Welcome

I am pleased to present the School of Education's annual Alumni Matters at such an exciting time for our campus. Just a few short months ago the campus announced the launch of the Campaign for UC Davis. Through its first comprehensive campaign, UC Davis has the opportunity to celebrate its century of accomplishments and advance its vision for another century of leadership. Through the School of Education, we all have the opportunity to contribute to the success of the campaign.

In this issue, we share some highlights from a recent alumni mixer, feature alumni news and accomplishments, and share the priorities of our Alumni Council. We encourage you to get involved. The Alumni Council is an exciting group of educators committed to strengthening the School of Education and providing opportunities for alumni to contribute ideas, energy and time. Write us at ed-alumni@ucdavis.edu.

Sandi Redenbach
(Credential '73),
Alumni Council Chair

Alumni Leading through Empathy and Community

by Heidi Sciutto

Meet three alumni of the UC Davis School of Education who inspire, inform and lead change in and out of the classroom. Each has taken a unique path toward a life committed to providing a high-quality education for all.

Sharon Tettegah
(BA '88, Credential '89, MA '91)

Sharon Tettegah believes in the power of empathy to transform teachers' perceptions and practice. Her research explores every facet of empathy in the classroom. “It’s a passion—this is research that’s going to matter,” she said.

Tettegah started her career in education at elementary schools in Davis, Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area. “In L.A., I was dealing with the Latino population for the first time and didn’t know Spanish,” she recalled. “I became very aware of teacher perceptions and their stereotypes of students. I had to address my own stereotypes.”

Now an associate professor of curriculum and instruction for the math, science & technology division at University of Illinois (UI) at Urbana-Champaign, Tettegah is also a part-time faculty member for UI's Beckman Institute in the cognitive neuroscience group. Most recently, she has delved into the world of virtual reality and social simulations to understand cognitive and emotional responses of students, educators, and other related professionals.

In one of her studies about a racial incident in a simulation, Tettegah found that very few pre-service teachers expressed significant empathy toward the victim. In light of these results, Tettegah thinks empathy-awareness training, similar to cultural or ethnic awareness training, should be considered a part of preparing future teachers.

“Most people are not honest about [their stereotypes],” she said. “It’s taboo to examine teachers and how they can sometimes damage their students. Yet kids can’t learn if they’re afraid of their teachers.”

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Annual Fund Scholarship is “Priceless”

Each year, gifts to the annual fund from alumni make scholarships possible for School of Education students. The scholarships support these students in realizing their goal of becoming educators, repaying the investment in them many times over. This year’s Alumni Scholars are Jamela Shaban and Monica Day.

Jamela Shaban

“This scholarship has taken a great financial stress off my family and myself,” said Jamela Shaban, who is earning her multiple subject credential. “Thank you to the alumni and donors for providing this scholarship that allows me to focus my efforts on school and allows me to pursue my dreams.”

Since she was a girl, Shaban wanted to be a teacher. “The person in my life who inspired me was my fifth grade teacher, Ms. Lane,” she said. “Through her love and passion for teaching, she encouraged me to become a better student. She has and always will be one of the greatest teachers I have had. To this day, I still keep in contact with her.”

Shaban said she has learned strategies in the School of Education that help improve a student’s fluency in reading and let students explore through hands-on learning. “This program has taught me innovative ways to approach teaching and given me effective methods that work,” she said. “Every day, I learn something new from my third graders and my resident teacher. Working closely with an experienced teacher gives me the opportunity to learn from him and take away strategies and tools that will benefit my future classrooms.”

Monica Day

Working on her single subject credential in social studies, Monica Day said she never thought she’d be a teacher until she started dating her fiancé, who was working on his teaching credential. “I realized teaching was a career that fit my passions and talents perfectly,” she said. “I enjoy working with youth, I love being creative and coming up with projects, I enjoy facilitating discussions, and I have since come to realize that I really love challenging kids to explore their full potential.”

Day has found student teaching in middle school to be an invaluable experience. “It forces me to be reflective and constantly improving,” she said. “I am continually learning the value of planning ahead and being more than prepared for class. You wouldn’t think a room of junior high students would be intimidating—until you’re in front of them with fifteen minutes left in class and they’ve already finished their quiz!”

With student teaching, credential coursework and a part-time waitressing job, Day is very appreciative of this scholarship. “A recent cancer diagnosis in the family has taken most of the tuition funding and put it toward hospital fees, so I’ve been working outside of school to try to help out,” she shared. “To have the generosity of others provide for a part of my tuition fees is truly a blessing—a mere ‘thank you’ doesn’t really express the depth of my gratitude. Having to work just a little bit less to be able to focus more on my studies is truly priceless.”

Please consider making a gift to the School of Education. Every donation can make a world of difference for our students. Donate online at education.ucdavis.edu/giving.
Dean’s Update

As UC Davis begins its second century, it is poised to build upon its extraordinary foundation of academic excellence and global impact and to advance among the world’s top universities.

Through The Campaign for UC Davis—a universitywide initiative to raise $1 billion in philanthropic support from 100,000 donors—UC Davis is expanding its capacity to meet the world’s challenges and educate future leaders. By advancing excellence, innovation, public service, opportunity and quality of life, The Campaign for UC Davis is propelling the university to even greater heights of distinction, scholarship and service.

At the School of Education, we have set our sights high with ambitious campaign priorities that address the most pressing challenges in public education. And leadership donors have stepped forward to serve as examples for us all.

Dolly and David Fiddyment’s commitment to teacher education is evidenced in a $1 million endowment to establish one of the nation’s only chairs in teacher education, held by Professor Chris Faltis.

“The School of Education prepares innovative and enthusiastic teachers who can help students blossom,” said Dolly Fiddyment. “This is the best investment we could make in the future of education, especially with Chris at the helm,” said David Fiddyment.

**Sandi Redenbach and Ken Gelatt’s** passion for teaching and belief in the power of teachers to shape our world is reflected in their giving. Sandi and Ken are the first alumni to support the School through their estate plans. And Sandi has additionally endowed a scholarship fund for credential students.

“I think we all have a responsibility to give back,” said Gelatt, who taught mathematics to junior high and high school students in Davis, Calif. “We want to use this gift as a way to let people know that it’s not hard to do. You don’t need to be a millionaire. All of us can do more than we think, especially educators.”

These are just a couple examples of philanthropic leadership at the School. Many of our alumni and volunteer leaders, including our Alumni Council and Board of Advisors, as well as faculty and staff are helping us to reach our campaign goals. In fact, more than 1,200 alumni and friends have contributed to the School of Education since our founding in 2002. My sincerest thanks and appreciation for your support.

**Please Join Us**

The School’s success is integral to The Campaign for UC Davis. At the same time, the campaign creates an unprecedented opportunity to extend the School’s influence, both locally and globally. Your support makes make all the difference in the world.

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“*Our foundation is strong, our vision is bold and our potential is great. The Campaign for UC Davis will ensure our excellence.*”

– Chancellor Linda Katehi

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Alumni Reunion and Awards

**May 15, 2011**

1 – 3 p.m.

Walter A. Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center, UC Davis

Join your fellow School of Education alumni to get reacquainted, reminisce, and learn about the exciting things going on at the School of Education. Light refreshments will be served, and you are welcome to explore what’s new on campus at your leisure.

During the reunion, we will also present our third annual Distinguished Alumni Award and Rising Star Award. Honorees exemplify “doing what matters” in the field of education.

Do you know a deserving alum? Nominations are easy to submit at education.ucdavis.edu/nominate-alum or contact Doreen Barcellona Strnad at (530) 754-2131 by March 18.

Help us celebrate the many ways that all of our alumni transform the lives of students every day!

**RSVP by May 5**

online at education.ucdavis.edu/alumni-reunion or to Heidi Sciutto at (530) 754-4824
Ultimately, Tettegah’s dream is to use her research to influence socio-emotional learning as a core component in learning.

“I teach empathy for everyday life and my pre-service teachers always say it’s the best class they ever had,” she said. “They get in touch with their own behaviors and how they interact with others. This is how that invisible wall between teacher and student can be broken down.”

Tettegah attributes a large part of her success in education to professor emeritus Doug Minnis. She said he “talked me into getting my multiple subject credential and master’s degree” while she took his education introductory course as an undergraduate philosophy student. “Doug Minnis had a huge influence on me and was so supportive from the very beginning.”

Kathy Emery

(PhD ’02)

“Too many believe they are powerless when in fact it is ordinary people who have made a difference,” according to Kathy Emery, who has committed her life as an educator to social justice and community organizing.

Upon completion of her PhD in education policy, Emery decided to revisit a project leveraging the 1964 Mississippi Freedom School curriculum that she and a colleague started earlier in New York, where she taught high school U.S. history for over a decade. Now living in San Francisco, Emery felt the time was right to tell the story of how four major civil rights organizations ended up joining together as a social movement in Mississippi to break up segregation in the South.

In 2005, while working with others on small school reform, she and a dedicated volunteer group put on a free summer program based on Freedom School Curriculum for high school and community college teachers, an interracial and intergenerational group of 15 to 20 people ultimately inspired to work as a network for change.

Eventually her curriculum was published in Lessons from Freedom Summer: Ordinary People Building Extraordinary Movements by Common Courage Press (2008), with an introduction by Howard Zinn.

“Social movements happen when everyday people act collectively at the right moment in history. But they don’t happen without building an infrastructure of local leadership and coalitions—a community,” she said.

Emery credits professor emeritus Donald Arnstine with enriching her ideas about John Dewey, her greatest influence. Dewey advocated for progressive education and democracy. “Don is a foremost John Dewey expert,” she said. “I was lucky to be his only student at that time. We just clicked.”

“In fact, I was lucky to find a champion, not just a mentor,” added Emery. Her dissertation addressed high-stakes testing and the role of corporations in developing school policy during the late 1990s. It was published by Heinemann (2004) as Why is Corporate America Bashing our Public Schools?

Since 2007, Emery has been teaching at San Francisco State University. She is excited that her San Francisco Freedom School will be transitioning to the university this year. “I’ve also heard from organizations such as the Center for Political Education and Facing History and Ourselves who are interested in the curriculum,” said Emery.

“My goal is to keep this history alive,” she said. “I pedal hope.”

Ruben Reyes

(BA ’83, Credential ’84)

A strong community is flourishing in the Robla Elementary School District in rural North Sacramento, and Ruben Reyes is dedicated to maintaining its intimate and supportive identity.

Reyes, the newest district superintendent as of July 2010, has been a part of “the Robla family” for more than 15 years as a teacher and principal. A small district with only 2,000 students, 19 languages, and 80 percent of students on a paid lunch program, Robla has unique needs. Reyes sees this as a rewarding challenge.
Alumni Council: Vision and Verve

With the energy and thoughtfulness characteristic of School of Education alumni, our Alumni Council devoted a day-long retreat to developing a long-range vision for alumni involvement and priorities for realizing that vision. We share them here to invite your participation, comments, and contributions.

Mission
The Alumni Council facilitates ongoing alumni involvement and support for the UC Davis School of Education to uphold excellence in research, community engagement, and preparation of education researchers and educators for current and future generations.

Priorities
- Increase visibility of the School
- Build fundraising efforts
- Establish alumni traditions
- Increase diversity of student population
- Build relationships with faculty
- Build relationships with current students

The Alumni Council has already held several successful events to connect alumni with each other and the School of Education, with future activities being developed in collaboration with faculty and staff. If you are interested in being involved or sharing your ideas, please contact the Alumni Council at ed-alumni@ucdavis.edu or Doreen Barcellona Strnad, Assistant Director of Development and Alumni Relations, at (530) 754-2131.

Memorable TGIF Social
Nearly 40 education alumni filled the Carmichael home of Rod and Sue Davis (Credential ’73) at the Alumni Council’s lively TGIF Social this past fall. Everyone enjoyed reconnecting and meeting new friends, noshing on delightful refreshments, and listening to Dean Harold Levine’s engaging update about the School’s current activities and upcoming opportunities. Another alumni mixer is being planned for the Sonoma area in the spring.
LINDA L’AI
(BS ’69, Credential ’71)

Linda L’Ai is currently teaching fourth grade at the Edith Bowen Laboratory School in Logan, Utah, a charter school affiliated with Utah State University. A Utah resident since 1988, L’Ai has also lived and traveled around the globe. She spent two years in Peru as a math/science instructor for the Peace Corps in the early 1970s, and served for seven years in Dixon, Calif., as a migrant education specialist, ESL instructor, and bilingual third grade teacher. In 1999, L’Ai was selected for the Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program. Last summer, she was in Guatemala as a math consultant for a Mayan community. L’Ai continues to work on integrating math and science in all curricular areas and has several grant projects in the works.

ELAINE C. COLLINS
(MA ’86)

Elaine Collins is dean of the College of Education at Grand Valley State University (GVSU) in Michigan. Collins also serves as board president of the Michigan Association of Colleges of Teacher Education and represents Michigan’s public university education deans on the State Board of Education’s Professional Standards Commission. She is a member of GVSU’s Advisory Board for Sustainability, which is responsible for the university’s recognition as one of the nation’s top 25 green campuses. A passionate advocate for community service, Collins has chaired both Leadership West Michigan’s Urban Center Revitalization/Education and Arts/Education Initiatives and served as a member of the Michigan State Department Task Force on Creativity, Arts and Cultural Education.

STEVEN LEVI
(Credential ’70)

Steven Levi received a grant from the Alaska Humanities Forum to produce a video of one of his poems for use in English classes in Alaska. The presentation, “The Phantom Dogsled,” and a teacher’s manual are available for free on his website: www.parsnackle.com. Levi, an Alaska resident for more than three decades, has had more than 30 books published including Boom and Bust in the Alaska Gold Fields (nonfiction), Cadzow (fiction), Committee of Vigilance (scholarly), and Derelicts, Bummers, Scoundrels and Doves (literary).

DANIEL D’AGOSTINI
(BA ’71, Credential ’72)

Daniel D’Agostini is the author and photographer of Into the Earth: A Wine Cave Renaissance (Panache Partners), released in October, 2010. It documents the story of modern wine caves. After more than 30 years of teaching middle school in Dixon, Somerset and Yuba City, D’Agostini retired in 2008 to devote more time to photography, writing and gardening in Amador County’s Shenandoah Valley. He was a leader in the “Garden in Every School” initiative for more than two decades.

NICOLE KORPELL
(Credential ’05, MA ’06)

While teaching fourth grade in Woodland, Nicole Korpell enjoyed writing songs and chants to help her students learn. After three years, she moved to New York City. While taking guitar lessons, her instructor encouraged Korpell to pursue her dream of creating a CD based on California’s education standards. Nearly a year later, Jamucation: Fourth Grade was born. Both singer and songwriter, Korpell produced songs like “1849 (The Gold Rush Song),” “Simplifying Fractions,” and “I’ll Do My Best on the Test” to encourage fourth graders’ musical abilities while studying for state tests. Lyrics and a preview of her songs are available at www.jamucation.com.
Alumni Leaders (continued from page 4)

“This district is a positive and caring place,” said Reyes. “It’s a good fit for me because I thrive on connections. While I was principal at Main Avenue Elementary School—the smallest school in the district—I knew every name of every child there and could feel the connection. That is so valuable to me.”

Reyes, who is one of eight siblings, knew he wanted to be a teacher when he was 11 years old. “My sixth grade teacher, Mr. Hal McCalllops, had the right balance of love and sternness,” he said. “I also admired his wealth of knowledge. It was the right combination and I knew that’s what I wanted to be like.”

Reyes also credits his UC Davis education professor Barbara Merino as an inspiration. “I’m fluent in Spanish now but I wasn’t then,” he recalled. “Dr. Merino was such a great instructor and so knowledgeable. She made me impassioned to do more as I pursued the new BCLAD (Bilingual, Crosscultural, Language and Academic Development) certification.”

He did his student teaching in West Sacramento in a largely Latino community. Reyes ended up teaching the first grade bilingual program at Elkhorn Village Elementary School for seven years, where he and his fellow teachers were required to have parent-teacher conferences in every home. “How completely enlightening it was for me to see their reality,” he recalled. “I was so welcomed in each family’s home, which was often a tiny house with no empty surface space. It helped me be more sensitive to the children and their family circumstances. Sometimes they weren’t living with a parent but rather a grandparent or aunt or uncle. My definition of family became so much broader.”

Reyes loved being a first grade teacher and never thought he’d pursue anything else. “I didn’t think administration would be for me,” he said. “One summer this principal position came up and it just kind of happened. I had to go back to my classroom to pack it up since I wasn’t planning to leave it back in June!”

Reyes was principal of Elkhorn for six years. He then moved to Robla as a district reading specialist and English learner coordinator, was principal of Main Avenue Elementary School for 10 years, and—in a whirlwind similar to his first principal job—became district superintendent in July 2010. “I found I enjoyed broadening my sphere of influence and helping other teachers get better too,” he said.

“My heart never left the classroom,” said Reyes. “I truly believe schooling is key to life success.”

— Ruben Reyes (BA ’83, Credential ’84)

PATRICIA A. RUCKER (BA ’81, Credential ’82)

A School of Education Distinguished Alumni finalist in 2010, Patricia Rucker has been named as one of seven appointees to the California Board of Education by Governor Jerry Brown. As a legislative advocate for the California Teachers Association, Rucker provides leadership in education policy development, curriculum and instruction at the state and federal levels. She is a former Teacher of the Year in Sacramento County and has 15 years of classroom experience in both K-12 and higher education.

“My heart never left the classroom. I truly believe schooling is key to life success.”

— Patricia A. Rucker (BA ’81, Credential ’82)
As alumni, we are uniquely qualified to attest to the quality of education we received at UC Davis, and we have a special responsibility to ensure the School of Education thrives well into the future.

As our beloved alma mater embarks on its first-ever comprehensive fundraising campaign, you and I have an important role to play to make sure the School of Education reaches or exceeds its campaign goal to raise $16 million. With this kind of support, the School can grow its programs and impact on critical areas of need in K-12 education: influencing education policy decisions, strengthening STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education, and serving the needs of English learners, to name a few.

Most importantly, our generosity will ensure that more promising young people have access to the excellent education we received and the resources they need to become stellar educators for California and beyond. This is why I give.

From the earliest stages of the School’s development, alumni philanthropy has played a key role in UC Davis’ ability to make a lasting contribution to the issue that matters most to us: providing a quality education for every child.

We all have a stake in this. I encourage you to make a gift to the School today.