

ACTION IN EDUCATION

A publication for College of Education alumni

DEPAUL
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION



Sharon Ponder (MEd '17) interrupted work on her degree to teach children in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina.

Spring 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

4-5 | Micro-credentialing

6-7 | Catholic connections

10 | National winner



DEAN'S CORNER

It is no secret that when one thinks of DePaul University, the notion of “mission” comes prominently to mind. Long known for helping Chicagoans achieve social justice, DePaul’s Vincentianism means serving those most in need, and, frankly, nobody does it better than DePaul’s College of Education (COE). Our response to the Vincentian question, “What must be done?,” permeates the work we do in the classroom and in the community at large to educate and counsel students and elevate the underserved.

Through our centers, initiatives and specialized programs, our dedicated faculty and staff address needs in the community and in the field of education. The Facing History and Ourselves collaboration inspires educators and the public to address complex social issues in the classroom. The Stockyard Institute engages youth, community residents and artists through an open interchange of projects and programs in the arts and social activism. The Education and Counseling Center provides quality, affordable educational and counseling services to children and adolescents.

Under the leadership of Sister Mary Paul McCaughey, O.P., the college’s Catholic Schools Faith Project provides scholarships to Chicago’s Catholic school teachers so they may pursue advanced degrees. In partnership with the Fraternal Order of Police, the college instructs members of the Chicago Police Department in educational leadership, directly affecting police officers and the communities they serve. In collaboration with the Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL), we instruct AUSL learners in the DePaul curriculum using the organization’s targeted methods, as well as connecting students with co-teaching mentors in AUSL/Chicago Public Schools. Our fruitful partnership with Bernhard Moos Elementary School allows our students to immerse themselves in an elementary school environment during field experiences, while our faculty provide in-service teachers with professional development.

Our Office of Innovative Professional Learning is working with the Barat Foundation on Our American Voice, a program that provides professional development and micro-credentialing. The Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies in Education researches the philosophies and practices of renowned Japanese educators Ikeda, Toda and Makiguchi and provides workshops and symposia to students. To address the need for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education for underrepresented young women, our faculty conduct Inspiring STEM in Girls (inSTEM), a summer experience for middle-school girls.

I am proud that the college serves as a tangible example of the success that is possible when small groups of dedicated individuals come together. With social justice at the heart of our mission, our students, faculty and staff collaborate to bring forth incredible outcomes through their perseverance and activism. I look forward to seeing more results from our continued work together.

Dean Paul Zionts

ACTION IN EDUCATION

We welcome your story ideas, questions and comments. Please contact Kris Gallagher at (312) 362-8365 or kris.gallagher@depaul.edu.

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DEGREE, INTERRUPTED

The COE helps alumna finish what life disrupted

“I tell my students that when you can have continuity with your education, take advantage of it, because when you get older, life just happens. It happened to me,” says Sharon Ponder, proud holder of a newly minted Master of Education in Teaching and Learning. She was just one course short of finishing her degree years ago when life happened: first the illness and death of her mother, followed by Ponder’s decision to take a leave from the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and teach in New Orleans for six years following Hurricane Katrina.

Her experiences in New Orleans convinced Ponder that she needed to return to Chicago and teach African-American students in a community similar to the one where she grew up. Based on the experiences of her eight brothers and sisters, she knew that higher education was the key to her family’s success. But could she return to the College of Education to finish her degree?

Absolutely, says Roxanne Owens, chair of the Department of Teacher Education. The college assesses returning students on a case-by-case basis and readmits them whenever possible. It was an easy decision to readmit Ponder, who taught steadily throughout her absence, is nationally board-certified, and is a Yale National Teacher Fellow, a Fulbright Scholar and a Golden Apple finalist.

Ponder, a fourth-grade teacher at Carter G. Woodson Elementary School in Chicago’s Bronzeville neighborhood, works more than full time—she’s at the school seven days



Photo by Tom Evans

a week. Returning to DePaul to finish her coursework meant she needed to find an evening class.

“Every teacher can always learn more about children’s literature, so I brought her into my class,” says Owens. Because Ponder shared her extensive experience with the undergrads in the course, which meets both undergraduate and graduate requirements, the class was a rich experience for everyone.

Ponder says her delayed finish was a blessing. “I had an opportunity to mesh with younger ideas and take a fresh approach to teaching and to education. I got to look at education practices through the eyes of millennials.”

Owens says returning students often take classes that better serve their current needs.

“I tell my students that when you can have continuity with your education, take advantage of it, because when you get older, life just happens. It happened to me.”

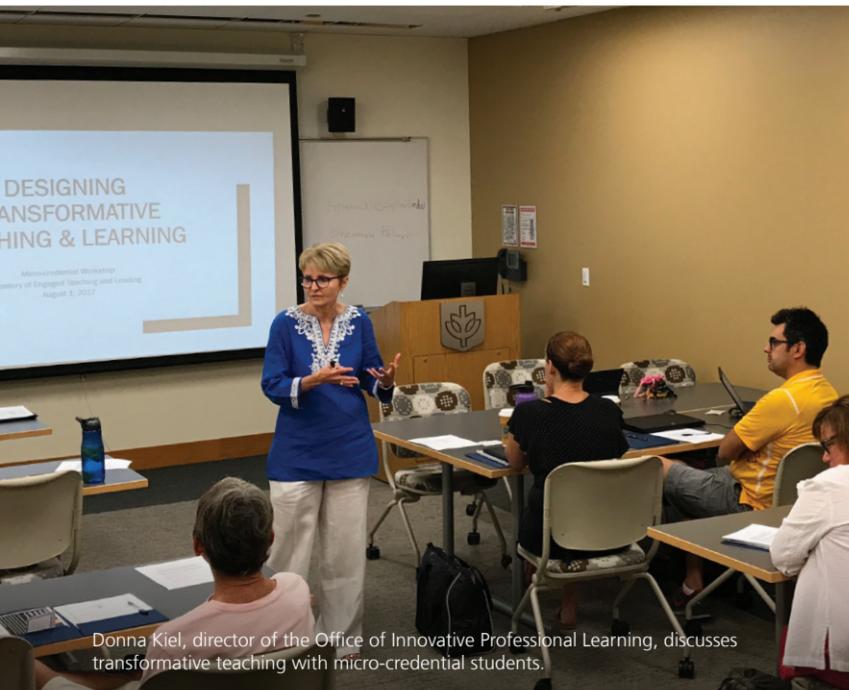
“Instead of that social studies class you didn’t take, you might benefit more from learning how to use data for instruction or a curriculum class,” she says.

Ponder couldn’t be more pleased with the support she got from the COE: “It speaks volumes to the type of institution that DePaul is that they would consider my case, evaluate it and say, ‘She’s worthy of finishing.’ I can’t say enough about how grateful I am.” Owens says, “Sharon is the kind of person that you are proud to see as a DePaul graduate.”

If you know people interested in returning to the COE to complete their degree, please ask them to contact Nancy Hashimoto, director of advising, at nhashimo@depaul.edu.

CUSTOMIZED

MICRO-CREDENTIALS FILL EDUCATIONAL NICHE



Donna Kiel, director of the Office of Innovative Professional Learning, discusses transformative teaching with micro-credential students.

Photos by Brennan Palmer

Growing out of a successful pilot begun nearly two years ago, the COE’s micro-credentialing program is expanding into new skill sets, delivery mechanisms and audiences, says Donna Kiel, director of the Office of Innovative Professional Learning (OIPL). Micro-credentials are short-term, competency-based educational programs that enable learners to document their knowledge and skills and have those verified by subject-matter experts.

The U.S. Army created the term “micro-credential” to describe its program to verify for employers that veterans had defined, concrete skill sets, such as the ability to fly planes, Kiel says. OIPL adopted the model for its International Baccalaureate educator certificate program. Once that was firmly in place, Kiel began expanding the topics offered to meet the needs of educators, leaders and other professionals who want to enhance their professional skills.

“We start with what you already know and what you need for professional success,” Kiel says. “Next, we coach you on the theory and skills you need to reach the best-practice level. Finally, we help you design a final project to demonstrate the skills you’ve acquired.”

The course is highly personalized even in a group setting, she says: “It becomes a powerful collaborative-learning program, where the cohort is working together yet each member has an individualized final project and an advisor to guide them.”

That final project elevates the COE’s micro-credentials over mass-market online courses or even taking non-degree college courses, Kiel says. “When professionals complete our program, they have a product, process or program that they can immediately implement in their classroom or organization.”

Micro-credentials are a great way to learn for teachers at St. Laurence High School in Burbank, Ill., which itself follows a project-based approach to teaching and learning, says Pete Lotus, a teacher and administrator there who earned the transformative teaching micro-credential last summer. “The project was the key to the whole process. We feel that applying what the students or we are learning really reinforces the concepts,” he says.



Allen Turner (left), a professional lecturer in DePaul’s College of Computing and Digital Media, introduces educators to new techniques.

A CONSTELLATION OF CREDENTIALS

Here are some of the micro-credentials available.

- Assessment Expert
- Global Educator
- Value-Creating Education for Global Citizenship
- Innovative Educator
- Innovative Leadership
- Mindful Leadership
- STEM Expert
- Transformational Teaching

THE POWER OF DePAUL

The college currently offers more than a dozen micro-credentials, and new ones are being added all the time. Kiel’s collaboration with Doris Rusch, an associate professor in DePaul’s College of Computing and Digital Media and a nationally recognized game expert, resulted in an innovative micro-credential in game-design thinking for teachers.

“The power of DePaul is that if there’s a need for a skill that we don’t already have a micro-credential for, we’ll design it,” she says. “That’s Vincentian personalism to a T.”

Jason Goulah was quick to recognize how micro-credentials could complement the college’s new Master of Education in Value-Creating Education for Global Citizenship, the world’s only formal degree program on the Soka approach to teaching and education.

“We’ve had a lot of interest, particularly internationally, from people who can’t afford a full master’s degree and don’t need one to be able to teach in their region,” says Goulah, associate professor of bilingual and bicultural education and director of DePaul’s Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies in Education. The micro-credentials in value-creating education for global citizenship, which debut this spring, cost about half as much as the credit-bearing courses while covering the same material.

The COE’s contacts in China are very interested in micro-credentials, says Kiel: “They want that cutting-edge solution to learning.”

SIMPLE REGISTRATION, TAILORED RESULT

Both individuals and groups can sign up for micro-credentials. Some credentials can be earned fully online. Others blend online and in-class learning.

The coursework is self-paced. While many participants take a quarter or a semester to complete a micro-credential, others have powered through a program in a week or two.

Finally, micro-credentials are “stackable.” Participants can earn three or four micro-credentials in a specific area and gain certification as a “master” in that arena.

Upon completing the micro-credential, participants receive an electronic badge that they can add to their email signature, LinkedIn profile or other electronic documentation. They also receive a paper certificate suitable for framing.

Goulah’s program takes a different approach. Students who complete four of the 12 courses in the master’s program earn a micro-credential, while those who complete seven courses receive a macro-credential.

Goulah cautions that micro-credentials can’t be used for credit toward a graduate degree. Students need to decide at the outset whether they are pursuing micro-credentials or a degree program.

However, micro-credentials may count toward continuing professional development units (CPDUs), depending on the policies of individual school districts. The programs meet CPDU requirements and educators are able to clock their hours. In addition, the Chicago Public Schools currently are assessing whether micro-credentials count for “steps” in moving up a professional lane, Kiel says.

Micro-credentials also count toward the learning goals of St. Laurence, Lotus says. “Micro-credentials are a really useful tool for us.”

For more information about the COE’s micro-credentials and a list of options, visit blogs.depaul.edu/innovate. To ask about a group session or suggest a new credential, email innovate@depaul.edu.



WHEN PROFESSIONALS COMPLETE OUR PROGRAM, THEY HAVE A PRODUCT, PROCESS OR PROGRAM THAT THEY CAN IMMEDIATELY IMPLEMENT IN THEIR CLASSROOM OR ORGANIZATION.”



Photo by Tom Evans

“Our goal is to get leaders in place who can hire the best teachers, who can then provide the best education for students in Catholic schools.”

NEW COE PROGRAMS DEEPEN CATHOLIC CONNECTIONS

The college’s longtime partnership with the Archdiocese of Chicago and the city’s Catholic schools is expanding in exciting ways, from educational programs specially designed for teachers and principals to crisis counseling for students.

“DePaul’s mission and our Vincentian personalism, plus our role as an urban educator, puts us in a unique position to support and strengthen Catholic education in Chicago,” says Sister Mary Paul McCaughey, O.P., the college’s Catholic school leadership coordinator.

Many people don’t realize how different the role of a Catholic school principal is compared with one in a public school, says Barb Rieckhoff, associate professor and director of the educational leadership master’s program.

“Principals are the faith leaders of the schools. They’re also carrying the responsibility for running a school and serving as the instructional leader. It’s a unique role,” says Rieckhoff. “They need a special lens, a special kind of training, and that’s why we’re so excited about our faith-oriented programs.”

The college offers three Catholic-oriented master’s degrees in educational

leadership: teacher leader, Catholic leadership and principal preparation. The latter program is specifically designed for aspiring principals, says Sr. McCaughey.

“The archdiocese will need to replace a large number of principals who will be retiring in the near future,” she says. “Our goal is to get leaders in place who can hire the best teachers, who can then provide the best education for students in Catholic schools.”

Graduate enrollment by employees of Catholic schools has increased in part because DePaul just renewed the Catholic Schools Faith Project. Through this initiative, DePaul is collaborating with the archdiocese’s Office of Catholic Schools in offering a generous scholarship program.

“These financial contributions reduce the cost of the program to under \$11,000 for a master’s degree and licensure,” says Rieckhoff. “Students

get monthly mentoring and coaching throughout the program and their first year of leadership, which is a huge plus.”

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To further support principals, the archdiocese requested that the college conduct a Catholic school leadership efficiency study. Rieckhoff and Donna Kiel, director of the Office of Innovative Professional Learning, are shadowing 20 percent of the principals in the area to identify effective time management techniques and areas for improvement.

“We’ll provide the archdiocese with results of the study to support them in providing the best resources to principals,” says Kiel. The research also may provide insight about what new educational opportunities are needed by principals.

Those opportunities may be part of the COE’s new micro-credentialing programs

(see page 4), which are drawing substantial interest from Catholic institutions. In fact, six of the seven schools in the pilot program are Catholic, Kiel says.

“Micro-credentials are a great way to customize professional development to what teachers in Catholic schools need to know,” says Kiel. “One of our micro-credentials is in faith leadership, which we’re doing for potential principals. Catholic school teachers also are interested in the transformational teaching credential.”

The COE’s new online program in special education “is going to be an amazing gift to Catholic schools,” adds Sr. McCaughey. She predicts that many K-12 teachers will complete the four-course sequence to add the Learning Behavior Specialist 1 endorsement to their professional portfolios.

COUNSELING SUPPORT

Since last year, the COE’s Education and Counseling Center (ECC) has been the primary referral source for Catholic schools in Chicago.

“Referrals are very easy. All the principal, school counselor, teacher or parent has to do is call or email me. No family is

turned away for inability to pay,” says Martha Mason, ECC director. Students, and sometimes family members, come to the center weekly for support. Meanwhile, Mason coordinates strategies with counselors and teachers at their schools.

“We get lots of kids for tutoring, counseling and special groups. We run mindfulness and strengths-building groups for kids. We’re really trying to equip them with the resources they need to be successful at home, at school and going forward,” she says.

Archdiocesan staff eagerly accepted Mason’s offer to provide crisis-counseling support to principals and teachers and sometimes directly to students who have an emotional breakdown while at school. “Not all of the Catholic schools have counselors or resources on-site,” Mason says. “We’re really meeting an area of need.”

Interns from the COE’s counseling program gain experience working with students from Catholic schools, and Mason hopes to include them in future on-site consultations. She also wants to expand the program to offer professional development opportunities for teachers and counselors at Catholic schools.

PRIORITY PLACEMENTS

“When students request to be placed in a Catholic school for field experiences and/or student teaching, the Catholic school administrators are quick to accept our request. They are eager to mentor our student teacher candidates,” says Kate Liston, director of field experiences and student teaching. Several schools, including De La Salle High School, St. Andrew School and Josephinum Academy of the Sacred Heart, host at least one student every quarter.

Principals from many non-Catholic schools, including Chicago Public Schools, look favorably on applicants with Catholic school experience. “Students are really learning excellent skills in terms of classroom and time management,” Liston says.

Liston also reaches out to COE alumni when Catholic school principals contact her with openings. “I’m a product of Catholic schools—elementary, high school and college—like my sons. I know what a wonderful experience this can be.”

For more information about Catholic-oriented degrees, visit bit.ly/CatholicMasters.



Micro-credentials are time- and cost-efficient options for teachers and administrators in Catholic schools.



Martha Mason is director of the Education and Counseling Center, which is the primary referral source for Catholic schools in Chicago.

IN BRIEF

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVIST ADDRESSES INEQUALITY

Renowned author, activist and educator Jonathan Kozol spoke to students, faculty and guests about educational inequality over three days in November 2017. More than 600 people filled DePaul's student center to hear the author of "The Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America" discuss how segregated education persists in public schools. DePaul President A. Gabriel Esteban, PhD, introduced Kozol the following day to Chicago-area educational leaders. Kozol also led a discussion with COE doctoral students and visited Bernhard Moos Elementary School in Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood.

Doctoral student Jeannette Srivastava sponsored Kozol's visit so that she could share a transformational educational event with her classmates. "It's really important to hear people's literal voices, not just through their words or their books, but to see them in person," she says.

"He made us laugh, and there were points that tears were shed," she continued. "He said really powerful things without hesitation, with such energy. He spoke about what he calls the testing regime in schools and how it's killing our kids. He emphasized that learning should be fun."

See Kozol's talk at bit.ly/KozolDePaul.



HALL MODERATES DISCUSSION WITH THE REV. JESSE JACKSON AT MLK BREAKFAST

Horace Hall, associate professor of human development, moderated a conversation with civil rights icon the Rev. Jesse Jackson at DePaul's annual prayer breakfast in memory of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Hall and Jackson compared the current political climate and racism with that in the 1960s. They also discussed strategies for creating what Jackson described as a "globally inclusive country."



COE associate professor Horace Hall (left) and civil rights leader the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

Photo by Jamie Moncrief/DePaul University

FORUMS ADDRESS SEGREGATION, IMMIGRATION

Panelists at the college's fall 2017 education forum spoke to an overflow crowd about issues of racial segregation and racial justice in public education, which is more segregated now than it has been since Brown v. Board of Education in 1954. The panel opened with an overview of data and trends in school segregation. Panelists discussed how government policies create and promote segregated schools and how people have resisted them. They also shared methods for integrating racial justice into classrooms and curricula.

At the winter forum, panelists explored how increased hostility toward immigrants in the U.S. and the rising risk of deportation for undocumented students create fear and volatility in the classroom. Sonia Soltero, associate professor and chair of the Department of Leadership, Language and Curriculum, moderated the panel. Topics included ideas for developing sanctuary schools, policies to increase safety and opportunity in schools, know-your-rights workshops and resources for students dealing with trauma.

Visit bit.ly/COEEvents for information about the spring forum.



Photo courtesy of Blinderman Construction

"BLINDERMAN BURGER BASH" SUPPORTS inSTEM

The college's inSTEM program is great preparation for high school science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs, two participants told about 300 attendees at the "Blinderman Burger Bash." For the second year in a row, Blinderman Construction and Elizabeth and David Blinderman dedicated their October fundraising event to the inSTEM program, raising more than \$50,000.

"As STEM-educated professionals, David and I understand firsthand the need for more talent in our industry, as well as in all STEM-related fields. There remains a crisis of encouragement and support for girls and women to pursue STEM opportunities. To balance the STEM playing field, mentoring and resources must begin in elementary school," says Elizabeth Blinderman. "The inSTEM program, with its role-model female leadership in STEM professions, is committed to creating this reality, and we are committed to helping them."

Camp participants displayed their skills when a robot broke right before a demonstration. "The students rebuilt and reprogrammed the robot on-site. Not only did they fix it, they rebuilt it a different way and liked it better. That was problem-solving in action," says inSTEM co-director Nell Cobb, associate professor of elementary math and associate chair of the Department of Teacher Education.

The funds from the event guarantee that the program will be held in 2018, and planning is well underway, Cobb says. New this year are Saturday experiences during the academic year, electronic badges for student portfolios and time in the science lab at the Museum of Science and Industry.

Photo by DePaul Athletics

DOCTORAL PROGRAM CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

The College of Education's doctoral program is celebrating its 20th anniversary throughout 2018. The program began in 1998 with the Doctor of Education in Curriculum Studies and the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership; the Doctor of Education in Early Childhood Education was added a few years ago. The anniversary's highlight will be an alumni panel symposium and poster session followed by a reception beginning at 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 14, in room 314 in the student center on the Lincoln Park Campus. Panelists will include superintendents, principals, teachers, university deans, college presidents and professors. Special editions of the program newsletter will profile other notable alumni. All COE alumni, current students and faculty are invited to the symposium.



EDUCATION ALUMNI HONORED AT FEBRUARY BLUE DEMONS GAME

The DePaul Blue Demons men's basketball team played in honor of the College of Education and its alumni on Feb. 7 at Wintrust Arena at McCormick Square, the new home of DePaul basketball. Alumnus Otis Dunson III (EDU '97) (above right), principal at George B. Armstrong International Studies Elementary School in Chicago and a DePaul Hall of Fame athlete, presented the game ball.

ALUMNA NAMED NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELOR OF THE YEAR



When Perry arrived at Lawndale, located in a low-income community on Chicago's West Side, attendance was 90.7 percent. Now it's close to 94 percent and rising. Perry forged partnerships and built trust with parents through weekly informational workshops. She established social-emotional instruction in all classrooms and incentivized good behavior. She recruited community partners and raised more than \$50,000 to support her programs. She bolstered college and career exploration. This past year, she expanded into wellness, bringing in a healthy food program that supplies students with fresh fruit and vegetables.

In the three years since she arrived at Lawndale Community Academy, school counselor Kirsten Perry (MEd '11) has implemented a host of programs for students and their families at the pre-K-8 school. Lawndale's principal credits her with raising the school from level three to level two in the Chicago Public Schools ranking system. In recognition, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) named her the 2018 School Counselor of the Year.

"It is honestly the highest honor for school counselors in the land," says Melissa Ockerman, associate professor of counseling, who noted that Perry also was named the Illinois School Counselor of the Year. Perry was among the first students to graduate from the COE's master's program in counseling after it was aligned with the ASCA's Transform School Counseling Initiative, which teaches counselors that they should be central to solving school problems. Perry's systemic, sustainable strategies demonstrate the effectiveness of the approach, Ockerman says: "She is living proof that this kind of work is necessary and effective."

"The method to my madness is collaboration. I don't do anything in isolation," Perry says. Her student council is a "little army" that helps create activities. Parents help set up workshops led by community managers whom Perry coordinates. Perry's attendance and behavioral initiatives are schoolwide efforts.

Perry did not arrive at Lawndale, her "dream school," by chance. A troubled

teen, she became involved with a gang member who fathered the son she had at age 18. In her mid-20s, she earned a bachelor's degree, then came to DePaul in search of a career that gave her journey meaning.

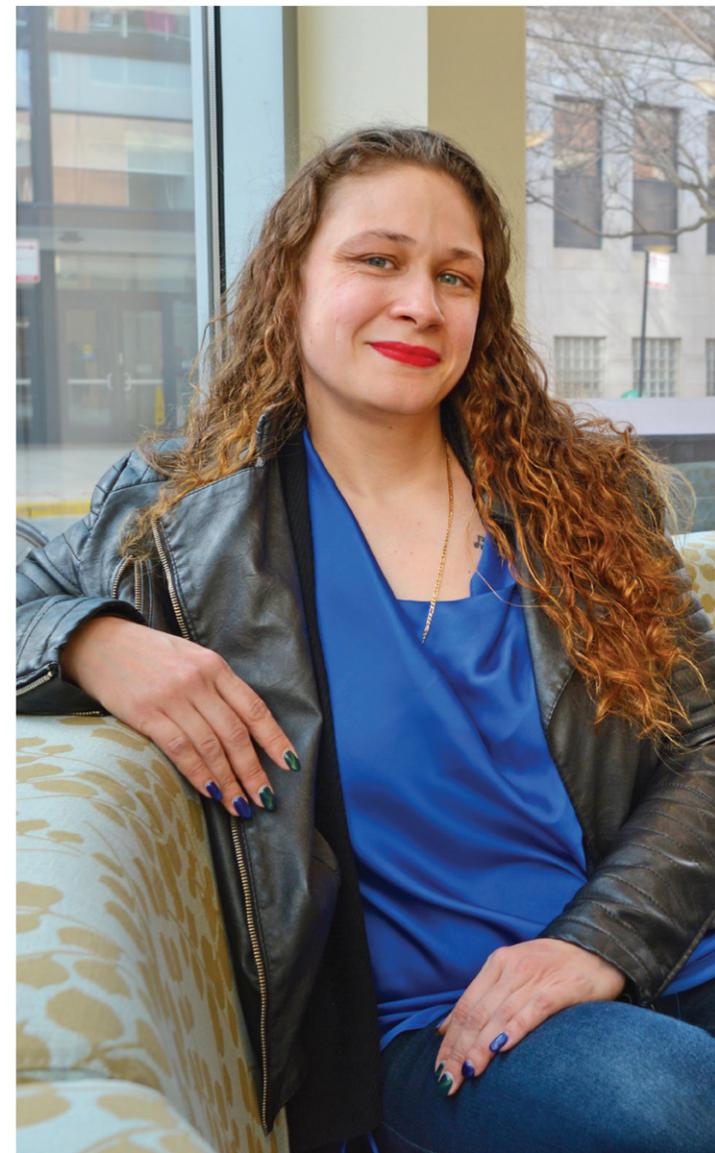
"My life experience all goes into counseling. It gives me strength and perspective," she says. Her students are willing to open up with her. She can relate to those parents who are coping with challenges such as low-wage jobs, gang influences or single parenthood. "I know what it's like to have my son's father in jail."

Perry credits her mentors at the COE with giving her confidence in her abilities and helping her to realize that she can change student outcomes and achievement. "These are very charismatic, bright, smart students. All they need are the same opportunities that other people have."

Perry was honored at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on Feb. 2, where former First Lady Michelle Obama introduced her and presented the award.



Jacqueline Sanchez



"I want to be that teacher who sees something in the kid that others might give up on. They aren't bad kids. There's just something we need to figure out. I want to bring out their potential."

It took a near-death experience to jump-start Jackie Sanchez's education.

"That was a wake-up call for me. I was young, I had three children, I was working two jobs. I had to change my life," says Sanchez, now a senior majoring in early childhood education. After nearly dying while giving birth in 2012, she passed her GED early in 2013 and enrolled at Truman College.

"I was in no way a traditional student. I was lucky to find resources," says Sanchez, who joined the federal TRIO and Chicago's One Million Degrees programs, which provided her with scholarships, mentoring and the desire to go further.

"I've wanted to be a teacher for as long as I can remember," she recalls. When she toured DePaul's campus with the TRIO program, she knew she had found her dream school. After earning her associate's degree at Truman, she transferred to DePaul. In addition to a transfer scholarship, she found support through DePaul's TRIO program and the advisors and faculty members at the college. Her advisor connected

her to a part-time job at DePaul's Ray Meyer Fitness and Recreation Center, a flexible position that enabled her to plan her work schedule around her field placement.

"Just having someone in your corner is a major deal," says Sanchez. She's giving back by being a coach scholar through the One Million Degrees program and hopes to teach in the Chicago Public Schools system.

"I want to be that teacher who sees something in the kid that others might give up on. They aren't bad kids. There's just something we need to figure out. I want to bring out their potential," she explains.

Although Sanchez is the first in her family to attend college, she won't be the last. Her daughter will graduate from high school in May and enroll in college, and her older son is an honor-roll student like his sister. Her youngest starts first grade in the fall.

"There are no smart people or children. It's hard work and dedication. That's what I tell everyone. You have to be dedicated in everything you do."

Photo by Tom Evans

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JULY 9-11 SUMMER INSTITUTE

The Holocaust and the United States: History, Identity and Religious Freedom

Join the College of Education and Facing History and Ourselves for the seventh annual Summer Institute, a three-day seminar that focuses on issues of race and membership in American history and today's schools. Up to 21 CPDUs available. The DePaul University and Facing History and Ourselves Collaboration is generously supported by the Donna and Jack Greenberg Charitable Trust.

Contact collaboration@depaul.edu for more information.

