

The Dolly and David Fiddymment Chair in Teacher Education

Dolly and David Fiddymment are looking to make a difference—today and well into the future. For these dedicated parents and community leaders, there is no greater cause than the education of children.

The Fiddymments believe a child's route to a great education depends on having great teachers along the way. They believe that supporting the School's efforts to prepare innovative and well-prepared teachers is the best investment they could make in the future of education.

"Teachers are tremendous role models, but they need the right training and tools to work effectively with children," said Dolly. "We believe strongly in Dean Levine's vision for making UC Davis a premier teacher education school."

The Fiddymments were also inspired to invest in School after

visiting the classroom of one of its graduates—Dawn Imamoto, a second grade teacher in West Sacramento, and one of California's Teachers of the Year in 2004.

"Dawn embodies the kind of teacher we'd like every child to have," said Dolly.

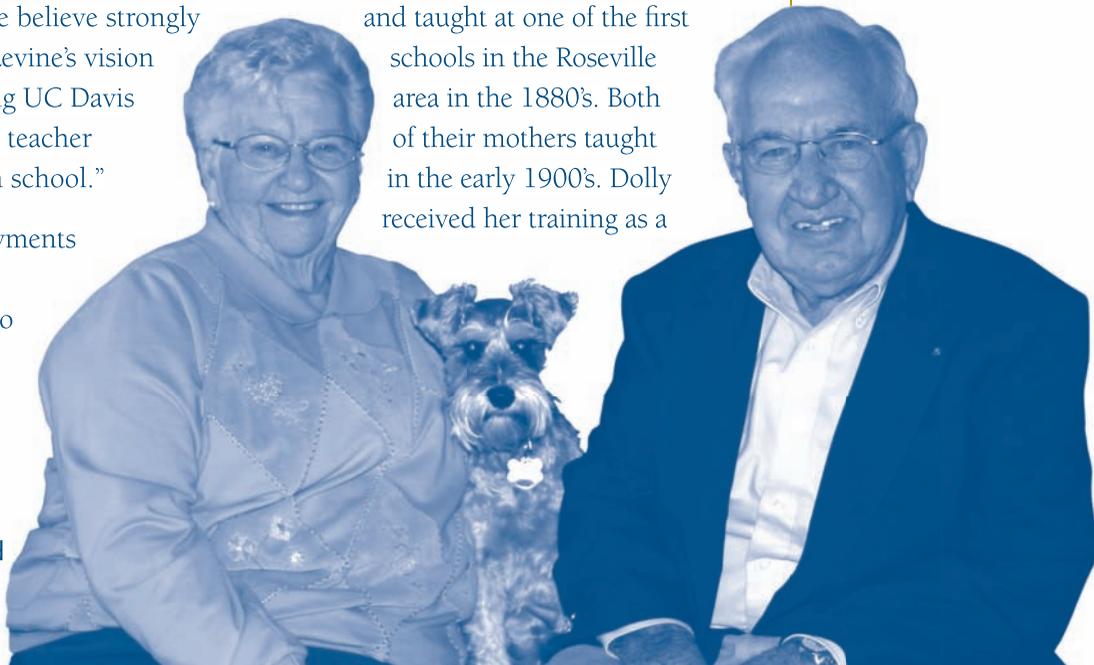
The Fiddymments, already major supporters of arts education and the Mondavi Center at UC Davis, have a long and rich history in education.

David's great-grandmother built and taught at one of the first schools in the Roseville area in the 1880's. Both of their mothers taught in the early 1900's. Dolly received her training as a

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Dolly Fiddymment

Dolly and David
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Dean Harold Levine

teacher at UCLA in the 1940’s and taught elementary school in the San Juan Unified School District for 25 years, retiring in 1981.

David is an inventor, farmer and problem solver by trade, helping shape the pistachio industry in California. During the last 30 years, he has also served on various community, business and school boards, including the Mondavi Center’s board of advisors.

“It is such a joy for us to be able to stand up and take a position on something of such importance,” said David. “With this gift, we are hoping to make a difference in the education of children everywhere.”

This gift, the largest private donation made to the School to date, will strengthen the School’s ability to attract a nationally recognized scholar to lead the teacher education program and will help UC Davis inspire additional support for students interested in teaching.

Working to strengthen schools has a long history at UC Davis, dating back to the first teacher-training program held on the University Farm in 1918. With the official founding of the School of Education just four years ago, the University revitalized its commitment to preparing the best and brightest teachers to serve all of California’s learners.

According to Dean Harold Levine, the Dolly and David Fiddymment Chair in Teacher Education will not only invigorate the School’s relationships with schools regionally, but also will raise awareness nationally about the importance of teacher preparation.

“This chair will further position UC Davis as a leader in teacher education and provide us with the resources to help shape best practices nationwide,” said Levine.

The School of Education plans to begin recruitment for the chair this fall.

Preparing Teachers to Lead

Master's/Teaching Credential Program

Our teacher education preparation is characterized by excellent faculty who help students bridge research and practice and small groups (cohorts) of students prepared to be leaders among their peers. In fact, the program's culture is one that encourages close interactions between each teacher candidate and teacher education faculty, as well as among the teacher candidates of each year's class. Additional coursework leading to the Master's degree introduces the integration of classroom research into teaching practice, making teachers more informed and pro-active practitioners.

In March, the 2004-06 Credential/MA cohort presented their inquiry projects at the Third Annual Symposium at UC Davis. Ninety-nine students presented on a wide range of topics from the role of prompts and audience on English learners' writing to the impact of creative writing in learning science among secondary students.

Barbara Merino, director of the teacher credential program, and Pauline Holmes, a supervisor in the program, have written a paper outlining the genesis of the master's component of the Credential/MA. "Student Teacher Inquiry as an 'Entry Point' for Advocacy" will be published in *Teacher Education Quarterly* this fall.

Thoughts on Teaching from Our Faculty

Joanne Galli-Banducci
Teacher Educator/Supervisor

Teaching is a complex task and profession; it is also a profession that allows us to mature, grow, and change in ways that positively affect our students, their learning, and our knowledge and skills as teachers. I believe that we hope to model and offer opportunities for the foundation of lifelong teaching. The credential year is part of the formative stage of teaching ... this

stage continues for several years. In the credential year we hope to establish habits of mind and teaching that are the seedbed of continued growth and maturity.

One factor that sets our program apart is that our cohorts are small; this allows us to know our students well. We know their strengths and challenges in the classroom and in our methods courses.

Additionally,

Joanne Galli-Banducci

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Al Mendle

we are part of the mentoring team and work collaboratively with resident teachers and school principals. I also believe that we want every student to be successful and will work together with other supervisors to support each student. We also set specific benchmark requirements. One requirement is the inquiry project, which integrates the habits of teaching that we want to nurture as well as develops “thinking professionals.” I want students to leave our program believing that they—not standards or a program—are making instructional decisions in their classroom. The basis of these decisions demands knowledge of students, their strengths and challenges, and ultimately what instruction best sustains learning.

Finally, I think that our MA program during the first year of teaching is a benefit to our students because it continues the associations and collaborations that our students established in their credential year. This second year also enhances the teaching attributes that were the groundwork of the credential year.

Al Mendle

Teacher Educator/Supervisor

I think everything about our program is exceptional. We are committed to children, their families and the schools. Those three targets form a triangle, and that is a very solid structural unit.

The new Chair in Teacher Education will strengthen our work in teacher education through a focus on research. In education, clearly, there is a strong connection between the research endeavor and best practices. Embedding the research component directly has the potential to energize our all of our efforts.

Research on Mentoring May Lead to More Effective Programs for New Teachers

Steven Athanases says the world for new teachers has become particularly challenging in the last 10–15 years because of the emphasis on standards-based and “very scripted” curricula and the fact that schools and classrooms have grown increasingly diversified.

Especially at the secondary level, teachers need to be expert in the subject matter pedagogy and the bar is very high for the standards of performance. Teachers also must be prepared to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

“So, we have to prepare them for all of this—and make sure they understand their role in providing access and equity for all students,” said Athanases. “We have high expectations, asking student teachers to think deeply about their own practice and to approach their teaching with innovation.”

Without the support of a mentor, according to Athanases, many teachers won’t make it through the first few crucial years of teaching. His research, done in collaboration with colleague Betty Achinstein,

seeks to identify the traits of a good mentor. “There is a huge need for mentors, and researchers have a role to play in identifying the traits of effective mentoring relationships,” said Athanases. For more information, see their co-edited book *Mentors in the Making: Developing New Leaders for New Teachers*, Teachers College Press, New York, 2006.

Teacher and Alumna Kelly Tsuda Reflects on First Year in the Classroom

The biggest challenge I face (everyday) is the “need” to get everything done and ready for the next day, week, lesson, etc. I normally have 11-12 hour workdays, plus I go in on weekends AND I bring stuff home. So, I am in the process of learning to tell myself I need to have a life instead of “living in my classroom.”

My greatest joys have really been

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Steven Athanases

Kelly Tsuda



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the little things that happen during the day that have reinforced my reasons for choosing this career. As a teacher, it's amazing because you never know all the ways you are affecting a child's life. Everything is not always academic when it comes to the teaching profession.

I have been very fortunate to have an off-site mentor who works with me both in and outside of the classroom. We have a wonderful relationship! We reflect on my teaching practices, and she's such a huge resource for me as a new teacher! I am able to talk to her about both student and school issues, if I have questions about “how to do” something, and she's also just a shoulder to lean on when I need it (and you will as a first year teacher, believe me!) It was very helpful to know she was “in my corner” simply to help me adjust to teaching. If I didn't have a mentor, it would have been a more difficult adjustment this year.

My experiences through UC Davis have prepared me well for the classroom in different ways. First, I remember how much the credential program stressed “collaboration” and “partnership.” The advantages of working together as a team produce so much more success. Consequently, in my own classroom, I stress

the importance of working cooperatively and collaboratively. I have structured my classroom tables in groups, and I create many of my activities in such a way that students need to work together in pairs or as table groups to reach a common goal.

Another experience that has helped prepare me for teaching has been the research I did in my classroom for the MA program both this year and last year. To be effective, I am constantly trying to find new, different approaches for teaching a concept, different strategies for assessing or measuring whether a student is learning something. Classroom research has provided a path to go and discover what works best for my students and me.

I hope to become more of an “expert” myself as I am constantly discovering new ways of doing things in the classroom (I feel like I learn something new everyday.) My goal is to help my students reach their highest potential. I hope to instill in them a love of learning and discovery. I am also trying to show them the importance of being a good person. If I don't feel like I am making a positive difference in their lives, that will be the day I stop being a teacher.

Science Teacher and PhD Student Wants to Impact Education

Some might say Comfort Ateh took a circuitous route to teaching, earning bachelor's and PhD degrees in agronomy before tackling a teaching credential at UC Davis in 2000. But Ateh sees life as one continuous journey of discovery.

Working in agricultural extension as a post-doc at UC Davis, Ateh didn't feel she could see the impact she was making even though she loved the research aspect of her work. Educational research looked like a better path, but Ateh felt she needed to have some teaching experience first. In 2000, she earned a secondary science credential and has been teaching ever since. In 2004, she entered the School's PhD program.

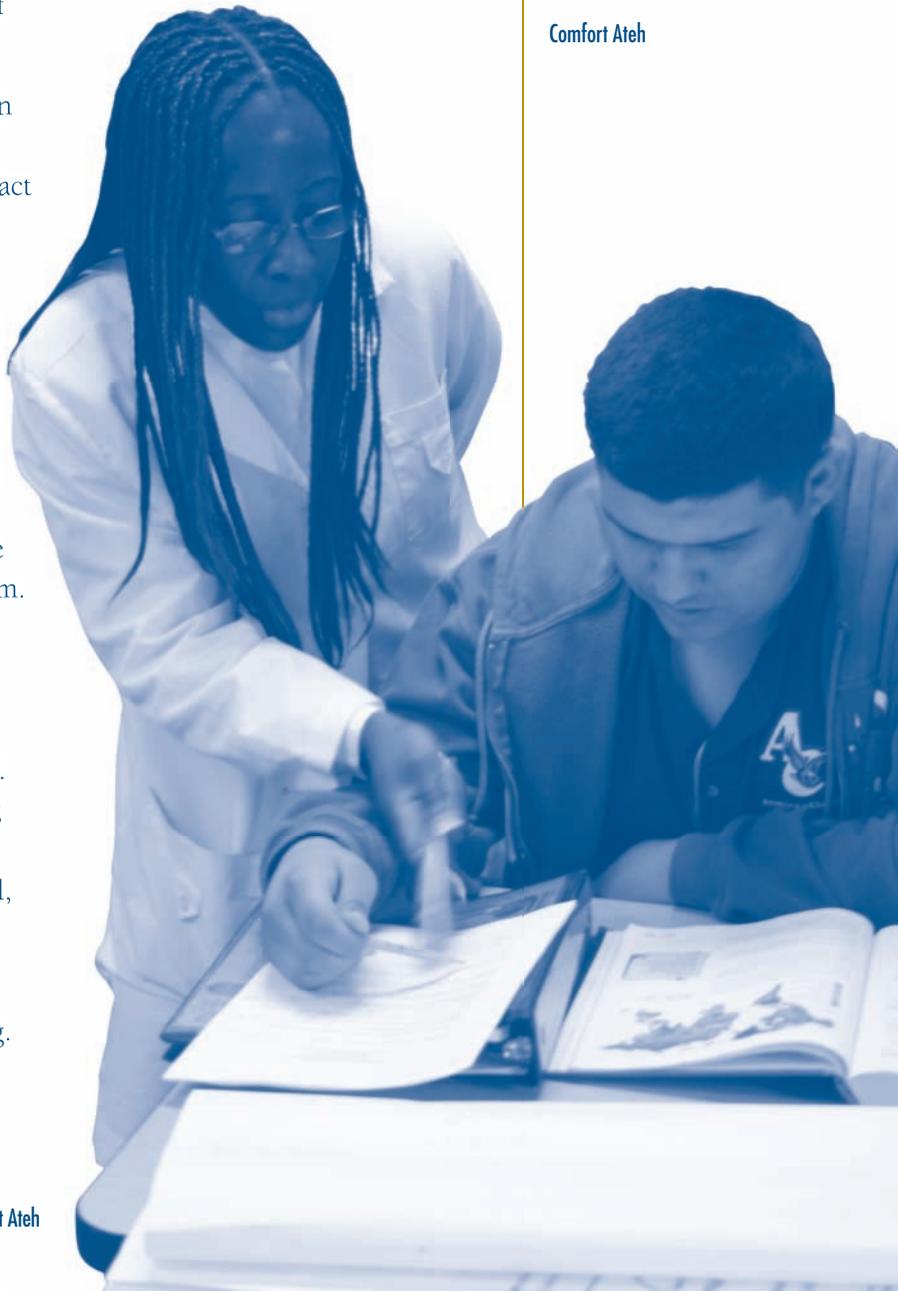
She spent her first three years teaching at a school for at-risk students. "It was the greatest experience of my life," said Ateh. "The students really needed help; some were from broken homes, some of their parents were in jail, others were victims of violence."

"Working with kids who really, really need you is very humbling. It really disciplines you as a teacher," she said.

Today, she teaches science to high school students at a charter school in Sacramento that emphasizes the importance of maintaining small learning communities and provides support to students who were not finding success at larger comprehensive high schools.

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Comfort Ateh



Investing in Our Future

Please consider joining us in creating this future by investing in tomorrow's teachers with a gift to the School of Education.

All of us benefit from great teachers. Every day, they are preparing for our futures in classrooms down the street, across town, and throughout the nation. Please consider joining us in creating this future by investing in tomorrow's teachers with a gift to the School of Education.

Your support of the School can also help you to realize your own financial goals. There are opportunities to reduce your taxes in both the short and long term, to secure a fixed income, and to help protect against long-term inflation, for example, while also helping to attract and prepare talented young people as educators.

You can also designate the ways in which your gift will shape our future, whether it is through providing scholarships to aspiring educators, supporting research that improves teaching and learning, or strengthening the work in a particular subject area critical today—and tomorrow.

For more information, please contact Jon Parro at 530-754-7024 or jparro@ucdavis.edu.

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