

# ACTION IN EDUCATION

A publication for College of Education alumni

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION



In-service teachers and educational leaders learned about immigration issues at the Facing History Summer Institute. See pages 4-5 to read more.

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**IN THIS ISSUE**

2 | New building

4 | Facing History

8 | Celebrating Teachers

## New building welcomes students and alumni back to campus this fall



## Welcome to the “new” College of Education

Our prominent, new location on the corner of Belden Ave. and Halsted St. increases our visible presence as a leading educational institution in the community. The energy that accompanies a fresh start in our new space is palpable among faculty, staff and students.

Although we reconvene to do familiar work, we are filled with a renewed sense of purpose. Several areas in the College of Education are settling into their expanded office and work spaces. The Office of Advising, the Abello Family Academic Success Center Suite, the Center for Education Technology, and the Education and Counseling Center (formerly known as the Family Lab) all have upgraded facilities and brand-new technology in rooms designed with invigorating aesthetics. In addition, the College of Education is implementing initiatives that enhance the experience of our students as they prepare to serve the broader community in crucial roles, such as teachers, counselors and educational leaders.

I think a lot about our College of Education graduates and where their professional paths will take them. In 2012, the Career Center issued a survey\* to collect employment data on our alumni. I am thrilled to report that overall employment rates for College of Education graduates who were out of school just six months jumped by 10 points to 78 percent. The breakdown of employment in the various disciplines is as follows:

\*DePaul sent surveys to more than 3,000 students, and education students had a return rate of more than 80 percent.

Physical Education at 88 percent compared to 73 percent in 2011, Early Childhood at 86 percent compared to 83 percent in 2011, Secondary Education at 82 percent compared to 67 percent in 2011 and Elementary Education at 74 percent compared to 68 percent in 2011.

Early indicators suggest a better year for our more recent graduates as job postings from July 2012 to March

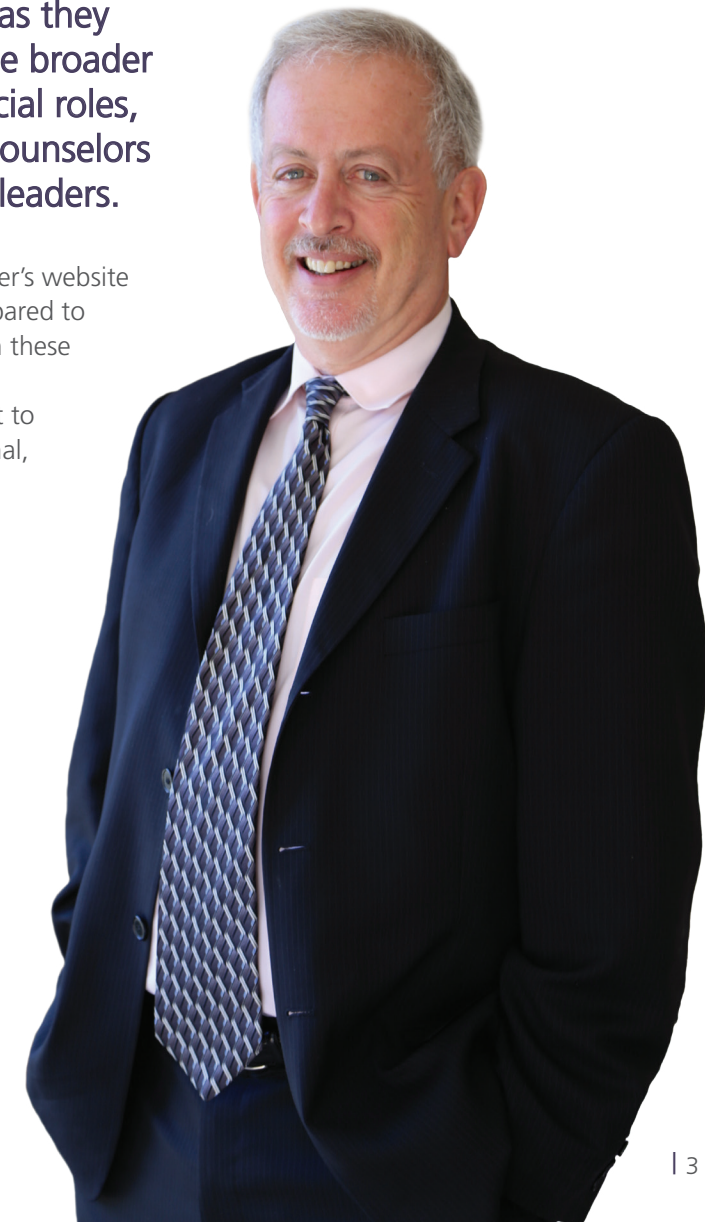
**The College of Education is implementing initiatives that enhance the experience of our students as they prepare to serve the broader community in crucial roles, such as teachers, counselors and educational leaders.**

2013 on our Career Center’s website were up 48 percent compared to last year. Reflecting upon these telling survey numbers, I consider our commitment to prepare urban, professional, multicultural educators. This success reaffirms our current vision and supports our mission and work here in the College of Education.

The College of Education not only responds to swift changes occurring in the workforce, but

we also prepare for the unexpected. We rigorously evaluate existing programs, and we work closely with the Illinois State Board of Education, schools throughout the metropolitan area, administrators from peer institutions and our own students, alumni and faculty in the field to determine education trends in order to enhance or develop new programs that ensure our students are well prepared for their field.

I look forward to what this academic year will bring.



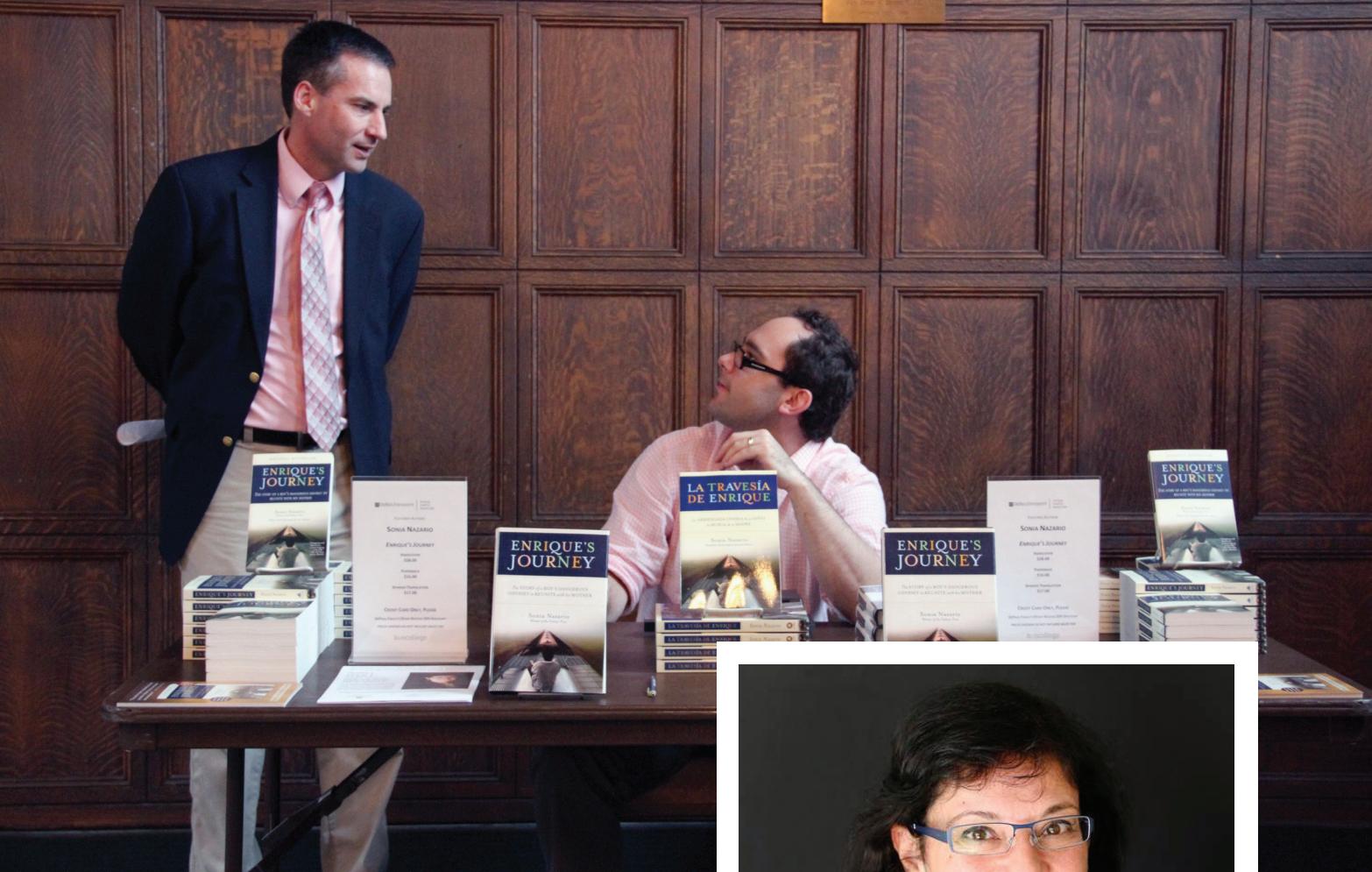
**Paul Zions, PhD**  
Dean, College of Education

After 50 years on campus, the College of Education finally has a home to call its own. “The College of Education for many years has needed a more contiguous space for their school,” says Mike Vasilko, president of Vasilko Architects and Associates, the firm that led the project. “It gives them an identity they didn’t have before. It was a perfect fit for the college.”

The four-story, 51,000-square-foot building is located at 2247 N. Halsted St. and stands on the east end of Lincoln Park Campus. Previously owned by Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago, the newly renovated structure was purchased by the university in 2012. After undergoing a \$6 million renovation from Feb. 1 through June 15, the building now houses offices for education faculty, staff and administration, as well as several university classrooms and computer labs. The advising office and the Education and Counseling Center are located on the first floor of the building, while the Abello Family Academic Success Center Suite and the Center for Educational Technology can be found on the second floor. “These are traditional spaces, but they don’t look traditional at all,” says John Lawler (EDU ’72, MED ’91), the building’s project director in DePaul’s facility operations department. “It’s a really beautiful building.”

Faculty and staff were involved in the planning process to ensure the needs of the college were met. While working within the existing structure, Vasilko integrated the use of glass walls and doors where appropriate to facilitate an open, yet secure, feel to the space. A statue of St. Vincent de Paul stands in front of the brick-faced structure, beckoning visitors inside. “It’s a very inviting building,” Vasilko notes. “It fits the character of DePaul’s campus.”

From light wood to warm colors, the new building’s aesthetics foster a sense of inclusiveness that is integral to the college’s mission. When the College of Education community visits the building, “they are going to see a change as soon as they walk in the door,” assures Dean Paul Zions. While the Schmitt Academic Center has served the college well over the years, he encourages alumni and friends to check out the new building. “It’s like night and day,” he adds. “Everybody who walks in feels much lighter because of the way the building is designed.”



## Facing History Summer Institute raises awareness of immigration issues



A captivated audience listened as Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Sonia Nazario recounted the harrowing journey atop freight trains from Mexico to the United States at the DePaul University–Facing History and Ourselves Collaboration’s annual Summer Institute, a three day, professional development seminar for in-service teachers.

Nazario’s book, “Enrique’s Journey,” tells the tale of a young Honduran boy’s struggle to find his mother in the United States. From avoiding being robbed or captured on the crossing to finding seemingly insurmountable cultural and language barriers once inside the United States, his passage to a new life was not an easy one. At the evening speaker presentation, Nazario spoke to about 80

members of the broader community, while the next day, she joined about 50 Summer Institute participants to discuss these complex issues.

“This is what your students are facing,” Nazario told educators and community activists, and then walked them through the various ways they could help alleviate the traumas of immigrant youths. “Integrating these students is one of the biggest challenges of our time,” she said.

While not all immigrants’ paths look like this, the story remains applicable to a broad range of immigration issues. “I think what Sonia Nazario gave us was a sense of compassion for the students who may be in our classrooms and

different ways to support them through very difficult circumstances,” says Hilary Conklin, assistant professor of secondary social studies and co-director of the DePaul University–Facing History and Ourselves Collaboration.

The Summer Institute entitled “Belonging in American Society: An Exploration of Immigration in American History and Its Impact in Our Classrooms” sought to develop content knowledge as well as to provide teaching strategies and methods to foster a sense of community in the classroom. It was held June 26–28 on the Lincoln Park Campus.

Each day was broken into different segments covering topics such as belonging, identity and community. Conklin, James Wolfinger, associate dean and co-director of the collaboration, and Phredd Matthews-Wall, associate program director at Facing History, alternated leading sessions, while Nazario and the Rev. Dennis H. Holschneider, C.M., president of DePaul, served as guest speakers. In-service teachers and educational leaders from throughout the Chicagoland area earned 21 CPDUs for participating.

“The idea of the institute is to reach out to educators at all levels,” Wolfinger says. Elementary, middle



school and high school teachers attended the event, as well as members of DePaul’s Educational Leadership Program. “We hope that by reaching out to our future administrators, we are going to have an impact on teaching in entire schools and districts, as well as individual teachers’ practices,” he explains.

**The DePaul University–Facing History and Ourselves Collaboration will offer events throughout the year. For more information, visit [depaulfacinghistorycollaboration.com](http://depaulfacinghistorycollaboration.com).**

## New programs meet the growing needs of the community

To keep pace with the ever-changing state of education, the college has created several new programs.

### BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN EXERCISE SCIENCE

Students interested in working in fitness-related fields can now choose between the traditional physical education major and DePaul's new exercise science program. "Health is becoming a major focus in people's lives in response to the obesity epidemic and related health concerns," says Anna Marie Frank (EDU '77), associate professor of physical education. "Our medical care is moving toward a prevention model instead of a recovery-treatment model." Students will take in-depth, specialized courses covering topics such as kinesiology, nutrition, exercise prescription and more. "These students will be able to provide structured and personalized training and expertise—they just are not doing it in a school setting," she explains. While many students are interested in becoming personal trainers,



the applications of this degree extend to hospital, community and corporate settings. "If this is part of who you are, make it your career because you will be so happy," she enthuses. The program launched in fall 2013, and applications are currently being accepted.

### MINOR IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION

As the United States becomes increasingly more diverse, teachers need to provide more students with the tools to address the needs of language learners. "A lot of schools are focused only on English as a second language (ESL)," says Jason Goulah, associate professor and director of the bilingual-bicultural education program. "There's less focus on maintaining and preserving the native language and native cultural identity." By completing a minor in ESL and bilingual education, students interested in becoming teachers in Illinois, throughout the nation or abroad will be equipped to address the linguistic, academic and social needs of diverse language learners. The minor is aligned with Illinois state requirements for ESL and bilingual education endorsements, as well as the DePaul Teaching ESL certificate. There are varied tracks to the program that are differentiated by whether students are seeking Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) licensure. "This is a great way for students to broaden their preparation and increase their marketability in the workforce," Goulah believes. "We are happy to offer this minor and hope that students will take advantage of this excellent opportunity." The minor launched in fall 2013 and is open to all DePaul undergraduate students.



### TEACHER LEADER ENDORSEMENT

For teachers who want to advance in their careers while staying in the classroom, the College of Education offers a new endorsement on existing licenses. The new Teacher Leader Program, developed jointly by the curriculum studies, educational leadership and bilingual-bicultural education programs, prepares in-service educators for additional leadership roles within the school. "It's designed for people who are really interested in issues of teaching, learning, classroom practice, curriculum development and assessment," explains Joseph Gardner, associate professor of curriculum studies. This program is targeted toward teachers with master's degrees who have at least two years of relevant work experience. "There aren't very many programs like it," he says. "This isn't a generic program. It's really a program designed to prepare people to be instructional and educational leaders in high-needs districts." The Teacher Leader Program will begin enrolling students in winter 2014.

### BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION MASTER OF EDUCATION IN MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION

Due to the recent change in ISBE teaching licensure, the college has developed new programs for middle school education. After consulting educators within the college and in the broader community, Mindy Kalchman, associate professor of elementary math, and Hilary Conklin, assistant professor of secondary social studies, created what they feel is an inclusive middle school program. "As a college with a focus on urban education and urban issues, our focus was to ensure that students who go through this program are really grounded in what it means to be an urban middle school student, not just an urban middle school

teacher," Kalchman notes. Required courses include counseling, physical health, human development, special education and more. "We tried to make it as comprehensive as we could to ensure that our graduates are being prepared in a way that will make them desirable to hire," she adds. Although the program is officially set to launch in 2015, students can begin to matriculate in 2014.

### BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Responding to a pressing need for more special education teachers, the College of Education is set to launch a new program. "There aren't many undergraduate special education programs because it is a very demanding and highly specialized area," explains Eva Patrikakou, associate professor of counseling and special education. "What we have created is a program that would offer comprehensive exposure to the field and hands-on experience in a very purposeful manner." The curriculum is designed to nurture and guide pre-service teachers so as to prepare them for any number of issues they may encounter in the classroom. It trains them to work with students who have a broad spectrum of abilities and disabilities. "In addition to knowing the content and theory, our students need rigorous experience dealing with different populations," she stresses. "It's a program that offers you what you need to be a leader in the field." Applications for the undergraduate special education program will be accepted for the 2014-15 school year.

Visit [education.depaul.edu](http://education.depaul.edu) for more information.



## Celebrating Teachers Initiative commemorates exceptional educators

From dolphin trainer to myth buster, graduate student Kathryn Roznai (CSH '13) was willing to investigate any career option, as long as it was challenging. But when she watched her high school chemistry teacher Christopher Cassidy in action, she decided she wanted to teach. "He did a lot of cool, really exciting demos—lots of explosions," she recalls. "He made it really fun to learn. I wanted to do that for the rest of my life."

Cassidy, a chemistry teacher at John Hersey High School in Arlington Heights, Ill., was just one of several educators honored by the Celebrating Teachers Initiative in 2013. "Acknowledging the impact that somebody has had in [his or her] life is a very important thing," says Cassidy. "[This award] means that I did what I intended to do, which is to help somebody with their life or their career. It means a tremendous amount to me that I made a difference in helping them get where they wanted to be."

The College of Education congratulates all 2013 Celebrating Teachers honorees.

Christopher Cassidy  
Myung Chi  
Rhonda Johnson  
Amy Kochenderfer-Preiss  
Darlene Oakley  
Sofia Orłowski  
Michael Piskel  
Michelle Sanborn  
Kristin White

Dean Paul Zions created the Celebrating Teachers Initiative in 2012 as a part of the College of Education's 50th anniversary festivities. "In today's times, with teachers being disrespected and disregarded, we thought it was about time that we turned some of the publicity to more positive accomplishments," he says. With that in mind, the college sent emails to graduating seniors universitywide to nominate K-12 teachers who made a significant impact on their lives.

The nine educators who were chosen were recognized at Honors Convocation on June 6. Videos of the honorees and their student nominators are featured on the College of Education website. "In some cases, these stories are heartbreaking," Zions says. "Yet in many cases, it's inspiring to hear about the effects that these teachers have had on these students' lives." Due to its overwhelming success, the Celebrating Teachers Initiative will be held annually.

As a future teacher herself, Roznai understands what the initiative is trying to accomplish. "I think teachers don't get the recognition that they deserve," she says. "Someone will say, 'That was my favorite teacher,' but that teacher will never hear about it." Now, through the Celebrating Teachers Initiative, there is a formal avenue to recognize those educators who have truly made a difference in the lives of their students. "If I were a teacher who got nominated by a student I taught five years ago, I'd think it was cool," she says. "It would help me realize that I made a real difference."

Did you have a K-12 teacher who inspired you? To be a part of the Celebrating Teachers Initiative, send a link to your YouTube video to Beth King at [bking18@depaul.edu](mailto:bking18@depaul.edu) for possible inclusion at [youtube.com/depaulcollegeofed](https://youtube.com/depaulcollegeofed).

To learn more, visit [alumni.depaul.edu/celebratingteachers](http://alumni.depaul.edu/celebratingteachers).



## COE alumna works to close the achievement gap

As a tutor with the Chicago Public Schools' summer program in 1988, Tanya Foster-DeMers (EDU '94, EdD '12) was presented with a unique opportunity. "The substitute basically allowed me to teach the class for the day," she remembers. "The assistant principal saw me and noted that I had a natural ability to teach." From that moment, Foster-DeMers knew she wanted to be a teacher. She was 16 years old.

The first of her family to attend college, Foster-DeMers visited DePaul with the Chicago Urban League, an organization that advocates for educational equality, economic development and social justice for the African-American community. Reflecting back, Foster-DeMers realizes that her experiences on campus helped her to better identify with the high-poverty communities in which she teaches. "Sitting in classrooms and seeing what some of my weaknesses were in comparison to my peers helped me to really understand that children have to have a strong academic and emotional foundation," she recalls. "If you look at a student, it's not obvious what that person is overcoming."

After graduation, Foster-DeMers plunged into teaching. While she has worked for Head Start and taught third grade, the majority of her 19-year career has been as a kindergarten teacher in the Chicago Public School system, where she seeks to address the early educational achievement gap by increasing parent involvement. "As a teacher, there is no way I'm going to close the achievement gap for this many students by myself," she notes. "There's a horror in knowing that if the students are not at grade level when they enter first grade, it will be extremely difficult for them to catch up."

Foster-DeMers searched for something tangible to support her ideas, but came up empty. It was then that she decided to return to DePaul. While most of her peers in the Educational Leadership Program aspired to be school district superintendents, Foster-DeMers struggled to find her purpose. "I was frequently asked what I would like to do or why I was in the program," she says. "I would reply, 'I need to be at least willing to make a difference.' I did not know how this would come about. I just knew it would be unjust of me not to at least try to solve the problems I saw."

Yet, Foster-DeMers eventually found her way, creating a pre-kindergarten through grade three model for teachers and parents. The model was the basis of her dissertation at DePaul and later evolved into TAF Educational LLC, a consulting company focused on increasing parent involvement in early childhood education as a means of eliminating the achievement gap. Its signature product, the Instructional At-Home Plan, shows parents what they need to do to ensure their children succeed in the classroom. "It's more than providing a piece of paper to a parent," she stresses. Foster-DeMers explains concepts to parents, but also provides visual representation for those who may be unable to read themselves.

The use of this model has successfully and consistently resulted in improved student assessment scores, and that is something that Foster-DeMers takes immense pride in. "In areas of high poverty, there's oftentimes not a lot to celebrate," she adds. "Parents are developing dreams for their children, and they are actively working toward those dreams. They finally have something to celebrate."



### Tanya Foster-DeMers' tips for recent graduates:

**Take DePaul's mission to heart.**

Never forget the DePaul mission and Vincentian way of doing things. It's extremely important to give back to the community.

**Let your work address unmet needs.**

Find a need that exists in the field and allow your education to be the answer to that gap.

**Be passionate in your career.**

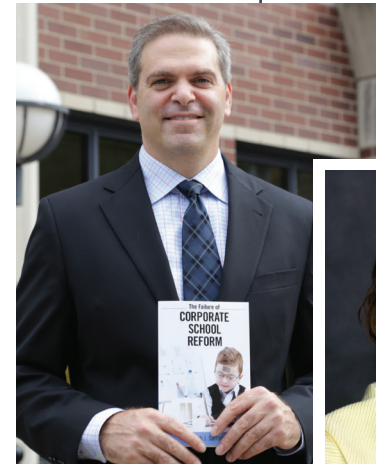
Enjoy what you do and have fun with it. The joy in what we do provides us with strength.

**Make sure to take creative risks.**

Don't be afraid to go outside the box and break the mold. That summarizes what I've done and what I continue to do.

Faculty publications

Kenneth Saltman, professor of educational policy studies and research, published several books in the past year, including “The Failure of Corporate School Reform” and “The Politics of Education: A Critical Introduction.” In addition, he co-authored “Neoliberalism, Education, Terrorism: Contemporary Dialogues” and “Toward a New Common School Movement.”



Gayle Mindes, professor of early childhood and elementary education, served as a content expert on social studies for the fifth edition of “The Work Sampling System.” “The Work Sampling System” is an observational assessment tool for pre-kindergarten through sixth grade.

Conference presenters

Jason Goulah, associate professor and director of bilingual-bicultural education, assisted four doctoral students in submitting a proposal for the 2013 American Educational Studies Association annual meeting. Deborah Weiner, Heather Summers, Melissa Bradford and Larissa Mulholland presented “Explicating Dialogue in Theory and Practice” at the conference, which was held Oct. 30–Nov. 3 in Baltimore. Doctoral student Brian Gilbert also participated in the event and presented “Racing Tradition: Catholic Schooling and the Maintenance of Boundaries.”



Leadership, Language & Curriculum student Clara Chi presented her paper “Proposal for a Four-year Interdisciplinary High School English Literature and Japanese Curriculum” at the 24th annual conference of the Central Association of Teachers of Japanese, Oct. 5–6 at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, Mich.



Advising office honored

Two College of Education advising staff members were recognized for their efforts this past year. Kevin McCann (EDU MA '76), academic advisor, received the DePaul Academic Advising Network (DAAN) award for “Advisor Who Raises the Bar,” as well as a COE staff recognition award for 2013. In addition, Sandra Tanksley, academic advising assistant, received an honorable mention from the DAAN Professional Development Committee.



“The feeling of being supported is empowering.”

Bryant Merma wavered between career choices when he started college. He briefly considered being a philosopher or an artist before settling on teaching. “One of the reasons art and philosophy weren’t fulfilling to me is because they were very focused on my own ideas, whereas teaching has an impact that lasts far beyond yourself,” he says. A senior in elementary education, Merma aspires to teach science in grades three through eight. “At that age, your presence is really influential on how students interact with each other and their environments,” he says. “These students are just beginning to develop their own sense of self.” Yet, if it wasn’t for scholarship support, Merma would not be able to follow his dream of becoming a teacher.

Like many of his peers, Merma depends on financial assistance to attend DePaul. As part of the Many Dreams, One Mission Campaign, the College of Education seeks to raise \$3 million for scholarship support. As the Campaign enters its final year, the college has achieved nearly 80 percent of its goal and needs help to raise the remaining funds so that it can continue to serve talented students, regardless of economic background.

Any gift, no matter the size, will make a difference in the lives of deserving students. “The feeling of being supported is empowering,” Merma says. “It’s been very influential in what I’ve done so far and what I’m going to do in the future. I’m interested in seeing how my career as a teacher will unfold in light of all the influences I’ve had, including this scholarship.”

To make a gift today,  
please visit  
[giving.depaul.edu](http://giving.depaul.edu).

For more information about the Campaign,  
please contact Sally Julian,  
associate dean of development,  
at [sjulian@depaul.edu](mailto:sjulian@depaul.edu) or (773) 325-4522.

## ACTION IN EDUCATION

We welcome your story ideas, questions and comments. Please contact Melissa Smith at (312) 362-5266 or [mssmit134@depaul.edu](mailto:mssmit134@depaul.edu).

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two-minute  
**survey**

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