



Education

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2009

Welcome

to the First Issue of the *Education* Alumni Newsletter

At UC Davis, nothing matters more than doing what matters. Your work for the education of children is one of the most tangible examples of how UC Davis is making a difference in the world. We are eager to highlight your successes.

In launching this newsletter, we hope to reach out to our growing network of alumni and strengthen our relationship with you. Most importantly, we want to share your stories and help you make connections with your fellow alumni.

Since this is intended to be your newsletter, we want to hear from you. We invite all alumni to submit ideas for content, updates, and suggested names for the newsletter.

Let us hear from you. Send us your naming ideas, feedback and updates to ed-alumni@ucdavis.edu. ■



Photograph by TJ Ushing/UC Davis

Introducing Doreen Barcellona Strnad

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

A Davis local since 1993, Doreen Barcellona Strnad joins the School of Education to expand and strengthen our growing network of alumni and friends.

“Short of being a classroom teacher myself, I can’t think of a better way to participate in the continued growth and vision of educators, than being actively engaged in promoting our School,” said Strnad. “I look forward to creating a stronger sense of renewed connection to the School, not only with our alumni, but also with other friends and supporters of education.”

*“This will be
an exciting
tradition for
all of us...”*

Strnad, who once served as a program assistant in the School and managed the campus Retiree Center, sees her new role with the School as one of outreach and building community among our many alumni. Part of this effort includes building an alumni organization, whose first project is the School’s first annual Distinguished Alumni Award. This will be an exciting tradition for all of us in the School.

For more information on School of Education events and news, contact Doreen at (530) 754-2131 or dastrnad@ucdavis.edu. ■

Giving Matters: An Interview with Student Teacher and Annual Fund Caller Wendy Wang

Teaching credential student Wendy Wang knows how much gifts to the Annual Fund mean to students. She has worked for the Annual Fund for five years, her entire time at UC Davis. As a student caller, she has talked to hundreds of people, from alumni to graduating seniors to parents of current students. Inspired by her conversations with Education alumni,

"I hope my students learn things they can apply to life."

she chose to pursue a career in teaching herself.

As a teaching credential candidate, Wang knows she and her peers benefit

from alumni generosity every day, with gifts large and small adding up to access to the latest tools and making scholarships possible for her classmates.

For Wendy Wang, giving back just comes naturally. It's what teachers do.

Why do you think it is important for alumni to give to the Annual Fund?

It is important for alumni to give to the Annual Fund because the money goes to help students receive the upstanding education UC Davis is known for. UC Davis gives more than credentials and an academic education to its students; it gives students life experiences they take with them and use for the rest of their lives. Giving back is a measure

of that satisfaction and an appreciation of what the institution has given.

What impact does a gift to the Annual Fund make?

Every gift makes an impact, even small gifts of \$15 or \$20 add up.

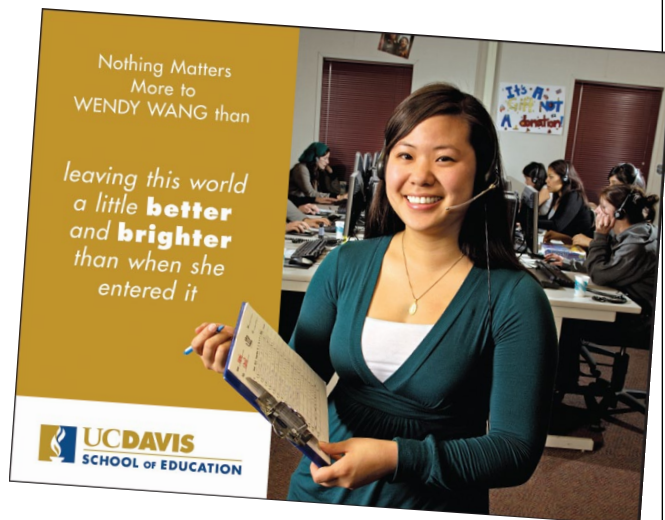
What impact(s) do you think gifts make on student teachers?

Gifts make a considerable impact on my peer student teachers and me. For instance, some of my peers have received scholarships that greatly help relieve financial pressure so they can focus on being stronger teachers in the classroom.

How long have you worked at the Annual Fund and why?

I have worked at the Annual Fund since I was an undergraduate first-year student. The job has greatly enhanced my experience at UC Davis. I would not have gone abroad or applied to the UC Davis School of Education were it not for the great encouragement I received from alumni.

I have been lucky enough to be on both the giving and receiving ends of the Annual Fund. I have talked firsthand to the alumni who give so generously. When I train callers, I can lend them my firsthand experience of being a student who has benefitted from alumni generosity.



Why did you decide to become a teacher?

I have always enjoyed working with kids. I gained a lot of experience through the UC Davis Cal Aggie Camp, a camp for underprivileged foster kids. The more time I spent with those kids, the more I felt the growing need to be a teacher.

I also learned so much as a caller talking to the teachers who graduated from the School. They have so much passion for what they do. Even if they are not paid riches, the teachers are always so happy and eager to give what little they do have. They like to give back. I was impressed and touched by the teachers. I feel that teaching is its own reward. Teachers are constantly learning—they learn from the students as much as they teach them.

continued on page 8

Let Us Know What You Think

To ensure that our communications are interesting and useful to you, we'd like to know how you would like us to keep in touch with each other.

In January 2008, alumni and friends responded to a survey about the School's outreach efforts to alumni. Eighty percent of respondents read the *Catalyst* and prefer that we communicate with them via regular mail. About 43 percent go to our Web site. The top three kinds of information respondents asked for were alumni updates, event announcements, and program or research updates.

It's time again to ask you what you think about our outreach to you. For instance, we have created this newsletter, in addition to our bi-annual

Catalyst, as a way to keep you up to date on alumni news. We are also working on an e-news feature that we will send periodically to alumni and friends who opt to receive information from us via email. We are also hoping to redesign our Web site to make it more attractive and relevant to everyone who visits it.

We could use your help in making all of these outreach efforts more effective. Please take a few moments to fill out a short online survey to let us know how best to engage you through publications, events and the Web.

You can find a link to the survey at <http://education.ucdavis.edu/alumni>.

Thanks in advance for taking the time to share your thoughts. ■

School of Education Makes a Splash in the World of Social Media

Just as the School has grown over the last seven years, so too have the means for us to connect with each other. Because we know many of you are now making connections, getting your news and building your communities through tools on the Web, the School has established a presence on prominent networking sites.

Please check them out. We would love to have more of our alumni leading discussions, connecting with each other, and shaping the way that we are engaged online.

Facebook: The School of Education has a Facebook page that is updated frequently with pictures, news and event announcements. The best way to find us is to join at <http://facebook.com>, and then search for UC Davis School of Education.

LinkedIn: The School of Education has set up a group on LinkedIn. You can access the group at <http://www.linkedin.com/e/vgh/1794779>. LinkedIn is a great place to connect with fellow professionals and alumni and engage in timely discussions about education.

You can find links to these and other sites on our home page at <http://education.ucdavis.edu>. ■



Hold the Date!

Honoring Educators Reception and Distinguished Alumni Award

May 6, 2009

5 – 7 p.m.

Putah Creek Lodge
UC Davis

Join us in honoring the achievements and contributions of educators at our second annual reception, held during the first full week of May to commemorate National Teacher Day.

At the event this year, we will also present our first annual Distinguished Alumni Award. The honoree will be someone who exemplifies "doing what matters" in the field of education.

Help us celebrate the many ways that all of our alumni impact the lives of children every day.

For more information on National Teacher Day, visit the Web at <http://www.nea.org/teacherday>. There you will find information on how to recognize teachers and celebrate the day. ■

AlumniProfiles

Jacob Clark Blickenstaff

ALUMNUS STRIVES FOR EQUITY IN SCIENCE EDUCATION

“Science shouldn’t be thought of as a subject only for a subset of our population...”



Jacob Clark Blickenstaff

A second generation Aggie, Jacob Clark Blickenstaff (BS '92, Credential '93, MA '01, PhD '04) strongly believes in the importance of treating equity as an issue in education. Now he is exploring new avenues to help science teachers break through socio-economic, ethnic and gender barriers in their teaching.

Blickenstaff is assistant professor of physics and assistant director of the Center for Science and Mathematics Education (CSME) at the University of Southern Mississippi. He teaches undergraduate physics courses and

graduate science education classes, in addition to conducting research and sharing recruiting and administrative duties with the CSME Director.

Because of his expertise in science education equity, Blickenstaff was selected as a U.S. delegate for the Third

International Conference on Women in Physics (ICWIP) in Seoul, Korea, on October 8-10, 2008. The conference, held every three years, examines what can be done worldwide to increase representation of women in physics at all levels. While he was in Seoul, Blickenstaff also had the opportunity to connect with Korean educators and give

seminar talks on science education at two local universities. “There is a definite sense of collaboration and reciprocity,” he said.

Blickenstaff also has an unconventional role in promoting science education equity – as a movie critic. In “Blick on Flicks,” a new periodic column in National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) publications, Blickenstaff reviews current movies and transforms Hollywood “bad science” into teachable science for middle school and high school students. He has critiqued films such as *The Happening*, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, and even *The Devil Wears Prada* and *Twilight* to help teachers engage young women in science. Available online in both text and podcast format, “Blick on Flicks” is published in *NSTA WebNews* at <http://www.nsta.org/publications/blickonflicks.aspx>. Since last fall, Blickenstaff’s reviews have also been printed in *NSTA Reports*, which is distributed to 55,000 NSTA members.

Throughout his teaching career, Blickenstaff has focused on providing opportunities for all students—especially women and people of various ethnic backgrounds—to learn science. “This equity piece is very important to me,” he said. “Science shouldn’t be thought of as a subject only for a subset of our population. It needs to be more accessible to a broader range of students.” ■

Sandi Redenbach

ALUMNA ESTABLISHES ENDOWMENT FOR STUDENT TEACHER SCHOLARSHIPS

Sandi Redenbach knows all teachers want to excel at their art, and she believes preparation and a commitment to serving the most challenging students are keys to great teaching. That is why she has established an endowment in the School of Education to support pre-service and in-service teachers.

“UC Davis did an excellent job of preparing me for the classroom over 30 years ago,” said Redenbach. “And since the School of Education was established, I have been even more impressed with the quality of teacher preparation and the direction in which the School is going. I wanted to do something tangible to support it. This is the perfect time for me to give back.”

With a \$50,000 gift, Redenbach established the Sandi Redenbach “Students At Promise Award” for teaching credential and master’s degree candidates. “At Promise” (a play on “at risk”) expresses Redenbach’s goal of encouraging School of Education students who are committed to improving education for those at risk of not succeeding in school. The award also recognizes the importance of teachers who act as advocates for their students. The first Redenbach Award will be for a student entering this fall.

Redenbach knows a lot about at-risk students; she was a high school dropout herself. “It is so important for teachers to stretch outside the box because, even though kids may look like they aren’t going to make it, you never know and you must never give up

on them,” said Redenbach. “I know the power a teacher can have because one caring teacher made me believe I could succeed.”

Redenbach received her teaching credential in 1973. She has played a number of roles in education since, always with a focus on recognizing and encouraging the best in her students.

After 15 years of teaching junior high and high school in Woodland, she founded the Woodland Joint Unified Independent Learning Center in 1988. After 20 years, the Center continues to serve Woodland students enrolled in independent study.

The Center, initially funded through a federal grant, serves at-risk youth. Redenbach’s grant application was one of only eight in the country to be funded. During her tenure, the Center graduated more than 80 students who would have otherwise dropped out of high school.

“Our philosophy is to give students a last chance to succeed using a very personal connection to shepherd them through the process. We ask the students to open their package of gifts, to believe in themselves, and to hold on to an attitude of ‘I can do this,’” said Redenbach. “It is crucial to me that the program holds students to high expectations and that they complete the same requirements as any other high school student in order to receive a diploma.”



Sandi Redenbach

“This is the perfect time for me to give back.”

continued on page 7

AlumniUpdates

MARSHA SPECK

(BA '69, Credential '70)

Marsha Speck is clinical professor of educational leadership and coordinator of the Master of Education in High School Leadership Program at Arizona State University. Recognized by the National Staff Development Council for her best-selling publication, *Why Can't We Get It Right? Designing High-Quality Professional Development for Standards-Based Schools*, Speck was the former director of San Jose State University's Master of Education in Urban High School Leadership Program for 10 years. She also has diverse experience as a high school teacher, high school principal, and assistant superintendent of instruction. "UC Davis gave me a tremendous foundation to build on," she said. "Now I see my leadership students making a difference in local high schools so their students can get the best education possible."



ogy Site (<http://csmp.ucop.edu/cmp/cmets/>), a project of the UC-based California Math Project. She taught student teachers for a year in the School of Education after earning her PhD, then moved to her current tenure-track position at NAU in August 2006. She continues to focus on teaching teachers to successfully implement technology as part of their mathematics instruction via grade-level appropriate content instruction and analysis. "What a great experience [CMETS] was for me," she said. "It has truly laid the foundation for how I think about professional development."

ALISON EEDS

(BA '04, Credential '06, MA '07)

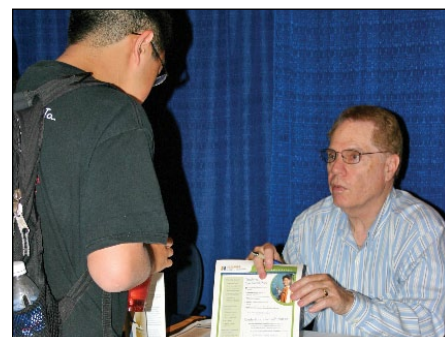
After just four years of teaching social science at Vacaville High School, Alison Eeds was selected as the 2009 Solano County Teacher of the Year. In addition to her tireless efforts and engaging personality, Eeds was hailed as "a wonderful example of that 'next generation' teacher who is infusing technology into the lesson delivery" by John Aycock, district superintendent of Vacaville Unified School District. "I had such an amazing experience at UC Davis," she said. "I know I wouldn't be as successful as I am today without the preparation I received from this wonderful program."



SHANNON GUERRERO

(PhD '05)

Shannon Guerrero is assistant professor of mathematics education at Northern Arizona University (NAU). While pursuing her doctorate, Guerrero served as project director of the California Mathematics Education Technol-



ROY ENGORON (BA '62, MA '65 Dramatic Art, Credential '66)

Roy Engoron, retired from West Sacramento's River City High School, eagerly accepted a recent opportunity to help recruit prospective students for the School of Education. "I had a ball!" he said. "Meeting the students was very interesting, and it was great sharing my experiences with them. They're so curious about what it's like in a classroom." A member of the School's newly formed Alumni Council, Engoron enjoyed 37 years in a classroom and believes that "...teachers are born, not made. Teaching is a very noble profession." His voice of experience is helping potential teachers make this important career choice.

KATHY WEATHERHOLT

ENGLERT (BS '76, Credential '77)

Kathy Weatherholt Englert was named 2008 Teacher of the Year for the Moreland School District in San Jose. She is now a third-grade teacher and spent the last 31 years teaching grades second through sixth. She says she was greatly influenced to become a teacher by her maternal grandmother. ■

Faculty Retirements

RICHARD FIGUEROA

With over three decades of research and teaching at UC Davis, Richard Figueroa's work in bilingual special education, minority testing and school psychology was widely recognized. In 1998, the California Department of Education selected his Optimal Learning Environment Project as a model for training educators to teach migrant children how to read and write. This unique project provided predominantly learning-disabled pupils with an instructional setting more typically associated with gifted-student programs. Since then, teachers have successfully used this model with students who speak a variety of languages—including Chinese and American Sign Language—and in varied instructional settings from an upper middle class school in Mexico City to classes for the deaf, blind and severely learning-handicapped.



Projects—science, math, art and history—were added to CRESS, as was the statewide Healthy Start Field Office.

Murphy continues to serve as a consultant to the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP), Achieve Foundation and the National Writing Project. Although she spends more of her time with several grandchildren, Sandy also holds emerita status at UC Davis and is teaching a course in the School. “I don’t intend to disappear,” she said.

SHARON DUGDALE

With much of her work addressing several interrelated themes in mathematics education, Sharon Dugdale more recently co-launched the California Mathematics Education Technology Site (CMETS) at <http://csmp.ucop.edu/cmp/cmets/>.



ucop.edu/cmp/cmets/. Sponsored by the California Mathematics Project, CMETS aims to help teachers make effective use of technology to enhance the teaching and learning of mathematics.

Dugdale took on a new role as associate dean when the Division of Education became a School in 2002. During the School's important “ramp-up” period, Dugdale reviewed and strengthened current programs, launched and planned for new programs, and established effective policies and procedures to support the School's growth.

With family priorities influencing her decision to retire, Dugdale said she feels “especially fortunate” to have spent the last chapter of her career at UC Davis. “The School has come a long way over the years, and it has a bright future,” she said. “I look forward to staying in touch and following progress and developments in the coming years.” ■

SANDY MURPHY

Sandy Murphy led the Writing Project and helped to merge the language & literacy and sociocultural disciplines as the Division of Education grew and took shape in the 1990s.



In 1991, she became the first director of the CRESS Center and served in that role for five years. During her tenure, four additional Subject Matter

Redenbach (continued from page 5)

Over the course of her career, Redenbach has also become an expert in training teachers how to apply principles of brain research, emotional intelligence, learning/personality styles, and self-esteem to better reach students and provide them with the tools to excel. She is the author of several articles and books, including *Self-Esteem and Emotional Intelligence: The Necessary Ingredients for Success* and *Autobiography of a Drop-out: Dear Diary*. She also provides staff development workshops on these topics throughout North America and other parts of the world.

“I want teachers to be emotionally intelligent, to teach from the heart and to embrace the goodness in their students,” said Redenbach. The “Students At Promise” endowment ensures that this message will reach future generations of teachers. ■

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Calendar

Picnic Day

April 18, 2009

Visit the School of Education at the CAAA Tent on the Quad

Honoring Educators— in recognition of National Teacher Appreciation Week

Wednesday, May 6, 2009
5–7 p.m.

Putah Creek Lodge,
UC Davis, RSVP required to
dljustice@ucdavis.edu or
(530) 754-4826

School of Education Graduation Celebration

Wednesday, June 10, 2009
4–6 p.m.

Jackson Hall, Mondavi Center,
UC Davis

Education

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

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Education Course Not Just for Would-Be Teachers

Issues around education are a part of all our lives, whether we own a business, teach, or raise a family. That's why the School is reaching out to undergraduates from every discipline to encourage them to take at least one course in education.

"Educational issues surround us and influence our development as a society," said Cynthia Carter Ching, associate professor and director of the School's Undergraduate Program and Minor in Education. "Whether entering the field of education or considering another field, students will encounter educational issues throughout their careers. They cut across disciplines."

Part of the undergraduate program's mission is to develop informed citizens and advocates for effective learning. "It's important that students preparing for research or jobs in social services, counseling, policy, business, advocacy or politics also have a concrete understanding of the education institution," Ching said.

Building on the School's required and specialized elective courses in education policy, foundations, and the psychology of learning, the undergraduate program is connecting to the wider UC Davis campus by linking education minor courses

with other fields of study. Sample electives include Asian American Studies 101: *Language and Educational Issues of Asian American Immigrants*; Psychology 130: *Human Learning and Memory*; and American Studies 152: *The Lives of Children in America*. Other potential areas include environmental science and economics.

"This will also help us as a school have stronger two-way communication with the students, our leaders of the future," said Ching. ■

Giving Matters: Wendy Wang

(continued from page 3)

What are your hopes and aspirations as you move into a teaching career?

I hope to teach students more than the literature in books or how to write an essay. I hope my students learn things they can apply to life. I aspire to help students become independent, open-minded, free-thinking individuals who are socially aware and responsible. ■