Ten Year Anniversary Celebration

The Lewis University College of Education will celebrate its 10th anniversary as a college this fall.

The College of Education has expanded quickly over the years, going from a department, then a school within the College of Arts and Sciences in 1999 and then becoming a separate college of its own in 2003.

The original department of just seven members in 1990 has grown to a college of 29 faculty and nine staff offering five undergraduate and 15 graduate programs, which include several endorsement programs and a doctoral program.

A celebration to mark the anniversary is planned for Homecoming Weekend 2013 in conjunction with Family Day, on September 28 from 1 to 4 PM. With a theme of “Past, Present, and Future,” an event to mark the occasion will include guest speakers Lewis University President Brother James Gaffney, FSC; Academic Associate to the Provost and former College of Education Dean, Dr. Jeanette Mines; as well as current Dean, Dr. Pamela Jessee.

Recent Educatoris Lumen award recipients and other College of Education award winners will be recognized at the event. Attendees will also be able to donate to a variety of scholarship funds which assist future College of Education majors.

In addition, College of Education graduates, current students, faculty and staff will have the opportunity to contribute photos for a memory lane photo book project.

Two COE student organizations, Teachers of Tomorrow and the Collegiate Middle Level Association (CMLA), will oversee a time capsule project that will include predictions of what students, graduates, and faculty see themselves doing in 15 years. The capsule will be opened on the 25th anniversary of the College in 2028.

Other planned activities for the celebration will include a kid’s corner activity area and live music played by pianist, Kasey Ryan.

The Celebration committee consisting of Dr. Laura Sloan (chair), Dr. James Moses, Dr. Nancy Kenedy, Dr. Christopher Palmi, Jennifer Buss and Jean Lucas encourages all students, graduates and faculty to send in their photos for the memory lane project to sloana@lewisu.edu.

Maureen White Named Outstanding Principal

The recipient of the 2013 Bishop Roger L. Kaffer Outstanding Principal Award is Maureen White, Principal of St. Irene Catholic School in Warrenville. The award was presented at the Fourth Annual Bishop Roger L. Kaffer Outstanding Principal Award Breakfast on April 11 on the Lewis University campus.

Mrs. White, who has been an educator for 24 years, has served as Principal of St. Irene’s for the past 12 years. Her work there has been powerful testimony of the core values espoused by the College of Education and the Mission of Lewis University. In addition, she personifies the Catholic values and principles of school leadership honored in the Bishop Roger L. Kaffer Outstanding Principal Award.

As a social justice advocate, Maureen understands that inclusive education is a particular mission of Catholic schools and has energetically worked towards accommodating the needs of all learners especially those most in need. A St. Irene parent shared this poignant testimony, “As the parent of a special needs child, we faced many obstacles with my son. I have a vivid recollection of sitting in Maureen’s office, hearing her say, ‘As long as we can help him learn, we want him here.’ And my son, challenged with dyslexia, ADHD and social issues, will graduate from St. Irene’s this year – and has been accepted to three Catholic high schools!”

As her nominator wrote, “Maureen has been a stalwart promoter of teaching every child through differentiated learning. She has supported teacher training, scheduling and technological innovations to ensure that every child is served.” Numerous improvements have been inspired by and implemented under Maureen’s leadership. In 2002, she facilitated the piloting of a new learning standards report card for early childhood (K-3) which became a “turning-point” decision for St. Irene’s and eventually a paradigm shift for the entire Joliet Diocese. It enabled children to be assessed based on differentiated instruction. The St. Irene model was used to create a smoother transition for schools who later adopted these standards.

The Reverend James Antiporek, Pastor of St. Irene’s Parish states that, “For the last 12 years, she has brought to this school a level of excellence and a spirit of joyful learning. I, the staff and community could not be more proud. Maureen is a true leader.”

Mrs. Maureen White, Principal at St. Irene Catholic School in Warrenville is the 2013 recipient of the Bishop Roger L. Kaffer Outstanding Principal Award. Mrs. White (center) is pictured here with Mr. Lawrence Wiers, Director of School Partnerships, College of Education and Dr. Pamela Jessee, Dean, College of Education.
Dr. Pamela Jessee Named Dean

After serving in the role on an interim basis, associate professor Dr. Pamela Jessee was recently named Dean of the Lewis University College of Education. A former school administrator, school psychologist and classroom teacher, Dr. Jessee began her career with the Lewis University College of Education in August 2004. In addition to her varied roles in the field of education, she also was the chair and director of special education during her career, working at Lockport High School as well as Oak Park and River Forest High School.

“Serving as the Interim Dean for eight months amounted to a long-term job interview for the position,” said Jessee, “which helped me prepare to take the reins. Certainly the responsibility heightened,” she said of her change in job status. Despite the increased responsibility, she said she’s been welcomed into the new role. “I’m very humbled by the support that I have gotten from the faculty, as well as the dean’s group, the Provost and the President,” she said.

As the new Dean, she’s looking to continue the positive trends that the College has enjoyed over the past year. She notes that recently all of the programs were recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education for their annual program reports with recognition by national specialty organizations. The College of Education is also working on its institutional report to receive reaccreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

Some highlights from this interim year included completion of the inaugural year of the new Early Childhood Education program, which is one of the few Early Childhood programs in the state to include both Special Education and ESL endorsements. In addition, the Illinois State Board of Education recognized the redesigned Principal Preparation Program for the Educational Leadership Department.

Jessee also points to increasing partnerships with area schools including the Joliet Diocese and Lasallian partners, as well as a professional development partnership that will launch in the fall between the initial education programs and Gompers Junior High School in Joliet. “Partnerships are key to insuring that teacher candidates have adequate time working in a real classroom, as well as helping to provide professional development support for our P-12 school partners,” Jessee said.

The College of Education has also launched a partnership with the College of DuPage for Elementary, Special Education and Early Childhood programs that provides a smooth transition from the Associate’s Degree to the Bachelor’s Degree and a teaching license in the State of Illinois that are affordable and can be completed in two years at the community college and two years at Lewis University.

As the new Dean, Dr. Jessee also has a full slate of initiatives she plans to oversee. First among them is to boost enrollment in the College of Education’s programs. Enrollment, she said, has decreased due in part to increased entrance requirements by the State Board of Education and what she believes is a negative portrayal of the profession. “A big part of my job is promoting the profession,” she said. She hopes to counteract some of the misconceptions of the teaching field through her efforts. “There is a perception that anyone can teach school,” she said noting an oft-repeated myth portrayed in the media. “What does not get portrayed are the small triumphs that occur each day in classrooms as teachers make significant progress with their students,” she noted. “Teachers deserve and are entitled to be treated like professionals,” she stated. “They’re really unsung heroes.”

Efforts to show the positive side of the profession were discussed at an enrollment day event in the College of Education. Faculty and staff volunteers, as well as members of the admission and financial aid departments, met to talk about ways careers in education could be promoted. Plans and projects garnered through these discussions will be carried out in the next few years. One of the plans is to develop more collaborative relationships with area high schools that may help in recruiting students to the profession.

In addition to her outreach and promotion efforts, Dr. Jessee said that she and her team are working on a principal cohort preparation program in cooperation with the Diocese of Joliet. “As a Catholic and Lasallian institution, we need to take a good look at what our candidates need if they are going to be working in a Catholic school setting,” she said. “I would like Lewis to be known as the university that prepares teacher and principal candidates to work in Catholic schools.”

According to Jessee, a Catholic school summit is being planned for the fall. Participants will discuss the distinct challenges facing leaders in Catholic schools such as managing a school board, conducting their own fundraising efforts and running their own human resources department. “They have way fewer supports than a public school principal,” she said.

As such, plans are also underway to launch The Institute for the Advancement of Catholic and Lasallian Education which offers further support for those professionals working in the field of Catholic education. “It’s a more explicit and deliberate focus on Catholic education and what that means for teacher and principal education,” said Dr. Jessee.

Other priorities in her new role include prepping faculty and students to teach the common core curriculum standards which move from a memory-based demonstration of learning to an application of knowledge and critical thinking. “That’s going to be very different for people working in the field,” she said.

She would also like to bolster the College of Education faculty’s knowledge of English as a Second Language (ESL) pedagogy because of its far-reaching connection to all aspects of education. Jessee believes ESL touches all programs and requires educators to become multicultural educators and social justice advocates.
Letter from the Dean

Dear Friends of the College Education,

Happy 10th Anniversary to the College of Education at Lewis University! Although education programs have been part of the Lewis academic offerings since the mid-seventies, the education unit as an independent College within the University structure is only ten years old. The College began as a Department of Education within the College of Arts and Sciences and then became the School of Education which by 1998 included programs in elementary education, special education, secondary education, reading and literacy and administrative preparation. With expansion came great growth in enrollment and on July 1, 2003 the College of Education was founded. Some of the faculty who were key agents for this change are still here teaching in the College and serving as high level administrators in the University. Those of us who came later are very grateful for their hard work and perseverance. What started as a few faculty and two programs has grown into a thriving college of 15 programs whose impact is known throughout the region.

So if you are available, please join us on Saturday afternoon, September 28, 2013, (Family Day of Homecoming weekend) to share in some birthday cake, meet up with old friends and make new ones. You can find us in the tent area on the commons and we would love to have you participate in the celebration.

So what makes the Lewis University College of Education distinctive?

Partnerships with our neighboring school districts is an important part of what we do to maintain the excellent reputation that we have earned. Through these partnerships we have been able to offer special tuition rates and discounts for graduate degrees, provide professional development and grant participation and collaboratively seek the guidance of our school partners to produce educators who have cutting edge knowledge and skills to impact today’s schools and classrooms. How blessed we are in the College of Education to have such wonderful colleagues to work with.

The quality of our faculty also makes us distinctive. Our faculty are exceptional teachers who model the very pedagogy that they want the candidates to exhibit in the classrooms. They stay current in their fields through professional associations and conferences and engage in meaningful research that adds to the body of knowledge of how to improve schools and student learning. Our faculty model the characteristics of Lasallian education by always putting the students first, providing whatever support is needed to achieve success and establishing a community of learners who care about and support each other.

I would be remiss if I did not mention our candidates at both the undergraduate and graduate levels of study. Whether candidates are here to earn their first teaching license or superintendent’s license, Lewis University College of Education candidates are the best. They never shy away from hard work. They have a “can do” attitude. Like sponges they soak up everything they can to be the best they can be. But more than anything, they learn to have the heart of an educator here at Lewis University. They grow to honor and respect the dignity of every person they meet. They approach each student with the belief that every child is capable of learning. They integrate the ideal of teaching as vocation and assume the role of advocate for social justice and equity in their communities and schools. They expend their efforts in service to others without asking for benefit or reward. Education candidates thrive here in the College and I am always humbled when I see their transformation as I hand them their diploma on graduation day. By far, one of the best parts of my job! In closing, please keep in mind that educators can, and do, make a difference and that the majority are caring, dedicated professionals who make the world we live in a better place one student, one classroom and one school at a time! Blessings to all.

Dr. Pamela A. Jessee
Dean, College of Education

Christine Sleeter addresses social justice teaching and learning at Lewis University

Dr. Christine Sleeter – a researcher, published author and Professor Emerita in the College of Professional Studies at California State University – shared insights from her years of experience in the social justice field with Lewis University students and faculty last February. The event was focused on promoting social justice teaching and learning in K-12 schools.

Sleeter raised the concern that there is a “gutting of public resources going into public education.” She said teachers are experiencing a loss of money for public services, which results in larger class sizes and fewer teachers and materials. Her advice was for teachers, faculty and students to unite as a group to speak back to public leaders.

Attendees participated in a Q&A session after the presentation and were inquisitive about the many aspects of teaching. Sleeter left the education students in attendance with the recommendation to get to know the kids they are teaching, and if possible, their families as well.
The Spring 2013 Recognition Ceremony was held on April 24 at St. Charles Borromeo Pastoral Center. The Awards for Program Excellence were given to candidates who completed an initial certification program and were recognized by their faculty members for displaying exemplary mission values. Pictured here are award winners and faculty.

(Left to right, front row) Brother James Gaffney, FSC, President Lewis University; Melissa Vranicar, Graduate Secondary Education; Sydney Lawler, Undergraduate Combined Special Education/Elementary Education; Nicole Dodoer, Undergraduate Elementary Education; Rose George, Undergraduate Special Education; Paul Greenawalt, Graduate Elementary Education; Susan E. Tekampe, Graduate Special Education; Mary and Larry Grossman, aunt and uncle of Kelly Schreiber, Undergraduate Secondary Education who was student teaching in Rio de Janeiro.

(Left to right, back row) Dr. Christy Roberts, Chairperson, Department of Special Education; Dr. Laura Sloan, Undergraduate Director, Department of Special Education; Dr. Pamela Jessee, Dean, College of Education; Dr. Dorene Huvaere, Chairperson, Department of Secondary Education; Dr. Suzanne O’Brien, Chairperson, Department of Elementary Education.
College of Education Faculty Update

Dr. Chris Palmi had the opportunity to go to Rio for eight days at the beginning of June. While there, he assisted the administration at Our Lady of Mercy School with the development of their K-12 curriculum maps. He also delivered two addresses to the faculty: one on using strategies to assist ELL learners and one on implementing a middle school curriculum. Our Lady of Mercy faculty was receptive, as well as appreciative, of the assistance.

Dr. Palmi also conducted three summer seminars at Lewis. Two involved utilization of reading strategies in the 6-12 classroom and one involved implementing writing strategies across the curriculum. Participants considered ways in which these strategies could help their students to become more proficient in their respective content areas.

Drs. Deborah Augsburger, Dorene Huvaere and Palmi presented findings from their three-year research study at the AACTE annual convention in Orlando, Fla., in early March. Their research involved pre-service teaching candidates’ beliefs toward the inclusion of young adult multicultural literature in their classrooms and/or curricula.

Assistant Professor Erica Kwiatkowski-Egizio graduated with a Ph.D. in Mathematics Education from the Illinois Institute of Technology in August 2013.

Dr. William Blackwell, Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education presented findings from his dissertation, titled Making Alternate Assessment Score Reports a Meaningful Tool for Parents, at the 94th Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association in San Francisco, Calif.

He also completed a research project on IEP development and submitted the manuscript to an education journal for review.

In addition, Dr. Blackwell worked with a group of undergraduate students on a research project titled Voices, Images, and Words: The Presence of Children and Youth with Disabilities on Charter and Private School Websites. The findings were presented at the Lewis University Celebration of Scholarship and also submitted as a conference proposal for the 2013 TASH conference in the fall.

Department of Special Education faculty members Jennifer Buss, Dr. Mary Fisher, Dr. William Blackwell and Elizabeth Pearce developed and submitted a conference presentation proposal titled Addressing Ableism in the Common Core State Standards. It was accepted for inclusion in the fall 2013 AATC annual conference.

Assistant Professor Jennifer Buss presented in February at the Learning Disability International Conference in San Antonio, Texas. Her presentation was on Faculty Attitudes and Perceptions of Disabilities in Higher Education.

GREW Workshop Held This Summer

The College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences co-hosted a series of GREW workshops over the summer, the third year the classes for area educators were held at Lewis University.

Financed under an Illinois State Board of Education Math and Science grant, the Green and Renewable Energy Workshop was taught by faculty from both the College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences. College of Education Assistant Professor Dr. Lauren Rentfro and Dr. Dorene Huvaere, Chairperson of the Department of Secondary Education worked with Dr. Ray Klump, Chairperson of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, who is the program’s lead organizer.

Twenty five teachers from Joliet School District 86 took part in the workshops which taught them to integrate science and math lessons into elementary classroom curriculum and boost science instruction in grades K-8.

The teachers spent two weeks during their summer break putting in about eight hours each day for the workshops. Lessons focused on subjects ranging from physics, chemistry, biology, math and computer science. The workshops were not just aimed at science teachers but also included health, PE, music and art teachers as well.

According to Dr. Rentfro, the classes included a variety of labs with hands on activities centered on the science of cleaning up oil slicks, solar ovens and solar panels. He and Dr. Huvaere helped demonstrate methods of transforming that information into lessons they could use with their students.

“We spent the time talking about all the new technologies and energy and how to bring that back to the classrooms,” said Dr. Rentfro.

In addition to their classroom work, the group also took field trips to Argonne National Laboratory, a wind farm near Aurora and the Com Ed training facility in Rockford.

“The extensive exposure to physics, chemistry and biology gives teachers time to process the information,” said Rentfro. “We go into more detail than they received during their original college coursework.”

“Participants were required to complete an action research project during the school year and then report their findings the following year,” he said. “The projects give students a chance to put into practice what they’ve learned and reinforce the skills they’ve developed.”

For one project, an art teacher found new ways to repurpose glass to be used in making jewelry and other household items. Rentfro says they are often amazed at what they are able to do.

In addition to the groups coming away with knowledge and renewed enthusiasm, grant money from the program also gets distributed to the participating school districts for the purchase of science equipment for their buildings.

The curriculum for the seminar was co-authored and taught by Dr. Ray Klump; Dr. Joe Kozinski, Chairperson of the Department of Physics; Dr. Jason Keleher, Chairperson of the Department of Chemistry; Dr. Jerry Kavouras, Director of the Environmental Science program and Dr. Cynthia Kersey of the Department of Math and Computer Science.
Fall 2013 Author Visit

Mark your calendars for the 2013 Annual Author Visit in the College of Education. Sally M. Walker, an award-winning non-fiction author, will speak to students, faculty and area educators on Lewis’ Romeoville campus on Thursday, September 26, according to Dr. Deborah Augsburger, Chairperson of the Department of Reading and Literacy.

“We will welcome guests and Ms. Walker with pizza at 5:45 p.m. in the University Dining Room on the Romeoville campus,” said Dr. Augsburger. “Her presentation will begin at 6 p.m., followed by an autograph session at 7 p.m.”


She is the author of many books including the picture books, *The Vowel Family* and *Druscilla’s Halloween*. Her Early Bird series of books covers earth science, energy, birds and physics for children in the primary and intermediate grades.

Biographies of Jackie Robinson and Bessie Coleman are just two of the titles in her Early Reader book list, aimed at readers in grades 1 – 4. Other subjects include a mystery fish, a search for dinosaurs, a shipwreck and a super croc.

Her most recent work, *An Explosion of Glass: The Halifax Explosion of 1917*, was published in 2011. It tells the story of two ships that collided in Halifax Harbour. The resulting explosion flattened two nearby towns that were then further ravaged by a snowstorm the next day, hampering efforts for rescue.

For more information, contact Dr. Deborah Augsburger at augsbude@lewisu.edu.

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Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction:
Designing Environments for Contemporary Classrooms

Students living in remote areas, or those unable to make the trip to campus, will find much to like about the College of Education’s new online Master of Education degree in Curriculum and Instruction.

The program, which will be taught entirely online, will appeal to educators looking to improve their teaching skills, according to Dr. Joyce Hayward, Professor, Department of Reading and Literacy and Accreditation Coordinator for the College of Education. She said that the new program will appeal to students who haven’t found a graduate program that fits with their situation.

“Maybe their geographical location or personal situation keeps them from being able to attend traditional classes,” said Dr. Hayward. “And with the College of Education’s approach, which stresses ethical leadership, social justice and a multicultural methodology, it will also address the immediate needs of the students that people find in their classrooms today,” she said.

That is why the program has been titled, Designing Environments for Contemporary Classrooms.

While the College of Education has offered some online courses before, the new master’s program will be the first time that the College offers a complete degree program online.

In addition to the convenience of allowing students to study when it fits their schedule, the online degree also casts a wider net for students outside of Lewis’ traditional geographic base.

“If you live in Montana, you could tap in to this and be able to do the whole program online,” said Dr. Hayward.

The new program is a team effort from several departments within the College of Education. Members of the Departments of Reading and Literacy, ESL, Special Education, Secondary Education and Educational Leadership have all contributed to the design of the 8-week courses that will be offered.

To help create the best methods for presenting the material online, Dr. Hayward said that the College of Education has partnered with Deltak, a company that specializes in designing online learning programs.

“We’re bringing the knowledge of content and pedagogy,” she said. “And they’re helping us to figure out the best way to do that online.”

Online tools could include Power Point presentations with audio voice-overs, videos and online assessment tools. Deltak will also help develop and streamline the online interface which will be consistent from class to class.

Students will be able to set their own hours but will have to meet deadlines set for completing reading and other coursework responses.

“But they may be doing it at 2:00 a.m.,” said Dr. Hayward of the asynchronous approach offered to students. The first four courses were developed over the summer with a plan to launch the online program in January 2014.
Dr. Joyce Hayward Attends Buttimer Institute

This summer, College of Education professor Dr. Joyce Hayward completed her third year as a student at the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies in California.

Held on the campus of St. Mary’s College in Moraga, Calif., about 45 minutes east of Oakland and near the Napa Valley, the Institute provides colleagues the opportunity to learn more about Saint John Baptist de La Salle, the founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The Institute is named for Brother Charles Henry Butttimer who served as the first American Superior General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

Agreeing to take part in the Institute requires a long-term commitment that not everyone is prepared to make. Participants commit to two weeks of immersive study in California each summer starting in late June for three consecutive years.

“It’s actually very beautiful there. It’s somewhat of a spiritual retreat,” said Dr. Hayward. “As we study about the life and teachings of De La Salle, we are encouraged to reflect on our own lives.”

Students take classes in the mornings and evenings with afternoons free for reading and preparing for their courses. Each year students learn about different aspects of De La Salle, including his educational philosophy, his spirituality and the Lasallian mission. During year one, students learn about the life of Saint John Baptist de La Salle. In year two, the focus shifts to his educational methodology. And in year three, attendees learn about the role of spirituality and prayer in Lasallian education.

“So it’s a very complete formation program,” said Dr. Hayward. She said that she has enjoyed getting to meet and interact with other participants who work in different areas of Lasallian education during her time at the Institute.

“The people who attend are those who work at Lasallian universities, high schools, and for the Christian Brothers,” she said, noting that attendees come from all over the U.S. and international locales as well.

“It’s a great opportunity to meet people whose job is similar to yours and get their take on Lasallian education,” she said.

Dr. Hayward received her master’s degree from Lewis University, and taught for many years as an adjunct for the College of Education before becoming a professor in the Department of Reading and Literacy 12 years ago. She said that her participation in the Buttimer Institute has given her a deeper understanding of the Lasallian mission and how it relates to her own teaching.

“Education is more than just filling up people’s minds, it’s being able to touch their hearts as well,” she said.

There are several other formation programs offered by the Christian Brothers. Dr. Laura Sloan, professor in the Department of Special Education and Joan Williams, Licensure Officer are also graduates of the Buttimer Institute. Dr. Pamela Jesse, Dean; Dr. Deborah Augsburger, Chairperson, Department of Reading and Literacy and Dr. Lauren Hoffman, Director of the Ed.D. Program have attended the International Lasallian University Leadership Program in Rome.

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Bryan Bolton Receives Father Aquinas Award

Bryan Bolton of Downers Grove received the Father Aquinas Colgan Award during Lewis University’s undergraduate commencement ceremonies held May 19 at the Romeoville campus. Bolton, who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Secondary Education, earned a 3.4/4.0 cumulative grade point average. This special achievement and recognition is awarded to graduating seniors at each of the University’s undergraduate commencement ceremonies held in May and December.

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others,” is a quote by Mahatma Gandhi. It’s the best way to describe my experience here at Lewis University,” explained Bolton. He found his calling and true passion through joining Big Brothers Big Sisters of America at Lewis University.

Involved off and on campus, Bolton was a part of University Ministry, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America and was a leader for the Koinonia and the Catalyst retreats. He also has led the Lasallian Youth Gathering for high school students from across the country.

Students are nominated for the Father Aquinas Colgan Award by University faculty and staff. To be eligible for nomination, a student must be an undergraduate who has qualified for graduation, who is a four-year student of Lewis University with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 and who has demonstrated exemplary personal, intellectual and social development in the spirit of Lewis University’s Mission.

A Lewis University tradition, the Father Aquinas Colgan Award has been presented to an outstanding undergraduate student at the University’s commencement exercises since 1953. The Award recognizes students who have demonstrated personal and intellectual growth, a strong commitment to their faith, and a firm dedication to the Lasallian values of justice and association.

The Award honors the memory of Father Aquinas Colgan, O. Carm., who was chaplain early in the University’s history. A U.S. Army chaplain during World War II, Father Aquinas died on May 6, 1945, while attempting to rescue a wounded corporman. He was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for valor, becoming one of only seven chaplains to receive this honor in World War II. He had previously received the Purple Heart with an Oak Leaf Cluster for acts of heroism and for two earlier wounds. Father Aquinas is remembered for his character, bravery, persistence in pursuing goals and also for his deep personal faith.

Fall 2013
Catholic School Cohort Program

In a partnership between the Catholic Diocese of Joliet and the Lewis University College of Education, 12 Catholic school educators will complete their master's degrees and General Administration endorsement this fall.

Candidates taking part in the two-year cohort program at Lewis' Oak Brook Campus were identified by their building principals as having the qualities necessary for leading their own buildings. These educators, employed in a Catholic school setting, will be working with teachers for staff development and leading other school-based initiatives.

"It's a variety of leadership roles that principals look at in terms of their particular building," said Dr. Jane Petrek, Chairperson and associate professor in the Department of Educational Leadership.

Cohort participants received discounted tuition through a Lewis University and Diocese of Joliet partnership.

"It's a broad geographic area that's represented," said Dr. Petrek, noting that students taking part in the program came from all over the Chicago suburbs including Kankakee, Bourbonnais, and Downers Grove.

The two-year cohort at Lewis' Oak Brook Campus had its origins in the Diocese's intent to develop future leaders for their schools. Developed in partnership with the College of Education, Diocesan school leaders said that they were anticipating vacancies at various leadership levels in their schools over the next several years.

"In order to meet that need, they wanted to develop their own candidates to fill those vacancies," said Dr. Petrek. "It's an attempt to grow their own."

According to Dr. Pamela Jessee, Dean of the College of Education, "The program is an attempt to prepare educational leaders from the superb teaching force in the Joliet Diocesan school system."

"The Department of Educational Leadership and the Diocese worked collaboratively to insure quality curriculum and experiences so the next generation of Catholic school administrators would be well prepared and ready to lead," she continued. "The College of Education looks forward to additional cohorts for principal preparation in the future."

Candidates took two courses per semester, spending one evening per week in classes that ran 8 weeks each. In order to complete the 33 credit hour program in two years, students also attended classes during the summer.

Cohort candidates will complete the program in the fall of 2013 and graduate in December. They will be eligible to work as principals, assistant principals, deans and in other leadership roles in Diocesan schools. Some have already secured new jobs. Two teachers are transitioning to principal positions in the fall while another has been named an assistant principal.

For its part, the College of Education ensured that the course work met all of the State of Illinois standards and licensure requirements. Guest lecturers were also brought in to talk about issues particular to the Catholic school system.

Early Childhood Program Completes Inaugural Year

The College of Education's Early Childhood program recently completed its inaugural year of courses.

"We offer an Early Childhood endorsement," said Dr. Rebecca Pruitt, the program's director. "Our program trains students to teach young learners from Pre-K through 3rd grade."

Offered at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, the program saw an enrollment of 16 students in the past academic year. The program includes coursework which leads to endorsement in English as a Second Language (ESL) as well as Special Education. The graduate level of the program allows students with undergraduate degrees in fields outside of early childhood education to earn licensure.

"Sometimes they come to us with a degree in communications disorders, or special education, and now they want that early childhood license," said Dr. Pruitt.

The curriculum focuses on early childhood development with an emphasis on methods for teaching students at those age levels. The interaction and communication within family systems and its impact on young learners also plays a key role in the field of study.

"Those things are so important to early childhood and understanding child development," said Dr. Pruitt. "It's all a big part of early childhood specifically."

Dr. Pruitt plans to increase the enrollment numbers in the coming years, and also wants to spend time cultivating relationships with area schools. She hopes to develop a reciprocal association with schools that will accept student placements for field work, but also wants to help those working as teaching assistants and paraprofessionals to earn their teaching degrees as well.

"It would benefit everyone if people in support positions in the classroom can come to us to become licensed to teach," she said. "Moving forward it's all about developing partnerships," she said. Although in operation only one academic year, the Early Childhood program has worked with both public and private schools in Oswego, Lockport, Joliet, Bolingbrook, Romeoville, Hinsdale, Crest Hill and Shorewood.

Pruitt also hopes to develop partnerships with area community colleges to give students studying there a pathway to complete their four-year degrees and licensure at Lewis.

The program has already earned some honors and distinctions. Gateways to Opportunity, a professional development system, entitled Lewis University with an Early Childhood Education Credential Level 5. This means that an entitled institution has aligned their coursework with specific credential benchmarks (based on state and national standards) and meets additional credential requirements through coursework. Students from entitled institutions completing aligned coursework are eligible for two years to apply for credentials that are recognized by the state of Illinois. The designation reflects multiple professional standards, including National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards.

Last March, six students from the Early Childhood program submitted a proposal and were accepted to present a session at the "Celebration of Scholarship" forum that was held on the Lewis campus. The students presented a session titled, "Family School Collaboration."

Dr. Pruitt was very proud of these students, saying, "Their very first semester in the program and they were able to present!"
Teacher from Brazil visits the College of Education

Felipe de Souza Moreira Portilho spent five weeks this summer with the College of Education in order to immerse himself in the English language. Felipe is a Physics teacher from Our Lady of Mercy School (OLM) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, whose native language is Portuguese but is required to teach his Physics classes in English as OLM is a multiethnic English school. The College has a partnership with OLM and sends student teachers there for an international experience. OLM provides room and board for the Lewis students, as well as strong mentoring and supervision. The program is heading into its second year and has been very successful. When asked about the Lewis University student teachers, Felipe remarked, “We love having student teachers from Lewis. They are always very well prepared and fit very well into the culture of our school. Lewis can always count on us to help provide a culturally rich experience with our many nationalities and backgrounds.” Felipe had the chance to meet and spend time with Kenny Cronin, a Combined Special Education and Elementary Education major who will student teach at OLM this fall.

During his time at Lewis, Felipe audited graduate classes in curriculum and instruction, science methods and technology, a field which interests him professionally. He plans to take the new concepts and ideas that he learned here back to Rio and into his science classroom, as well as share them with his colleagues at OLM. He particularly enjoyed the nature walk with Dr. Lauren Rentfro’s elementary education science class. Felipe also had opportunity to participate in the Green and Renewable Energy Workshop with science, math and education faculty from Lewis and middle school teachers from Gompers Junior High in Joliet.

In order to help him experience American culture, many departments, faculty and staff entertained Felipe. He joined members of the Department of Secondary Education for a Chicago Cubs game and a 4th of July picnic complete with fireworks, a BBQ and s’mores. The Department of Special Education took Felipe out for buffalo wings and darts. He also joined Brother James Gaffney, FSC, Lewis University President and Lewis international students for an evening at a Joliet Slammers baseball game. There were shopping excursions, trips to the Chicago Art Institute, Russian Tea Room and Millennium Park, as well as dining on a multiethnic cuisine of pizza, sushi, vegan and Mexican food. Dr. Jessee, Dean of the College of Education, remarked, “We eventually needed to create a calendar for Felipe during his stay. Everyone here wanted to meet him and spend time with him and his time was quickly accounted for.” When asked about his experience at Lewis, Felipe had this to say, “This has been a delightful and surprising experience that far exceeded my expectations. I feel part of this Lewis College of Education family and will remain so for the rest of my life.” Felipe expressed gratitude to the College for such a wonderful, warm and loving expression of kindness. It was a tearful good bye as he boarded the plane to return to his life in Rio.
Alumni News

Robert Culp

Robert Culp, a 2008 College of Education alumnus and teacher from Dirksen Junior High School in Joliet, has been selected to the 2013 LearnZillion Dream Team. Culp, who completed the Combined Special Education/Elementary Education program, has also been an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Special Education.

More than 3,000 teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators from across the country applied for the Dream Team and only 200 were chosen to the highly selective Dream Team. These teachers were chosen based on their understanding of the Common Core State Standards and their ability to create high-quality, highly conceptual lessons that are easily understood by students.

As a member of the Dream Team, Robert received an all-expenses paid trip to San Francisco in May for TeachFest through the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. TeachFest is an intensive professional development conference that kicks off the Dream Team experience. Based on the “hack fest” model popularized by computer programmers who spend weekends coding and trading tips, teachers spent three days at TeacherFest working with Common Core experts, content specialists and other Dream Team teachers to better understand the new standards and the best ways to teach them. LearnZillion provides teachers with the technology and support they need to translate their classroom expertise into screencasts, a sophisticated but simple use of the computer screen for teaching.

After TeachFest, Dream Team teachers will capture their proven approaches and teaching methods in concise lessons that will then be made available at no charge to every student, teacher and parent through LearnZillion’s online platform at LearnZillion.com. More than 100,000 teachers are registered for the free site as well as 1.5 million students. More than 400,000 teachers and students view LearnZillion lessons each month from hundreds of countries around the world. Throughout the process, Dream Team teachers are motivated by the concept of “scaling their impact” beyond the walls of their own classrooms and schools. By sharing their lessons online, all students and teachers can benefit from the expertise of the Dream Team teachers.

Robert (Rob) Culp, 2008 College of Education alumnus, is shown here in his classroom at Dirksen Junior High School in Joliet District 86. Culp was recently chosen for the 2013 LearnZillion Dream Team.

Ted Stec

Ted Stec, who completed the coursework for a Type 75 General Administrative certificate at Lewis University in 2004, was recently named the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations for District 44 in Lombard. Stec has several years of both teaching and business office experience.

Dr. Louis Lee

Dr. Louis Lee, who earned both a Master of Arts in Secondary Education and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership at Lewis University, has been named Principal at Oswego East High School. Dr. Lee taught Chemistry at Lincoln-Way East High School located in Frankfort, Ill. During his tenure at Lincoln-Way East, he also served as a Football Coach, Dean, Assistant Principal for Attendance, Assistant Principal for Student Services and Associate Principal. In 2012, he worked in the Indian Prairie School District #204 as an Assistant Principal at Granger Middle School. Dr. Lee has also served as an adjunct instructor in the Department of Educational Leadership in the College of Education.
Dr. Pamela Jessee, Dean, College of Education welcomes the second grade class from John R. Tibbott Elementary School.

Brother Pierre St. Raymond, FSC of Lewis University’s Department of Chemistry demonstrates how to make “slime” for the students from Tibbott Elementary School who visited the campus in the spring 2013 semester.

A student from John R. Tibbott Elementary School in Bolingbrook shows off the “slime” she made in the chemistry lab as part of a college visit day to Lewis University.

Dr. Lauren Rentfro Receives Award

At the annual Lewis University Celebration of Service ceremony, Dr. Lauren Rentfro was very surprised when his name was announced as the winner of the De La Salle Medallion for Exemplary Volunteer Service. He thought he was there to support his colleagues who were receiving recognition for their years of service at Lewis University.

“I tried to give it back,” he said with a laugh. “I thought, ‘I don’t deserve this!’” Even faced with evidence of his many years of community service, Dr. Rentfro was still humble about his efforts and the recognition.

Lewis University presents the De La Salle Medallion for Exemplary Volunteer Service to faculty and staff members who perform outstanding volunteer service at Lewis University or in the community.

The Medallion was given in recognition of Rentfro’s years of volunteer service which includes his work as a director of children’s ministries at the United Methodist Church of New Lenox where he also teaches Sunday School.

In addition to his volunteer activities with his church, Rentfro has presented at institute days for Catholic school teachers. Last summer he travelled to Sucre, Bolivia with Diocesan volunteers and 11 students from Lewis University and other area universities. There he taught workshops and, with the students, volunteered in a soup kitchen and two elementary schools.

Dr. Rentfro has taught at Lewis for three years and is an assistant professor in the Department of Secondary Education. Before coming to Lewis, he worked as an administrator in the Valley View School District and previously taught science at Alan B. Shepard High School in Palos Heights.
Calendar of Events:

Welcome Back Cook-Out
Tuesday, September 10
Behind De La Salle Hall

Graduate Admission Open House
Tuesday, September 17
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Romeoville Campus

Sally M. Walker, Author Presentation
Thursday, September 26,
5:45 – 8 p.m.
Lewis University Dining Hall

Graduate Entrance Writing Exam
Thursday, September 26,
5 – 7 p.m.

Graduate Entrance Writing Exam
Saturday, September 28,
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Lewis University Homecoming
and College of Education 10 Year
Anniversary Celebration
Saturday, September 28
Romeoville Campus

Fall Break – no classes
Thursday and Friday,
October 10 and 11

COE Town Hall Meeting
Monday, November 4
4:30 – 6 p.m.
Sancta Alberta Chapel

Thanksgiving Holiday – no classes
Wednesday – Friday,
November 27 – 29

Ed Lumen Reception
Wednesday, December 4,
6 p.m
St. Charles Borromeo
Pastoral Center

Recognition Ceremony
Wednesday, December 4,
7 p.m
St. Charles Borromeo
Pastoral Center

Graduate Commencement
Saturday, December 14

Undergraduate Commencement
Sunday, December 15

Visit www.lewisu.edu for more information