the College of Education.

They are Dr. Gregory Blalock, Assistant Professor of Special Education; Dr. Evelyn Blalock, Temporary Assistant Professor of Teacher Education; Professor Sandy Little, Temporary Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education; Dr. Gary Shouppe, Temporary Associate Professor of

Educational Leadership; and Dr. Melissa Sullivan, Temporary Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education.

Evelyn Blalock and Gregory Blalock come to CSU from the University of New Mexico. She has a background in both child development and special education, while he was on the faculty of UNM for

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COE Retreat Focuses On “Who We Are”

“We are a dynamic community that leads,” notes one faculty member.

“Maybe so,” comments another. “I’d say that we are a diverse group of educators who serve our students.”

“True enough,” observes a third, in this case a newer member of the faculty. “What I’ve noticed since I’ve been at CSU is that the College of Education is filled with supportive professionals who both inspire and challenge others, including themselves.”

Though fictionalized to some extent, the above statements are strikingly similar to those emanating from an exercise that faculty and staff engaged in during a planning retreat at the outset of fall semester. The exercise was simple enough, as participants brainstormed adjectives, nouns, and verbs that collectively comprise a working and dynamic definition of the College of

Education. The words most frequently suggested were *innovative* (adjective), *leaders* (noun), and *serve* (verb).

Later in the term, faculty revisited the topic in October’s First Tuesday Forum. Drs. Pat Dutterra (educational leadership) and Gregory Blalock (special education) offered contrasting perspectives on the subject. Blalock spoke briefly of his commitment to social justice and noted that one reason he applied to CSU a year ago was the fact that the College of Education embraces transforming schools to benefit children and adolescents. Dutterra observed that end-of-program leadership candidates identified many similar attributes of the College of Education when she conducted a similar exercise in one of her classes. In essence, the faculty sees the process most positively.

“From time to time,” Dean David Rock points out, “it’s important for faculty and staff to stand back a bit and think about the College of Education, both what it is and what it wants to be. Doing so underscores



Pat Dutterra shares student perceptions of “who we are” in the College of Education.

that, together, we are more than the sum of our respective parts. We are a community of learners striving to reflect and grow. I think that matters a great deal.”

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seven years. Professor Sandy Little is pursuing doctoral studies at Auburn University, where she has been a Summer Enrichment Program Director. She is NBPTS-certified in early childhood education and is highly proficient in technology applications in education.

Gary Shouppe, a CSU graduate in the 1970s, joins the leadership faculty after a productive career in Muscogee County Schools, both as teacher and administrator. An adjunct faculty member since 2006, he has been principal at four MCSD schools, most recently having opened Veterans Memorial Middle School.

Melissa Sullivan joins the COE early childhood faculty after an eight-year stint at Auburn University, Montgomery, where she coordinated AUM’s mentoring program for new teachers. Among other assignments, she teaches cognitive development and language arts methodology.



Jeff Conklin (right) shows the ropes to new faculty Evelyn and Gregory Blalock.



Melissa Sullivan and Sandy Little compare notes.



Gary Shouppe teaches graduate research and leadership courses.

High Marks For Wilks And CSU Children's Theatre On Tour

Theatre education graduate Melissa Wilks, class of 2000, was named Muscogee County's Teacher of the Year for 2008 in May. A teacher at the Wynnton Arts Academy, formerly Wynnton Elementary School, Wilks was chosen from a pool of 61 school teachers of the year in the district. She was the first elementary teacher to be thus honored in the past six years. The honor included a cash award and one-year lease of a new Chevrolet.

Wilks' achievement came as no surprise to her former professors and colleagues at CSU. Brenda May Ito, program coordinator for theatre education, praised her in these terms: "She was a stellar student, of course, and she was heavily involved in the Theatre Department's touring children's productions."



**Melissa Wilks,
Muscogee County
Teacher of
The Year**

Ito recalled that, as a student teacher, Wilks earned praise from her cooperating teachers for her creative and unique ideas on ways to reach children. Today she makes her classroom available to numerous teacher candidates from CSU, thus preparing a new generation of talented drama educators.

What is Wilks' secret? She puts it this way: "My goals and my philosophy of teaching can be summed up in one word: fun. I know that when students enjoy what they are doing, they participate freely, work hard, and retain more."

Some would say that Wilks may cause children to pair hard work and discipline with fun—possibly even that hard work adds up to fun. In describing a recent performance of fourth-graders at the Wynnton Arts Academy, Bebe Bahnsen of the *Ledger-Enquirer* reported Wilks' backstage pep talk with her students in these terms:

"Eyes on me, please. You are already performing," Wilks reminded the children. "You are going directly to your place. You

are not speaking. The show has begun."

As a CSU student, Wilks and other theatre education majors participated in the Touring Children's Theatre Productions. Among the plays she worked with were *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *TarHeel Tales*, and *The Velveteen Rabbit*.

The tour, a mainstay for over a decade, reaches as many as 25,000 children each semester in Alabama and Georgia. One of its primary successes may be the fact that the shows feature dedicated Columbus State University theatre education majors both onstage and behind the scenes. These young people want to bring the power of drama to children when they are highly impressionable. Many children who see the productions of plays such as *Cows Don't Fly and Other Known Facts*, this semester's offering, have never experienced a theatrical performance before. They especially enjoy meeting cast members afterward.



Theatre education majors perform for thousands of Georgia and Alabama children.

CSU's Touring Children's Productions go directly to schools rather than require schools on limited budgets to find funding for field trips. As a result, educators support this program both for its convenience and for what it offers its viewers. Depending on the play, teachers may link the theatrical performances to their curriculum and use them in creative ways to reach their children.

Interested in booking *Cows Don't Fly and Other Known Facts* for spring 2009? Contact the Theatre Department at (706) 504-8400.

College of Education Initiates Online Graduate Programs

In an effort to accommodate graduate students who seek quality online studies, the College of Education has or will soon launch new programs geared toward the needs of different clientele. Courses in new online programs have a separate tuition structure from campus-based programs. Each three-credit class costs \$1,050.

Master's Degree in Accomplished Teaching

The M.Ed. in Accomplished Teaching

is an Internet-based comprehensive master's degree for already licensed teachers, either in Georgia or elsewhere. The 36-hour program is offered 100 percent online. Its mission is to guide students, who may access course materials from either home or work, as they apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in their classrooms.

Among program requirements are

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Susan Barlow and Lenoir Gillam Reflect On Memorable Learning Experiences

Editor's Note: Earlier this year, we invited faculty to recall what had been, for them, powerful learning experiences and then to comment on how those experiences shaped their own teaching practice. Lenoir Gillam's and Susan Barlow's responses, following, are quietly powerful recollections of moments in teaching and learning.

Susan Barlow I saw Mr. Whitson for the first time in 9th grade. Short in stature, legs brittle and straight, hands clutching braces, he made quite an impression, but not because of his disability. With a round belly and white hair and beard, he was almost like Santa Claus, but that all changed once you talked with him. He *was* jovial, but, moreover, he was intelligent and passionate about what he loved; science. Dan Whitson taught Advanced Placement Biology, and I was bound and determined to get in his class before I graduated. Finally I was able to fit his class into my schedule in 11th grade.



Susan Barlow

With only six in the class, Mr. Whitson let many things happen that other teachers just didn't allow. I'm not talking about chewing gum or sneaking in a soda. We had *discussions*—discussions where you challenged everything, from the latest science discoveries in the news to our own textbook. He allowed us to discover things on our own, to try out ideas, and to make mistakes. These are the same things that I try to pass on to my students today when they are working with young children!

Upon thinking of a particular learning experience with Mr. Whitson, I recall the day he brought a dozen eggs in an incubator. We were all to cut a small “window” in the shell (without damaging

“He allowed us to discover things on our own, to try out ideas, and to make mistakes. These are the same things that I try to pass on to my students today when they are working with young children!”

Susan Barlow

the membrane underneath) to observe the development of the chick. Or maybe the most notable experience was when the class bullfrog croaked for three days straight and the class was charged with the job of figuring out how to get it to stop! I don't have one defining memorable experience, but I do have a most memorable *person*. His brush with polio as a child changed his outlook on life, like no other person I've met. He didn't allow excuses, challenged us, made us question our own beliefs, and

pushed us to not just become better students, but better people. And isn't that what teaching is all about?

S. Lenoir Gillam One day when I was a middle school counselor, I said “hello” to a student, calling her by name, as I was walking through the halls. She expressed excitement that I had spoken to her and told her friends enthusiastically that I knew her name. Though I did not know her well, I was struck by the impact of such a simple gesture. The experience caused me to reflect on significant people in my life during my own middle school years. One teacher in particular came to my mind. I could not recall any major events that led to her importance in my life, but I could remember so many *little things* that contributed to a lasting impression after all those years. Later that day, I called her on the phone (she lives in Texas) and told her that she had made a difference in my life and that I appreciated her. Needless to say, she was surprised to hear from me.



Lenoir Gillam

I have been so fortunate to have wonderful teachers and/or mentors throughout my educational history. The key piece of insight that I take away from those experiences is how important relationships have been in my personal and professional development. Those relationships have made me feel valued, and

“Though I did not know her well, I was struck by the impact of such a simple gesture.”

Lenoir Gillam

they have provided supportive and safe environments for growth to occur. As a professor, this reflection exercise offers a strong reminder of the importance of being present and authentic in

relationships, creating environments that are conducive to students' growth, and remembering to tend to the little things (e.g., learning names quickly). I value the significant teachers and mentors who have been (and still are) a part of my life, and I hold an ongoing commitment to serving in that professional mentoring role with my students.

Susan Barlow, Instructor in Early Childhood Education since 2005, holds a bachelor's and master's degree from Auburn University. Her specialities include cognitive development and science methods.

S. Lenoir Gillam, Professor of Education, has been a member of the COE faculty since 1997. A native Texan, she earned advanced degrees from the University of Georgia. She coordinates CSU's School Counseling program.

Walk Much? 10,000 Steps A Day Or Else

Fresh off its successful mission of walking 50 million steps in recognition of CSU's first half century, the College of Education has challenged faculty and staff across campus to get in step. More than 150 faculty and staff have accepted the friendly challenge, agreeing to take part in PAWS, a team-based walking program that encourages participants to walk at least 10K steps a day.

Dr. Ellen Martin spearheaded the program a year ago. For 2008-2009, she has been joined by Dr. Jeanine Fittipaldi-Wert and ably supported by Shunta Walls.

Sponsors of PAWS have provided participants with pedometers. They include the American Heart Association, the D.A. Turner YMCA, State Farm Insurance, the Hughston Hospital, and the Georgia Coalition for Physical Activity and Nutrition.



Dr. Ellen Martin is enthusiastic about Cougar PAWS.

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courses in research, trends and issues in education, multicultural education, and professionalism. Requirements may be completed in four consecutive semesters, including two summer sessions. The program is designed around precepts of the Georgia Framework for Accomplished Teaching.

For more information and application materials, contact the College of Education via email at EDAT@colstate.edu or call (706) 568-2301.

Master's Degree in Leadership

In addition, the COE will implement an online leadership degree in January. The M.Ed. in Leadership, which can be completed in 15 months (two semesters and two summer sessions), is designed to meet the needs of professionals in corporate,

military, non-profit, and educational settings who wish to improve leadership skills and advance their careers.

Although the program is fully online, its hallmark will be collaborative interaction between students and faculty as they tackle real-life leadership scenarios. Faculty are committed to balancing the development of scholarly expertise with what they perceive as "friendly customer service." Through the program, leadership candidates should learn how to become agents of change.

The cost is \$1,050 for a three-credit course. For more information, contact Dr. Tom Hackett at hackett_paul@colstate.edu or call 706-888-7791.

Master of Arts in Teaching Mathematics and Science

Qualified mathematics and science teachers are in short supply in Georgia and

Wilson Honored As Outstanding First-Year Teacher

Brook Wilson, a 2007 graduate in early childhood education, was named Muscogee County's Outstanding First-Year Teacher for 2007-2008 in May. A second-grade teacher at Lonnie Jackson Academy, Wilson was one of numerous nominees, each of whom was judged based on such elements as contributions to the school and/or school community, original or innovative ideas and approaches to teaching, and a willingness to share.



Brook Wilson and Kay Dowis, Principal of Lonnie Jackson Academy

GAYC Recognizes Wetherington as Student of the Year

The Georgia Association for Young Children has chosen CSU graduate Pam Wetherington as its Student of the Year for 2008. Nominated by SAFE Director Lisa Shaw, Wetherington was recognized in ceremonies in mid-October. She is now teaching in Harris County.



Pam Wetherington

elsewhere. To help expedite the transition of qualified men and women into secondary classrooms, the College of Education—in collaboration with Kennesaw State, Georgia Southern, Valdosta State and West Georgia—will launch in January an online Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in Mathematics and Science Education.

Designed to attract individuals with undergraduate degrees in math or a science discipline, the program leads to certification at the master's (T-5) level. Program options include mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics, and earth/space science. For more information and application materials, please contact Dr. Tom Hackett, Director of Graduate Studies (hackett_paul@colstate.edu), or Patty Jamieson at (706) 568-2301 or jamieson_patty@colstate.edu.

College of Education Students Are On The Go

A little-known opportunity College of Education students may capitalize on is professional development funded through the Student Academic Travel budget. In the past year, students in several majors—health/physical education, early childhood, science education, and English education—have traveled to conferences and presented workshops and papers to fellow professionals.

A case in point is Laura Garmon, a graduate early childhood major, who along with reading professor Sallie Miller, co-presented “No Excuses! Let’s Teach Our Students to Read” at an International Reading Association (IRA) conference in Atlanta. More than 300 professionals attended the session. Garmon’s role was to present case studies reflecting a pre-service teacher’s perspective. Garmon is looking forward to using strategies she gleaned from other IRA workshops.

Like Laura Garmon, three science education majors—Susan Sneed, Jamie Gonzalez, and Matthew Young—were funded to present papers at a joint meeting of the Georgia and Florida Academies of Sciences in Jacksonville in March. They were sponsored by Drs. Bonita Flournoy (science education) and Anil Bannerjee (chemistry/geology), who also presented papers. Sneed, Gonzalez, and Young received awards

acknowledging the quality of their scholarship.

Sometimes Student Academic Travel supports students sharing their own scholarly endeavors, but other activities may also be funded. A good example is support extended to Tammie Barnes, a graduate student in health & physical education, who attended Tucson Camp Abilities in Arizona (TCA). Barnes worked closely with Dr. Jeanine Fittipaldi-Wert, assistant director of TCA as well as the newest member of the COE faculty in health/physical education. TCA is a developmental sports camp for blind children held each summer at the Arizona School for the Deaf and the Blind.

Other faculty sponsor students to attend professional conferences, typically in-state. Ellen Martin (health/physical education) and James Brewbaker (English education) are cases in point. Martin secured funding for ten students to participate in a three-day meeting of Share the Wealth at Jekyll Island early this year. At the event, students learned best practice techniques from experts in their chosen field.

Brewbaker enabled a dozen teacher candidates, most of them student teachers, to attend the winter 2008 meeting of the Georgia Council of Teachers of English at Callaway Gardens. At the meeting, which focused on active Georgia writers, M.Ed. candidate Missie Stugart, was impressed by sessions that highlighted new technology for the classroom. Others—among them Crissy Neal, Rosanne Tempesta, and Jessica Boggs—enjoyed listening to Terry Kaye, author of *To Dance with the White Dog* and *The Year the Lights Came On*, a young adult



Tammie Barnes, a health/physical education major, works with a boy with impaired vision at Camp Abilities in Tuscon, Az.

novel set in the 1940s.

Approved student travel for 2008-2009 includes support for students attending meetings of the Georgia Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the American Counseling Association in Charlotte, and the National Association of Education for Young Children in Dallas. At the latter meeting, Angela Williams, recipient of the CSU Faculty Cup for 2008, will present a paper.



Laura Garmon and Professor Sallie Miller at IRA.



Susan Sneed and biology students at Northside HS

Long Presents Workshop On Couple Therapy

Ric Long, Professor of Counseling, presented a workshop on Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy (EFT) to the Columbus Chapter of the National Association of Social Work in September. He explains that emotionally

focused couple therapy, or EFT, is a short-term, systematic, and evidence-based approach to reduce distress in adult love relationships and create more secure attachment bonds.

Long has been a member of the CSU

faculty since 1991. He joined the counseling faculty after several years as chair of the Department of Communication.



Ric Long

Bonita Williams Investigates Writing Strategies

Dr. Bonita Friend Williams, Professor of Reading Education, promotes instruction that emphasizes writing and its links to teaching and learning both reading and technology strategies. A CSU Faculty Writing Fellow (2007-2008), Williams recently completed a project that infused digital storytelling into her graduate and undergraduate literacy courses, where she demonstrated specific ways in which digital storytelling enhances the writing process.

Extending the writing process beyond print publication, digital storytelling adds voice and visuals to make the “story” come alive for both the writer and the audience. Williams’ students completed projects that ranged from “word stories” in a course focused on teaching word analysis and vocabulary development to book talks in a multicultural literature course for school library media majors.



Bonita Williams explains aspects of reading comprehension to her students.

Students enrolled in Williams’ middle grades courses used digital storytelling as a reflection tool, thereby relating personal experience in learning to read and write to major literacy theories. Williams’ students presented their projects at CSU’s first Celebration of Student Writing in April.

Most recently, Williams has received a grant from the Faculty Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning to support her investigation of assessment strategies of professional writing for teacher candidates. Rubrics were developed from assessment instruments used in English 1101 and 1102, on Cognitive Level and Quality Writing Assessment (CLAQWA), plus measures linked to Georgia Performance Standards and statewide writing assessments. Writing records and portfolios were maintained to assess the impact of feedback provided through the rubric on the quality of student writing and level of achievement. Dissemination and discussion of the results of this project are planned for spring 2009.

Fall Photo Contest

For this issue’s contest, we invited faculty, students and friends to submit up to three photos of “teachers, children and adolescents, families, and others engaged in learning.” Our panel of judges chose these three pictures, which depict a substantial range of learners who, it is clear, are thoroughly turned on by learning in the arts, mathematics, and . . . umm . . . family science! Congratulation to our winners.



First Place: “Beginning to See the Light” Art student teacher Robyn Watson shows youngsters at Waddell Elementary some fine points of sketching (photo by Tara Lewis).



Second Place: “Your Move, Quadrant 4” Participants at the October Mathfest bring algebra to life (photo by Kenneth Jones).



Third Place: “Cake Magic” Margie Grace Wilder stirs things up in the kitchen (photo by Tom McCormack).

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All Smiles (see “Students On The Go,” page 6)



English student teachers Rosanne Tempesta, Derik Roberts, Laura Englebert, Jessica Boggs, and Crissy Neal pause between workshops at Callaway Gardens.

In Our Next Issue

- A Conversation on Writing (In May, College of Education faculty James Brewbaker and Tom Hackett were named Outstanding Teachers of Writing by the Columbus State Faculty Center. In our March issue, they discuss the writing of teacher candidates.)
- What's New in the Partner School Network?
- New Teachers: Coping with the First Year in the Classroom

Interested in receiving the *College of Education Quarterly* at home?
Contact Brenda Gross at (706) 568-2212.