

the Challenge

Magazine for The Center for Gifted Studies

MAKING ADVANCED ACHIEVEMENT A PRIORITY

As a community interested in gifted and talented students achieving their potential, we know it is important to note the number of children and young people who score at advanced levels on achievement tests. Nationally, the percentage of students reaching advanced levels on achievement tests is low, but it is even lower for children from low-income families, those from minority backgrounds, and those for whom English is not their first language. This low percentage of advanced-level achievers from underserved groups, known as the Excellence Gap, could change if advocates made doing so a high priority in education at both the state and national level.

As part of Project RAP (Reaching Academic Potential), funded by a Javits grant and done in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education, Jefferson County Public Schools, and the University of Louisville, The Center for Gifted Studies has developed video and



SAM OLDENBURG

print materials on the Excellence Gap for educators and other interested parties. In addition, a grant from the Kentucky School Boards Association has provided resources for us to produce a video and professional learning materials for school board members. Mary Evans, Tracy Inman, and Julia Roberts are part of the Equity Cadre which conducts workshops for local school board members on the strategies

to address the Excellence Gap within their school district.

Now it is time for you to take part in the effort to reduce the Excellence Gap and help more students reach the advanced levels of achievement of which they are capable. For the future of your community, state, and country, it is time to speak out.

To take action, first read the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation's 2018 *Equal Talents, Unequal Opportunities: A Report Card on State Support for Academically Talented Low-Income Students*, found on the website

jkcf.org. From this document, you can assess what policies and laws your state has in place to encourage and promote advanced learning as well as what barriers exist. Then, contact The Center for Gifted Studies if you want to discuss strategies for upgrading the achievement priorities in your district or state.

The Excellence Gap is not inevitable: help us reduce it now.

Letter from Julia



Dear Friends of The Center for Gifted Studies,

Summer brings numerous opportunities to participate in programs offered by The Center for Gifted Studies. Camps are offered for first through tenth graders – Camp Explore (1st-3rd), Camp Innovate (3rd-5th), SCATS (6th-8th), and VAMPY (7th-10th). It is so important for gifted children and young people to experience learning with others who share their interests and love of learning. I like to call those individuals “idea mates.”

Summer marks the time between school years. During summer months, it is good to communicate with school and district decision-makers about practices and policies that would enhance learning for advanced students. One initiative at The Center for Gifted Studies has been with the Kentucky School Boards Association to disseminate information about the Excellence Gap with school board members. The Excellence Gap examines achievement at advanced levels in general and specifically for children from poverty, those who are

African American and Hispanic, and those who are English Language Learners. Check out The Center’s website for a video and other materials on this very important initiative.

Summer also provides the time to ensure that professional development opportunities are in place for the fall. We are planning to offer two days of professional learning on twice-exceptional learners, one for parents and educators new to the topic and one for those who are already knowledgeable. Next, the Berta Seminar will focus on the social-emotional needs of gifted learners, and this professional learning is provided at no charge to participants, thanks to a gift from the Berta family. Finally, another workshop on differentiating the curriculum will be provided by Tracy Inman and me. This workshop will highlight materials we have written about in books published by Prufrock Press. It will be offered in two separate professional learning opportunities: one for those who are new to our differentiation book and another for those who have been to a workshop focused on our book.

Stay in touch with The Center via social media, our electronic monthly messages (send an email if you would like to be included and aren’t now receiving these messages), and, of course, on our website. We so appreciate Friends of The Center and know you are one of those.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Julia Link Roberts". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Julia Link Roberts
Mahurin Professor for Gifted Studies

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THE MISSION FOR THE CENTER

We are committed to encouraging excellence by providing educational opportunities and resources to three populations: gifted and talented students, educators working with gifted students, and parents of gifted students.



THE VISION FOR THE CENTER

An internationally preeminent center, The Center for Gifted Studies envisions expanding services in five areas: (1) offering educational programs for gifted children and youth, (2) providing professional development opportunities for educators, (3) enhancing communication and advocacy for gifted children, (4) conducting research and developing curriculum to remove the learning ceiling, and (5) building a testing and counseling component for gifted children and their families.

The Center for Gifted Studies' fifth annual celebration of ideas, IdeaFestival Bowling Green, brought more than 650 middle and high school students from 19 schools to Western Kentucky University on February 15.

The day began with speaker sessions in Van Meter Hall. Three entrepreneurs shared their experiences in the first session, "Making the Big Idea a Reality: Lessons from Entrepreneurs." Sarah Nuse, whose love of dance led her to found the franchised dance company Tippi Toes Dance, told the audience, "It's when we take action in our lives that we see the greatest growth." Next, Muamer Razic, who established the company Level Lacrosse while still a student at WKU, advised, "The road to success and the road to failure are exactly the same thing — I've had to fail more times than you can count to get where I am today." Finally, chocolatier Phillip Ashley Rix told the story of his professional journey: "I spend a lot of time daydreaming. I'm always thinking

about chocolate and how far I can push the envelope."

The second speaker session, "Sharing the Big Idea: Why Knowledge Is Power," featured three women who have found ways to communicate complex information. SCATS and VAMPY alumna Kristina Talbert-Slagle (SCATS 1990, VAMPY 1991-94) explained the concept of global

health by describing the Ebola crisis in Liberia, asserting, "No one should get sick and die just because they are poor or cannot access the health services they need." Next, Jessica Bellamy, an infographic designer and social entrepreneur, talked about the crucial role of information in increasing people's access to freedom. She asked the audience, "What happens when

PARTICIPANTS SHARE THEIR BIG IDEAS AT IDEA FESTIVAL BOWLING GREEN 2018





PHOTOS BY JESSE KNIFLEY

we share what we have and empower the most vulnerable, marginalized, and under-represented?” Finally, planetary astrophysicist Natalie Hinkel talked about how and why she became a scientist: “I get to zoom from the earth into outer space and see not just pictures and numbers and data but see questions and possibilities — and work on how to answer them.”

In the afternoon, participants dove into more than 20 minds-on, hands-on activities on the third floor of the Downing Student Union. One participant commented, “I liked the ‘wideness’ of the activities — they branched out into different fields while still encouraging STEM.”



“One thing I’ll remember is how all the speakers said they started out young and were so determined and went for their dreams. Now I have a dream.”

— IdeaFestival Bowling Green participant from Edmonson County Middle School

Many activities were new to this year’s event. Participants could try Newton’s Attic’s SPINtron, a multi-axis trainer that simulates the motions an astronaut would experience in a capsule in a tumble on re-entry. At artist Leslie Nichols’ station, students experimented with manual typewriters to see how she uses them to make portraits. Participants performed in front of a camera with the professional puppeteers from Sublime Media. American Printing House for the Blind, meanwhile, demonstrated its multilevel tactile graphics display, which allows blind students to access information.

Returning activities were also popular: students designed with 3-D printing pens provided by the Kentucky Innovation Network, transformed smartphones into microscopes under the guidance of Rico Tyler of SKyTeach, and played strategy games



PHOTOS BY JESSE KNIFLEY

with students from the Mahurin Honors College at WKU. They also learned basic coding from Potter Gray Elementary School students on computers donated by DataSeam and experienced the dangers of texting while driving on AT&T’s virtual reality simulators.

Some veteran activity providers brought new projects: the Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce got participants thinking about their communities by building with LEGOS, and students in the WKU graduate creative writing program sparked ideas for poems. In addition, WKU’s BioAmbassadors taught animal anatomy, the Intercultural Student Engagement Center presented a student

art exhibit for Black History Month, and artist Andee Rudloff designed a brand-new mural for participants to paint throughout the afternoon.

There were four makerspace opportunities this year, each with its own twist. Jennifer Sheffield of the Green River Regional Educational Cooperative brought robots and Squishy circuits. Anne Heintzman and her students from the WKU Makerspace provided vinyl stickers and gadgets that taught concepts of electricity. The Maker Mobile set up a 3-D printer and a laser cutter. Finally, the Kentucky Science Center exhibited a soldering station where participants worked on micro-circuitry.

Throughout the afternoon, participants could share their big ideas with WKU graduate and undergraduate students who served as Idea Mentors. They also talked one-on-one — and took selfies — with the morning’s speakers.

Lead Sponsors for this year’s festival were Vid Monster Productions, which filmed the speaker sessions and created highlight videos, and the Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce. AT&T served as Supporting Sponsor. For videos, photos, and social media posts from this year’s festival and to receive information about next year’s festival to be held February 13, 2019, go to wku.edu/gifted/ideafestivalbg.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

In May 2015, Julia Roberts and Tyler Clark had the opportunity to travel to Mexico City for the 2nd International Conference on Giftedness. The conference was hosted by Centro de Atención al Talento (CEDAT), a school for gifted students in Mexico. Julia delivered a keynote about successful experiences with gifted education. The conference provided a wonderful opportunity for Julia and Tyler to share information about The Center for Gifted Studies, The Gatton Academy, and the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children.

From this visit, the idea arose for a delegation of students from Mexico City and Guadalajara to visit Western Kentucky University to learn about the opportunities offered through the university. In March, 16 students traveled to Bowling Green during CEDAT's one-week break. This was the first formal international academic visit of this type CEDAT has made. Partners throughout WKU's campus assisted with sharing information about The Gatton Academy, the Mahurin Honors College, and the Confucius Institute, among other opportunities.

Participants stayed busy throughout the trip. The students attended a section of Computational Problem Solving with Gatton Academy students. During the week, they also learned from Tucker Baker, current WKU engineering major and 2014 Gatton Academy graduate, about the concrete canoe competition, majors in engineering, and other academic options offered through WKU. The students also visited the WKU Makerspace. The week ended with a trip to Lost River Cave where the students, joined by current Gatton Academy students, conducted experiments with water samples.





The Center Travels to England



Spring break and fall break bring the opportunity to travel with The Center for Gifted Studies. April 2018 offered an adventure in England for eighth graders, high school honors students, and interested adults on a trip to explore the sights of London and surrounding areas.

The 17 travelers highlighted different places as their favorites. Several responded that visiting Stonehenge was most memorable. Others found Kensington Palace, Hampton Court, or the Globe Theater to be at the top of their lists. Still others cited the theater performances of *Les Miserables* and *Phantom of the Opera* as top memories.



One place that was new to all travelers was the Warner Brothers Studio Tour: The Making of Harry Potter which allows visitors to journey behind the scenes of the Harry Potter films. The chance to see first-hand the actual sets, costumes, animatronics, and special effects used in the movies was an experience to be long remembered.

Travel opens eyes to the world in which we live. Hopefully, travel also opens possibilities for future travel, perhaps with The Center for Gifted Studies or to a semester abroad when in college.

Alumni Update

ISAIAH (IZZY) BROOMFIELD (SCATS 2004; VAMPY 2006) is the chief technology officer of Mountain Tech Media, a digital marketing creative co-op from eastern Kentucky. He graduated from the University of Georgia in 2013 with a degree in political science and international affairs. After graduation, he completed two terms of service with AmeriCorps NCCC and VISTA. It was during that time that he fell in love with new media, which brought him to Mountain Tech Media.

"I wouldn't be where I am today without the experience of attending SCATS and VAMPY. SCATS introduced me to the tech field with a phenomenal class on how computers work, and VAMPY helped me refine my passion by exposing me to coding. Not only did The Center allow me to dive into subjects I wouldn't have had access to otherwise, but it also introduced me to an array of incredible, inspiring, and diverse people who continue to shape who I am to this day."

CAT GALLAGHER (SCATS 2007; Travel Paris and London) graduated *magna cum laude* from the Honors Program at Fordham University. She majored in computer science and French, receiving several honors at graduation. She is currently living in and enjoying New York City with her friend Lauren Kammerling (SCATS 2008; VAMPY 2009-10). Cat is taking courses at Pratt Institute for geo-mapping, wanting to use her computer skills to help save endangered species. She works part time on a teaching fellowship at the Prospect Zoo in Brooklyn in its education department.

ERIN WALCH (VAMPY 2009-10; Gatton) just completed her second year at the University of California Riverside in the PhD program in biomedical sciences. She is doing research in Dr. Todd Fiacco's Neuroscience lab where the goal is to elucidate the function of astrocytes in brain physiology and pathology. Erin is becoming skilled at patch clamp electrophysiology. She also tutors high school students in transient living situations.

GRETCHEN WALCH (VAMPY 2009-12; Gatton) graduated from Smith College in May of 2018. Through a Critical Language Scholarship, she will spend the summer continuing her Swahili studies in Arusha, Tanzania. This fall, she will be researching and teaching a new soil test for intestinal worms on a Fulbright Fellowship in Kenya. Gretchen credits Gatton Academy's Derick Strode as the person who opened up the idea of reaching for her dreams in intern and summer experiences and helping her to find a path to her destinations.

**Are you a
Center Alum?**
We want to
hear from you!

We have a new alumni form on our website:
wku.edu/gifted/about/alumni.php
Fill it out and let us know what you're doing.
You're important to us!

Duke Talent Identification Program Celebrates Gifted Kentucky Seventh Graders and Their Families



"This is a day to celebrate academic excellence," Julia Roberts announced on May 23 at the Duke Talent Identification Program (TIP) Kentucky Recognition Ceremony in Diddle Arena at Western Kentucky University. She spoke to approximately 275 young people and their families who attended the event which recognizes academically talented 7th graders.

Duke TIP's 7th Grade Talent Search identifies students across a 16-state region who have scored at or above the 95th percentile on a grade-level achievement test as a 6th grader. These students later take the ACT or SAT, tests designed as college-entrance exams, to learn more about their abilities. Duke TIP holds recognition ceremonies to honor those who score the highest. The Kentucky Recognition Ceremony has been hosted by The Center for Gifted Studies since 1982.

Nearly 61,000 students took the ACT

or SAT through Duke TIP in late 2017 and early 2018. In Kentucky, 883 qualified for recognition.

Many students traveled far to attend the ceremony, such as Casey Logan from Garrard Middle in Lancaster, who was visiting Bowling Green for the first time. Logan Amos of Scullen Middle School in Naperville, IL, spent almost seven hours driving to WKU with her mother and younger sister. This was the closest ceremony for her after a move from North Carolina.

Before the ceremony, Caleb Russell from Taylor County Middle School said he was a little apprehensive about crossing the stage: "Part of my brain is saying, 'Whoa, that's a lot of people!'" With his older sister by his side, however, he had solid support.

Dylan Thomas from St. Albert the Great in Louisville, meanwhile, was very

happy to be there. He said, "I was really excited to get my scores. They didn't come back for a while, and I was nervous."

The ceremony began with Julia's welcome, followed by Kathie Anderson, Gifted Education Academic Program Consultant for the Kentucky Department of Education. Next, Kentucky State Representative Jody Richards told the audience, "We are here not just to congratulate you but to encourage you to do even more."

WKU President Timothy Caboni gave the keynote. He lauded the students, saying, "Today, I share how important you are to our schools, to our communities, and to our world."

He also congratulated the students' families: "To the moms and dads in the room, the grandparents, and all others who have taken on the significant role of raising these gifted young people, great job! You do all the right things to encourage these bright minds and support their perpetual desire to learn. Never think that you don't influence them."

Finally, Duke TIP Education Research Specialist Rick Courtright praised the students' accomplishments and distributed medallions to all the students for state recognition, as well as additional medallions to those who had scored high enough to receive grand recognition and certificates to two students who had received scholarships.

Thanks to the generosity of the Kentucky Education Savings Plan Trust, everyone enjoyed a celebratory reception after the ceremony.

VAMPY's Holocaust Murals on Display and Featured in Documentary

focus on; subjects have included Anne Frank, the liberation of the camps, Hitler youth, the eternal flame, Kristallnacht, and Jewish resistance. Through images like a dark cloud of lost souls hovering over a camp and quotations from sources like Elie Wiesel, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and the Bible, the murals allow viewers to connect emotionally to this difficult history.



While music from the soundtrack of *Schindler's List* played in the background, hundreds of visitors, including school and religious groups, viewed the exhibit at the Corvette Museum. Some were teens who, alerted to the display by their teachers, came specifically to see the murals; others were car enthusiasts drawn to the images because they had visited

concentration camp memorials in Europe. Many visitors expressed a desire that the story of the Holocaust be taught to younger generations and were impressed the work had been done by students in middle and high school.

In addition to the exhibit, KET has created a documentary video called *The Murals of the Holocaust*

about the making of the murals that appeared several times on television and is available to watch online. The video premiered at the Kentucky Center for the Arts in February and again at the Corvette Museum in March. Both premieres were followed by receptions attended by many VAMPY alumni. At the March reception, Ron shared memories about making the murals, such as the dedicated

student who would end the day “looking like a coal miner” because she was covered in so much charcoal dust.

The mural project began in 2015-16 with the grant; the murals were exhibited at WKU's Kentucky Museum and the Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts in Louisville. It continued in 2017-18 with additional exhibits in Louisville, Danville, Madisonville, Hopkinsville, and Henderson. Also, through KET, PBS Online Media is creating online resources that will make the murals available to students throughout the country and the world.

For more information and to view the documentary, visit KET's webpage on *The Murals of the Holocaust* at ket.org/series/KMHOL.



Under the guidance of veteran teacher Ron Skillern, each summer since 1992 students in VAMPY's Nazi Germany and the Holocaust have created a class mural. All 20 existing murals were on display at the Corvette Museum in Bowling Green from March 1-14 in an exhibit called “Never Again,” part of an ongoing partnership between The Center, the Kentucky Center for Performing Arts, and Kentucky Educational Television (KET). This exhibit and the KET documentary were made possible by a grant from the Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence.

Measuring nine feet wide and seven feet tall, the murals rely heavily on the black and gray tones of artists' charcoal with occasional shocks of bright red, yellow, or light blue. Each year, the students choose a particular aspect of what they have learned to

DEVELOPING TRADITIONS AT THE GATTON ACADEMY

In the wake of The Gatton Academy's 10-year celebration, Gatton¹⁰, the school staff has been doing a lot of reflection on the program's first 10 years. For one, I have been thinking about traditions that I see taking root and wondering how a young academy like ours identifies and nurtures these traditions.

As I asked around about traditions at The Gatton Academy, I talked to current students, alumni, and staff.

"Waffle House is the obvious one," Alex Sorrels said. Alex is The Gatton Academy's alumni relations and recruitment coordinator. Before joining the office staff, he was a residential counselor (RC) for two years.

Sure enough, everyone I talked to mentioned six a.m. Waffle House runs. These must matter. So, what exactly does that mean?

Nikitha Rajendran, a 2018 alumna, explained her lone Waffle House run: "I'm usually a go-to-bed-at-11:30 or -12:00 type, so this was really big for me."

Tradition has it that on a non school night, students stay up overnight until curfew lifts at six a.m. Then, as morning dawns and on-wing curfew expires, friend groups head out the door on foot to the Russellville Road Waffle House.

"It's walkable breakfast," Nikitha described.

On the morning of her only Waffle House run, she said that her group ran into other Gatton Academy students both on the way and also once at the restaurant. The majority of customers that early



morning were Gatton Academy students who had made the same pilgrimage.

If traditions are acts or rites of passage that are shared by a group of people, there are also symbols and items that have added to the lore that connects Academy experiences across the years.

The yellow couch is the earliest of these known symbols.

Beth Hawke, The Gatton Academy's assistant director, residence life, has lived-in with all 11 classes of Gatton Academy graduates. She explained how the yellow couch took on meaning by October 2007—just two months after the program first opened.

When school started in August 2007, the furniture in the common areas of the building was rental. In October, when the real furniture arrived and the rental furniture was being picked up, the yellow couch had already become significant to the students.

"Students begged to keep it," Beth explained.

Then-director Tim Gott purchased the couch. From there, the yellow couch was a signifier. Students either hung out on the 4th floor or at the yellow couch.



They were, then, yellow-couch people or 4th-floor people.

The two examples above have grown organically out of student life at the school. Another tradition, the last-night-midnight meeting and signing of the attic beams, was introduced and cultivated by The Gatton Academy staff.

Off-limit during the rest of their Academy experience, the attic is a con-

stant source of curiosity for some students. Since the graduation of the first class, staff has met seniors on the 4th floor for a mid-night ceremony the Friday night before the graduation ceremony. Several years into this tradition, another element was added. Staff members had noted that the wooden attic rafter beams had been signed by plumbers, ironworkers, and masons during the 1928 construction of Florence

Schneider Hall. Since 2013, Academy staff have led graduates to the attic to sign the beams on their last night.

The tradition has taken on such meaning that during The Gatton Academy's expansion in 2015-16, when the program was temporarily housed in Bates Runner Hall, all Class of 2016 graduates' signatures were collected on a cardboard sign that is still stored in the Florence Schneider Hall attic alongside the other alumni signatures. A few class of 2016 graduates even managed to sneak into the then-under-construction Florence Schneider Hall to sign the physical beams before they graduated.

Asking about traditions revealed countless stories that connect current students and alumni to the Gatton Academy memories that matter most. Stories came from all settings, including from the annual Harlaxton study abroad experience. There, rituals of croquet, Nando's, Primark, and Pizza King are passed class-to-class.

Stories kept coming.

From the home front there were stories of traditions of video games on the wings (mostly boys) to ultimate Frisbee on the Fine Arts Center lawn to Physics Fridays (where students dressed in anything from tuxedos and top hats to superhero costumes to attend Physics class). Food has been central in the tradition of The Gatton Academy. No food experience seems to matter as much as Thai Express (or downtown's Thai Thai if one has longer to wait). Stories came from proms and dances. Since 2013, every school dance has ended with students interlocking arms, standing in a big circle, and swaying in unison to Billy Joel's *Piano Man*.

The school is soon to turn 11 years old, and traditions at The Gatton Academy are still young and developing. Yet, rich rhythms of shared experiences abound already. For students and alumni of the program, these traditions are nurtured and passed carefully to the next generation to preserve a unified story across time.

GATTON-SPEAK

GATTOP Students' Gatton Academy-issued laptop.

GATPACK A group of Gatton Academy students, typically four or more, spotted together on campus, near campus, or on a study abroad in an unnaturally cohesive, clumped walking pattern.

GRANDSENIOR Used by students to place alumni and current students in context of lineage by class of graduation, this usage describes an alumni from two classes earlier. *(There are many variants to this as well. For example, great-great grandseñior would be used to delineate an alumnus from a class four years earlier).*

BABY JUNIOR A term of endearment signifying a newly-admitted or freshly-arrived Gatton Academy first-year student.

ACCOUNTABILIBUDDY A senior assigned to a baby junior at the start of the school year who shows the new student around campus, answering questions without judgement.

PRIVS Short for Senior Privileges, these are rights earned by seniors in good standing to be off residential wings in common areas of the building between the hours of curfew and midnight.

DUNGEON GIRLS Female residents who lived on the shorter-than-other, common room-less wing on the ground floor of Florence Schneider Hall before the school's expansion. This is now a mostly-antiquated term since Florence Schneider Hall's opening of a second ground floor wing and the introduction of common rooms on these wings.

FRIENDS

A heartfelt thank you goes out for your gifts that make it possible for The Center to provide opportunities for children and young people.

John & Kathy Abbott
Louisville, KY

Mark & Benita Albert
Oak Ridge, TN

American Legion Post 23
Bowling Green, KY
SCATS Scholarship

Alan & Janet Armentrout
Bowling Green, KY

Pravin & Smita Avula
Bowling Green, KY

John & Sandra Baker
Bowling Green, KY

Rose Carter Ballard
Brentwood, TN

Robert & Barbara Begtrup
Nashville, TN

Chris & Patricia Bertke
Reynolds Station, KY

Mark & Kathryn Bigler
Bowling Green, KY

Sunday Boling (VAMPY 1990-92)
West Hollywood, CA

Miranda Brown (VAMPY 2002-05)
Lexington, KY
VAMPY

Phil & Trudy Burkeen
Bowling Green, KY

Dann & Kathi Cann
Leitchfield, KY

Caverna Independent
School District
Cave City, KY

Jay & Eileen Chalmers
Murfreesboro, TN
In Honor of Harry Chalmers' Birthday (SCATS 2002-03; VAMPY 2004-05; Counselor)

Bill & Sharon Chaney
Hendersonville, TN

Tyler Clark (Counselor; Instructor)
Bowling Green, KY

Matt & Ginger Depp (SCATS 1989-91; Counselor) Cline
Pearland, TX

Richard & Sharon Clouse
Glasgow, KY
In Memory of Connor Sheehan (FSS 2007-12; WSS 2008, 2010, 2013; VAMPY 2014-17)

Susan Cook
Bowling Green, KY

Raymond Cravens
Bowling Green, KY

Julie Crudele (VAMPY 1997-2000)
Seattle, WA

Chris & Kathryn Doyle
Smiths Grove, KY

Jean Dudgeon
Elizabethtown, KY
Alumni Fund

Eric (SCATS 1988-89; VAMPY 1988) & Abigail Edds
Bowling Green, KY

Warren & Darlene Eisenstein
Boca Raton, FL

Adam Ellis
Russellville, KY

Diane Esrey
Louisville, KY

Mark Evans
Louisville, KY
Alumni Fund

John Fitts
Bowling Green, KY

James & Mary Ann Flueck
Lexington, KY

Michael Flueck
(VAMPY 1989-92; Counselor)
Brownsburg, IN

FMC
Princeton, NJ
Matching Gift: David and Michelle Wheeler

John Gallagher
Prospect, KY

Ruthene Glass
Bowling Green, KY

Will Gump (VAMPY 1985-88; Travel)
Louisville, KY

Bill & Sue Hamilton
Pflugerville, TX

Charles & Carolyn Hardcastle
Bowling Green, KY

Richard Harris
Columbia, MO
Kristin Harris Peterson VAMPY Scholarship Matching Gift: Shelter Insurance Foundation

Connie Hayes-Badon
Louisville, KY

Robert Haynes
Bowling Green, KY

Walt & Sherry Heath
Franklin, KY

Nelson & Susan Helm
Louisville, KY

Amanda Hines (SCATS 1983-84)
Evansville, IN

Bill & Renita Hines
Calhoun, KY

John & Dawn Hitron
Louisville, KY

Wimpy & Regena Hudson
Scottsville, KY

James & Karen Hughes
Fairdale, KY
In Honor of Leah Hughes (SS 2002-05; SCATS 2006; VAMPY 2007-9; Counselor)

Mark & Catherine Hunt
Lexington, KY

John & Tracy Inman
Bowling Green, KY

Sylvia Jaegers
Louisville, KY

Karl & Dorthy Johnston
Joelton, TN
In Honor of Dr. Julia Roberts

Ints & Melissa Kampars
Hardinsburg, KY

Tom & Jennifer Kanaly
Louisville, KY

Jih Sheng & Ying Ru Lai
Blacksburg, VA

David & Laura Harper Lee
Bowling Green, KY

Hillary Lee
Knob Lick, KY
Twice Exceptional Gifted Studies Fund

Holly Lewis (Travel)
Arlington, VA

Stewart & Amanda Lich
Brownsville, KY

Christopher & Melissa Lind
Nashville, TN

Nathan & Shelly Lovell
Greenville, KY

Pete & Dixie Mahurin
Bowling Green, KY

Charles & Bobbi Mann
Calhoun, KY
Matching Gift: Texas Gas Transmission

A BROTHER'S LOVE

Henry Lawrence never met his big sister Riley, but he is helping to keep her memory alive. Henry (age 6) is the son of VAMPY alumna Dr. Sarah M. Lawrence and her husband, David. He and his little brother, Sam, were born a few years after Riley's death in 2008, but he has grown up hearing about her and about the ways her family has chosen to memorialize her life. Henry wanted to help, so with his mother's blessing he sorted through his books and chose some titles to sell. He was able to fill two boxes and sell them all through Facebook. After a generous contribution from a family friend, Henry's total for his efforts was \$70 for the Riley Jane Lawrence Memorial Scholarship for VAMPY.

Carl & Donna Martray
Elberta, AL
William McLean
Lumberton, NC
Rodney & Janet Meeks
Custer, KY
Prabodh & Daksha Mehta
Elizabethtown, KY
Bharat & Bharati Mody
Glasgow, KY
Tom Moody
Franklin, KY
John & Astrid O'Boyle
Elizabethtown, KY
Graham (SCATS 1996-98;
VAMPY 1999-2001; Travel)
& Carolina Oliver
Round Rock, TX
Matching Gift: Dell Corporation
Mary Ann Pardieck
Columbus, IN
Jan & Ron Peeler
Bowling Green, KY
Kimberly Lorch Perrins
(VAMPY 1994-97)
Atlanta, GA
VAMPY
Shannon Bunnell Pickett
(Counselor)
Glasgow, KY
Jonathan Plucker
Glastonbury, CT
Dick & Julia Roberts
Bowling Green, KY
In Memory of JoAnna Hudson Cann
Josh Roop (SCATS 1992-93)
Vine Grove, KY
Super Saturdays
Ronald & Michelle Sabotchick
Wurtland, KY
In Honor of Nick Sabotchick
(SCATS 2015; VAMPY 2016)
J. T. & Martha Sandefur
Bowling Green, KY
Alfred & Andrea Smith
Louisville, KY
James Snider
Franklin, KY
Jim & Joyce Ann Spiceland
Salisbury, NC
TIAA-CREF
New York, NY
Mary Nancy Todd
Bardstown, KY
Clarence & Carolyn Traum
Princeton, KY
Larry Treadwell
Sunrise, FL
Frank (VAMPY 1987-90)
& Viengthong Sundara Tso
Torrance, CA
In Honor of Emma & Alexander Tso

Michael & Shannon Vitale
Bowling Green, KY
VAMPY Scholarship in
Memory of Andrea Marie Hall
David & Jill VonGruben
Wildwood, MO
Catherine Ward
Bowling Green, KY
Jon Warren (Counselor)
Bowling Green, KY
Kendrick & Claudia Wells
Louisville, KY
Michael & Sherry Whitten
Germantown, TN
Mary Ellen Wiederwohl
(SCATS 1987-88)
Louisville, KY
Max & Lucy Wilson
Hickman, KY
Joe & Judy Wismann
Talent, OR
RILEY JANE LAWRENCE
Lara Augustine
Louisville, KY
Amy Burris
Fayettesville, NC
Dann & Kathi Cann
Leitchfield, KY
Christopher Carlton
Louisville, KY
Steve Conrad
Louisville, KY
Thomas & Leah Dawson
Louisville, KY
Nancy Farmer
Louisville, KY
Megan Fultz
Port Orchard, WA
Tina Gibson
Louisville, KY
Jennifer Guichard
Louisville, KY
Millicent Hawkins
Louisville, KY
April Helm
Evansville, IN
Dean Hite
Louisville, KY
Christy Honaker
Shelbyville, KY
Joan Huber
Louisville, KY
Rosebell Komugisha
Urbandale, IA
David & Sarah Markham
(VAMPY 1988-90) Lawrence
Louisville, KY
In Honor of Detective Darrell Hyche
In Honor of Imperfect Moms Club
In Honor of Henry & Sam Lawrence
In Honor of Jane Walsh

Nicole Leszczuk
Bordentown, NJ
Heather Mahoney
Lexington, KY
Jennifer Mahoney
Chesterfield, VA
Scott Nass (VAMPY 1988-91;
Counselor)
Burbank, CA
Claudel Nisingizwe
Shaker Heights, OH
Chivas Owle
Altamonte Springs, FL
Temesia Perdue
Madisonville, KY
Kimberly Reid
Louisville, KY
Zara Risoldi
Elkhorn, NE
James & Marsha Serdenis
Louisville, KY
Alan Shepherd
Hamilton Township, OH
In Honor of Henry Lawrence
Lori Sims
Louisville, KY
Anne Sinnett
Bellingham, WA
Audrey Stanton
Broken Arrow, OK
Dennis & Pam Stokes
Memphis, TN
Laura McClendon Stokes
Mayfield, KY
Alison Swift
Etobicoke, Ontario
Elaine Terry
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Richard Tewksbury & Lisa Sutton
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Mary Turner
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David & Connie Walters
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Kimberly Weaver-Beard
Lexington, KY
Nick Wiggins
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Shannon Wilson
Louisville, KY
IN HONOR OF DAVID LAWRENCE
Douglas Hensel
Durham, NC
Allen Holbrook
Brooks, KY
Eric & Mariann Lawrence
Louisville, KY
Janice Lawrence
Louisville, KY
Eva Markham
Louisville, KY

IN HONOR OF JAN LAWRENCE
David & Sarah Markham
(VAMPY 1988-90) Lawrence
Louisville, KY
Eric & Mariann Lawrence
Louisville, KY
IN HONOR OF MARIANN LAWRENCE
Katherine Ballard
(VAMPY 1997-99; Travel)
Louisville, KY
Brian Deckman
Louisville, KY
David & Beverly Esser
Erie, PA
Daniel Gray
Richmond, KY
David & Sarah Markham
(VAMPY 1988-90) Lawrence
Louisville, KY
Eric & Mariann Lawrence
Louisville, KY
Janice Lawrence
Louisville, KY
Eva Markham
Louisville, KY
Candace Portman
Louisville, KY
Connie White
Louisville, KY
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& CHAMBERS WEDDING**
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Louisville, KY
Mary Brehm
Louisville, KY
Eric & Indigo Friedlander
Louisville, KY
Kelly Goforth
Louisville, KY
William & Terrell Harrison
Louisville, KY
Terry Laun
New Albany, IN
Eric & Mariann Lawrence
Louisville, KY
Janet Margerum
Louisville, KY
Susan Marquardt
Louisville, KY
Timothy O'Dea
Louisville, KY
William Shelton
Louisville, KY
Xanthe Tabor & Annie Eckstein
New York, NY
Susan Torok
Louisville, KY
Ruth Wukasch & Gretchen Davis
Masonic Home, KY

Twice-Exceptional Seminar: Understanding, Recognizing and Working with 2e Students



“He’s so capable, but he is such a lazy student.”

“He doesn’t even try to do his schoolwork.”

According to Dr. Lois Baldwin, a national expert on twice-exceptional (2e) children, comments like these should set off alarm bells. They may refer to a gifted student with a disability who, thus, is twice exceptional. These students often appear to be intelligent and capable but do not show their abilities when asked to produce work in their classes. Identifying 2e students is difficult because the disability may overshadow the giftedness, the giftedness may mask the effect of the disability and both advanced and remedial learning needs may not be recognized. (See the chart on the three conditions of 2e.)

Educators must understand both giftedness and disabilities and how they interact in order to successfully identify and plan appropriate services for these students. Lois recommends using a problem-solving team approach to develop a learning plan.

Both gifted education and special education teachers should be members of the team along with the parents and the student if the child is older.

The team should start with targeting the student’s strengths and interests to write strength-based goals. Strategies such as acceleration, content extension, and higher-level thinking activities can be included as interventions in the student’s learning plan. The second important consideration involves the student’s learning challenges. After a thorough review of the student’s performance and assessment data, the problem-solving team might include specific programs, tutoring, compensatory strategies, and small group direct instruction as interventions to address challenge areas. A third area to examine is social-emotional. Twice-exceptional students often have a low self-concept and high levels of anxiety and anger because of the discrepancies between what they can and cannot do. The problem-solving team must include

THREE CONDITIONS OF 2E

Exceptional Ability Recognized First	Disability Recognized First	Neither GT or Disability Recognized
Achievement or talent noticed early, often highly verbal	Often struggles in school	Disability masks gifts, gifts mask disability, appears to be average
Tries to compensate for learning issue	First noticed for what they cannot do	Functions at grade level but well below potential, may excel in specific subject or area
Frequently passed over for special education support because they may be achieving at or near grade level	"At risk" because focus tends to be on deficits	Gifts emerge in specific content areas or in particular learning environments where nontraditional methods are used
When struggling often thought to be "lazy," "not trying," or underachieving	Difficulty giving themselves credit for abilities, refers to self as "dumb" or "stupid"	
	Basic skills emphasized over creative abilities	

Baum, S., & Owen, S. (2004). *To be gifted and learning disabled: Strategies for helping bright students with LD, ADHD, and more*. Mansfield, CT: Creative Learning Press.

supports for 2e students such as counseling sessions, social groups, or anger management training. Since 2e students are very complex, Lois recommends that the learning plan be comprehensive, individualized, and flexible. The plan should be implemented for four weeks then reviewed and adjusted as needed.

Catherine Cliburn, gifted/talented coordinator and library media specialist for Cloverport Independent Schools, attended Lois's presentation as part of The Center's annual Twice-Exceptional Students Seminar last January: "I am so thankful that I had the opportunity to learn from Dr. Lois Baldwin's expertise. Her workshop activities challenged participants to alter their perspectives and focus on the strengths of students rather than disabilities in order to not miss out on potentially gifted children who are so often overlooked. Working through real case studies with other educators generated wonderful discussions and practical ideas for how to meet the challenge of recognizing these students' gifts and ensuring appropriate enrichment experiences while providing them the necessary support for any learning disability."

Mark your calendar for the upcoming Twice-Exceptional Learners Seminar November 1 and 2, 2018, led by Lois and her colleague Daphne Pereles.

A CELEBRATION OF TALENT

"So much information was applicable to my classroom as well as being a parent. It was like being at a professional learning opportunity that I wanted to attend! I wish that it had lasted longer."

These were the words of art teacher Bethany Inman of Elizabethtown, KY. Bethany joined close to 40 people who traveled to Barnes and Noble in May for Innovation in Education, an event consisting of a panel discussion, Q and A, and book signing. The event, organized by Allison Bemiss, brought together The Center's Julia Roberts, Tracy Inman, and Allison along with consultant Jana Kirchner and Terri Stice of Green River Regional Education Cooperative. Liz Storey moderated the panel which focused on what innovation and engagement look like in the classroom, increasing challenge, parenting gifted children, and more. The books available for purchase and signing were the following:

Decoding the Past: Inquiry-based Lessons in U. S. History by Jana Kirchner and Andrew McMichael (Prufrock, 2015)

Hands-on STEAM Explorations for Young Learners: Problem-Based Investigations for Preschool to Second Grade by Allison Bemiss (Prufrock, 2018)

Parenting Gifted Children 101: An Introduction to Gifted Kids and Their Needs by Tracy Inman and Jana Kirchner (Prufrock, 2016)

Powerful Task Design: Rigorous and Engaging Tasks to Level Up Instruction by John Antonetti and Terri Stice (Corwin, 2018)

Strategies for Differentiating Instruction: Best Practices in the Classroom 3rd ed. by Julia Roberts and Tracy Inman (Prufrock, 2015)

Teacher's Survival Guide: Gifted Education by Julia Roberts and Julia Boggess (Prufrock, 2011)

Get your copies of these books through prufrock.com or us.corwin.com! We might even be able to arrange an autograph.

Sponsored by The Center for Gifted Studies and the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences at WKU, the 2018 Wedge Visiting Scholar Presentation was given on February 21 and 22 by Dr. Rena Subotnik, director of the American Psychological Association's Center for Psychology in the Schools and Education.

At the free evening lecture on February 21 (open to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and counselors), Rena spoke on how psychological science can provide key insights on effective in-

struction, classroom environments that promote learning, and appropriate use of assessment as well as research methods that inform practice.

In the next day's three-hour workshop for educators and administrators, she drew from research by the Coalition for Psychology in Schools and Education on the "Top 20 Principles from Psychology for PreK-12 Creative, Talented, and Gifted Students' Teaching and Learning" to talk about the specific needs of gifted students (see page 19). She explained that

while learning for all students hinges on general psychological learning principles, those principles often need to be applied differently to gifted students than to their classmates in order to be effective.

Rena also gave examples of how the Top 20 Principles could be applied to gifted and talented learners. For example, one principle states that "Student creativity can be fostered." To encourage creativity in gifted students, educators can "encourage the development of students' critical thinking and reasoning abilities by

Wedge Lecture Focuses on Applying Learning Principles to Gifted Students



providing challenging opportunities for solving complex problems, particularly in knowledge domains in which students already have substantial knowledge."

Dr. Antonia Szymanski, Assistant Professor at the School of Teacher Education at WKU, attended the presentations and commented, "Dr. Rena Subotnik's evening talk provided parents, teachers, and researchers with a terrific foundation of ways to teach young people. In her follow-up teacher workshop, she sprinkled real-life stories with research-based principles that made the material easy to understand. I appreciate the Wedge Lecture series because I always learn something new from the speakers."

For information on past lectures or to receive information on future events, visit wku.edu/gifted/educators/wedge/index.php.

Top 20 Principles from Psychology for PreK–12

Creative, Talented, and Gifted Students' Teaching and Learning

www.apa.org/ed/schools/teaching-learning/top-principles-gifted.pdf

PRINCIPLE 1 Students' beliefs or perceptions about intelligence and ability affect their cognitive functioning and learning.

PRINCIPLE 2 What students already know affects their learning.

PRINCIPLE 3 Students' cognitive development and learning are not limited by general stages of development.

PRINCIPLE 4 Learning is based on context, so generalizing learning to new contexts is not spontaneous but instead needs to be facilitated.

PRINCIPLE 5 Acquiring long-term knowledge and skill is largely dependent on practice.

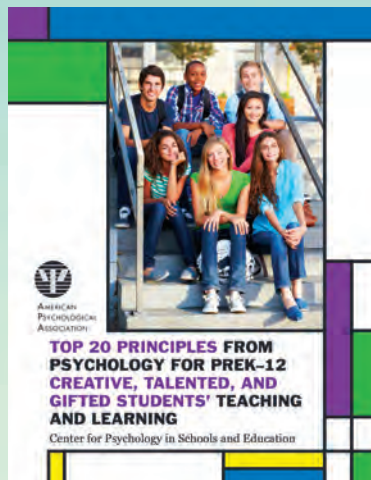
PRINCIPLE 6 Clear, explanatory, and timely feedback to students is important for learning.

PRINCIPLE 7 Students' self-regulation assists learning, and self-regulatory skills can be taught.

PRINCIPLE 8 Student creativity can be fostered.

PRINCIPLE 9 Students tend to enjoy learning and to do better when they are more intrinsically rather than extrinsically motivated to achieve.

PRINCIPLE 10 Students persist in the face of challenging tasks and process information



more deeply when they adopt mastery goals rather than performance goals.

PRINCIPLE 11 Teachers' expectations about their students affect students' opportunities to learn, their motivation, and their learning outcomes.

PRINCIPLE 12 Setting goals that are short-term (proximal), specific, and moderately challenging enhances motivation more than establishing goals that are long-term (distal), general, and overly challenging.

PRINCIPLE 13 Learning is situated within multiple social contexts.

PRINCIPLE 14 Interpersonal relationships and interpersonal communication are critical to both the teaching–learning process and the social development of students.

PRINCIPLE 15 Emotional well-being influences educational performance, learning, and development.

PRINCIPLE 16 Expectations for classroom conduct and social interaction are learned and can be taught using proven principles of behavior and effective classroom instruction.

PRINCIPLE 17 Effective classroom management is based on (a) setting and communicating high expectations, (b) consistently nurturing positive relationships, and (c) providing a high level of student support.

PRINCIPLE 18 Formative and summative assessments are both important and useful but require different approaches and interpretations.

PRINCIPLE 19 Students' skills, knowledge, and abilities are best measured with assessment processes grounded in psychological science with well-defined standards for quality and fairness.

PRINCIPLE 20 Making sense of assessment data depends on clear, appropriate, and fair interpretation.

American Psychological Association, Center for Psychology in Schools and Education. (2017). Top 20 principles from psychology for preK–12 creative, talented, and gifted students' teaching and learning p. 6.

When Jesse Knifley first joined The Center for Gifted Studies staff, we waited for the calm, composed, unflappable demeanor to fade away as the fast-paced, high-energy days at The Center did not stop. But after most of a year on the job as the coordinator of technology and communications, Jesse remains the standard-bearer for all “I can take care of that, no problem” people.

Jesse was interested in applying for the position at The Center for a number of reasons. His cross-discipline interests aligned with the programs The Center offers to students, families, and educators of high-ability students. As an English major in college (BA WKU '09), expressive writing and storytelling are deeply important to him, so the communications component of the job seemed like a great fit. He also enjoys working with and learning about the technical areas at The Center – anything from installing software updates to figuring out why a Facebook post won't show to setting up multiple laptops for an event to revamping The Center's website (usually all at once with a minute's notice). And finally, Jesse is very engaged with the visual arts and enjoys telling The Center's stories through his photographs. “I love having a lot of variety in day-to-day work,” says Jesse. “Having a job that crosses a lot of disciplines and being able to touch upon a lot of different areas is great for me.”

Jesse's previous work experiences were a perfect way for him to be able to step right into The Center's nonstop, cross-discipline work environment, where everyone pitches in at any given time to help make sure our programs are a success. From making pizza back in college, he learned about customer service and about showing up and being a professional every day. Working six years at the Warren County Public Library in Bowl-

Dedication, Einstein, Pizza, and Storytelling

JESSE KNIFLEY HELPS THE CENTER SHINE



ing Green, Jesse learned the very valuable lesson that working with and thinking about how information can be organized and

stored can help him discover the steps to take to go from having a pressing problem to finding a workable solution.

One of Jesse's favorite anecdotes highlights his approach to problem solving: “There's a wonderful anecdote from Albert Einstein (which, like most great Einstein quotes, is probably apocryphal) that goes something like this: when asked the speed of sound, Einstein responded that he didn't know. Baffled, the questioner pressed Einstein as to why he couldn't recall such an important fact. Einstein replied that he didn't worry about memorizing information that he could just look up when he needed it. One doesn't have to know everything. One just has to know where to find it—and how to find it.”

What is the main similarity between working at Warren County Library and The Center for Gifted Studies? “Both are places

where dedication is a central tenet. The people drawn to public service are the type that not only want to do good work, but also want to be working toward something larger in their communities.”

When Jesse first started working at The Center for Gifted Studies, he knew of The Center's excellent reputation. “After all, it would be hard to build a world-class institution like this without word getting out that important work was being accomplished. What I didn't know, however, was the sheer scope of The Center's dedication to gifted education.”

“This isn't a place that tackles gifted education from one angle and calls it a day. We're advocating for the rights of gifted learners in the offices of elected officials. We're actively involved in bringing cutting-edge pedagogy to K-12 classrooms through grant work and professional development. We're making sure to reach future teachers in both the undergraduate and graduate levels so they have the skills and resources they need to identify and meet the needs of the gifted learners in their classrooms. We're setting young people up for a lifetime of learning by providing events outside of the classroom where they can explore their interests and spend time with others like them. We're an international presence that ensures academics from across the world can share ideas and research.”

Jesse will tell you that the best piece of advice he has received since joining the staff at The Center is “that every interaction we have—whether it's in person at a conference or answering the phone or in print—is a chance to let The Center shine. We interact with people in a lot of different ways, so it's always important to keep our mission in mind.” We are fortunate to have Jesse with us to help us shine.



SAM OLDENBURG

The Role of School Board Members in Reducing Excellence Gaps

Members of local boards of education are required to participate in training each year with the number of training hours based on their tenure. Mandated topics include school finance, ethics training, superintendent evaluation, and charter school regulation. The Kentucky School Boards Association provides Board/Superintendent Team Training Modules on these topics and more.

Thanks to a collaboration with The Center, a new module is now available to help school board members understand their important role in reducing Excellence Gaps. Excellence Gaps are the differences

in the proportion of students in different demographic groups who score at the advanced level on student achievement tests.

Lower socio-economic students as well as English Language Learners and Hispanic and Black students are underrepresented at the highest levels of academic achievement.

The module begins by debunking six myths of gifted education that lead to overlooking talented minority students. It includes information about what's in place for gifted education in Kentucky, a discussion of school scenarios and what policies are needed to help students learn at advanced levels, and a video designed just for school board members. (See cover story.) After watching the video, school board members discuss intended and unintended consequences of policies. Participation in this module prepares school board members to examine their district and school Excellence Gaps. They can then gather information about what policies are in place and what needs to be done to remove the learning ceiling and accelerate learning.

School board members who would like to participate in this training module should contact the KSBA office at 800-372-2962.

Only 4% of low-income 4th graders and 2% of low-income 8th graders scored advanced on the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress in mathematics. This is one example of the seriousness of Excellence Gaps in Kentucky. More children need to be scoring at advanced levels!



On a crisp Winter morning, Professor Patty Bertke moves around her classroom, watching her young students design and build bridges from everyday materials. They had spent time on previous Saturdays learning about the importance of the connections to support their construction. She watches as the member of one team wants to use connectors that will be too weak to hold up the structure they have designed. Thankfully, others are mindful of the importance of strong connections, and the team is able to move on to build a functioning structure.

Patty knows the importance of connections not just for successful physical structures but also for supporting people. One of her student helpers this past Super Saturdays session was Siobhan Abel, and Patty's mentoring shows the importance of connections in all walks of life.

Patty teaches at the WKU Owensboro campus, where Siobhan, an elementary education student, enrolled in one of Patty's classes. One of the requirements

Connecting, Mentoring, and Building Bridges: Winter Super Saturdays

of the class was to participate in a service project with other classmates and an outside organization that serves children. "I always offer up Super Saturdays," explains Patty, "because it is the only time they would get experience working exclusively with gifted, high ability, or high interest children in a learning environment." Patty has been a teacher in The Center for Gifted Studies Super Saturdays program since Fall 2013, always teaching something that involves civil engineering in bridge building and design.



When Siobhan mentioned that her sons had participated in Super Saturdays in the past and that her daughter was signed up for the winter 2018 session, Patty jumped at the chance to have someone who had experience with the program from a parent perspective help with class. But Patty not only saw Siobhan as a helper, she also saw the opportunity to develop a mentoring relationship. “We met and I ‘tutored’ her about the content of the course, displayed many of the activities, and explained our roles. I asked her to review the materials and content and reminded her of the new age group I had and that any insight she had for changes would be appreciated. After each session, we debriefed and discussed changes. She was awesome. There was one class period we changed midstream because what was



happening was not working well. I am sure she was exhausted and overwhelmed and amazed at what these children could do. She also seemed to genuinely appreciate the view from ‘the other side’ as she had always been the parent. I feel like she enjoyed the behind-the-scenes.”

Siobhan first became interested in gifted studies in 2012 when her oldest child was identified as gifted in 3rd grade. She remembers receiving a letter, but not

really knowing what to do from that point. “I talked with his school — we lived in Los Angeles at the time — to see what changes to his education would be made. In a roundabout way, the school informed me that there wasn’t funding for such programs as GT, but that his teachers will help to challenge him. That was really the end of that discussion, and the years went by.”

After moving to Kentucky, red flags in behavior

had her worried that another son might have special needs. During testing it was determined that he had a very high IQ. After meeting with the school, she realized

that his needs were not going to be met. “This started a fire in me to investigate gifted education in Kentucky. I thought that if my kids’ needs were not being met through the school, then I had better find a way to meet them at home. This is how I came across The Center for Gifted Studies.”



Siobhan's sons started in the Super Saturdays program, where they both had very positive experiences. "They felt like they could have fun learning in an environment that allowed them to think. My oldest son also attended SCATS and still attends VAMPY which he looks forward to each summer. He says that the classes are interesting, but what he likes the best are the friendships. Being around people that understand your way of thinking is refreshing. So often I hear my children say

through the teacher education program at WKU-Owensboro." In Patty, Siobhan found the same passion to meet the needs of the gifted that she had. "Professor Bertke taught the student diversity class in a way that had teacher candidates look at how they would meet the needs of all learners, including the ones at the top of their class. There were times that I would sit after class for an hour talking to her about her personal and professional experiences working with gifted children.

mentee, and teacher is powerful: "The experiences children and families have in the programs offered through The Center for Gifted Studies are immeasurable. Children are given an environment that understands their way of learning, and, because of that environment, the learning stays with them. I've seen it leak out at the most interesting of times with my own children, and I know where that learning came from. It came from a place that challenged them but also allowed them to



that other kids don't get them. They feel isolated even though they are surrounded by hundreds of peers."

Seeing the isolation her own children felt and having experienced the lack of information the schools had about meeting the needs of gifted students drew Siobhan into returning to school to become an educator. "I wanted to work with gifted kids in a way that would be rewarding for them and their families. I met Patty Bertke

Working with her has been amazing. I think that in a way, I too felt like my boys, that I was alone in my mission and desire to help gifted children. Mrs. Bertke and the seminar opportunities that I have experienced through The Center for Gifted Studies have helped me to feel connected to others who share my passion for these children."

Siobhan's summary of her connections to gifted education as a parent,

be themselves. It's an environment focused more on exploration than limitation. My only wish is that programs that serve our most unique learners were more readily available. Because for each of my children who gets the opportunity to reach a part of his or her potential, there are numerous others who don't."

The connection that Patty and Siobhan made is invaluable for both of them as educators, and one that will serve many high ability young people in the future.

In the fall of 2013 we received an email from a student, Meghan Althaus, from the service sorority Omega Phi Alpha. The sorority's focus that semester was to work with girls in science, and someone had told them that The Center for Gifted Studies program, Super Saturdays, had several science classes and that we were looking for student helpers. I was so impressed with Meghan when we met. She was organized, flexible, and excited to get involved. The next two years we relied heavily on Meghan's wonderful organizational skills to place amazing student helpers in Super Saturdays classes. I was thrilled when I saw that Meghan was now a teacher and working on her MAE in Gifted Education and Talent Development and enrolled in classes with Dr. Julia Roberts. I hoped that some of the experiences she had with Super Saturdays led her to this. — Gail Hiles (Super Saturdays Coordinator)

“SUPER” OPPORTUNITIES

BY MEGHAN ALTHAUSER

Life is about seizing opportunities. The opportunities available to me during my time at WKU helped to prepare me for my future more than one could expect. As a college freshman in the Fall of 2011, I began this series of life-changing opportunities when I joined the service sorority, Omega Phi Alpha. Two years later, as a service committee head, I met Gail Hiles to discuss a possible service project. From this meeting, I was able to begin my two-year volunteer work with The Center of Gifted Studies' Super Saturdays program.

As an elementary education major, I gained many valuable educational experiences working in a variety of Super Saturdays classes centering on Chinese culture, puzzle making with the *Hunger Games*, fairy tales, musical theatre, and biology. I met and worked with many qualified gifted educators and students. I was fascinated by the complex thinking and application skills of the students in these classes. The integration of curriculum through authentic experiences provided a very engaging and higher level of learning environment for the students. I became inspired to one day create a similar environment in my classroom. I observed and



absorbed everything I could to grow as an educator throughout this experience. I also began to see how more advocates within the school systems were needed to make sure the needs of gifted students were being met. This inspired me to continue to pursue my graduate work with WKU to help meet the needs of gifted students.

After graduating in 2015, I continued my college education with WKU by earning an endorsement as an elementary math specialist in 2016. Now in my second year teaching fifth grade, I could not be more grateful for my time with WKU and Super Saturdays. My work with the students in the program has given me insight into the needs and capabilities of the gifted. As a current graduate student with WKU's MAE Gifted Education and Talent Development, I hope to take the knowledge I gained from these courses along with my work with Super Saturdays to shape my classroom to be a place of higher level learning. WKU and Super Saturdays allowed me to gain many life-changing experiences, and I am excited to see what other opportunities my graduate work with WKU will lead me.



Nashville

T E N N E S S E E

JOIN US IN MUSIC CITY

The international Headquarters of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC) relocated to Western Kentucky University in January 2011. The WCGTC has held the World Conference around the world from London to Sydney since 1975. The next conference will be close to home: The 23rd Biennial World Conference will be hosted by the Executive Committee in Nashville, TN, July 24 – 28, 2019, on the campus of Vanderbilt University.

The World Conference is always a time to network with researchers, psychologists, educators, and parents interested in serving gifted students from around the world. At the 2017 World Conference hosted in Sydney,



approximately 730 people participated from 35 countries. One of the Australian attendees, Robert Baiton, commented, "I found the entire conference challenging and useful and immediately applicable to my classroom environment."

This July, the Executive Committee will visit the Headquarters at WKU to conduct

the business of the WCGTC and discuss plans for the upcoming World Conference. Members of the Executive Committee include Julia Link Roberts, President, USA; Leonie Kronborg, Vice President, Australia; Tracy Riley, Secretary, New Zealand; Denise Fleith, Treasurer, Brazil; Ümit Davasligil, Turkey; Sue Prior, Hong Kong; and Margaret Sutherland, Scotland. Tyler Clark serves as the Executive Administrator.

We look forward to welcoming many to Nashville next year. Registration will begin in August. You can learn more about the World Conference by visiting the conference website at www.worldgifted2019.com or emailing headquarters@world-gifted.org.

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I would like to talk to someone about other ways to support The Center (e.g., endowment, scholarships, specific programs, etc.).



DR. JULIA ROBERTS
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The Center for Gifted Studies
Western Kentucky University
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



CALENDAR

Differentiation Workshop

October 18, 2018

Fall Super Saturdays

October 20, 27 & November 3, 10, 2018

Twice-Exceptional Learners Seminar

November 1-2, 2018

Berta Seminar

November 9, 2018

Winter Super Saturdays

February 2, 9, 16, & 23, 2019

Idea Festival Bowling Green

February 13, 2019

Spring Break in Paris and Normandy

March 29 – April 7, 2019

Camp Explore

June 3-7, 2019

National STEM Scholar Program

June 3-7, 2019

SCATS

June 9-21, 2019

VAMPY

June 23 – July 13, 2019

The Advanced Placement Summer Institute

June 24-28, 2019

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children

23rd Biennial World Conference

July 24-28, 2019