

Graduate Education Newsletter

Volume 15, Issue 1

SPRING 2009

- **Spring Semester registration begins Nov. 3rd for matriculated students and Dec. 1st for non-matriculated students.**

- **Register for Spring 2009 Courses online at: www.smcvt.edu/graduate**

- **Reminder: Please complete the candidacy application prior to earning 12 credits.**

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?: INCLUSION IN VERMONT SCHOOLS

By Karen Donovan

“Floyd” is a high school student who happens to have cerebral palsy. He is currently in a pull-out situation for math and language arts (LA). His special education case manager teaches “Floyd” math for one hour every day, five days a week. He works the same amount of time with another special educator for LA. These teachers are not highly qualified in their specific content areas. They are his **primary** teachers for those two content areas. He does not participate in the regular math or LA classes at all. This will all be changing soon...

How does this connect to the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) requirements? The state of Vermont is required to comply with the regulations set by the Federal government and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) regarding the HQT status of special educators. This applies directly to special educators who are providing the **“primary instruction”** in any core content area. Special educators at the elementary level can simply take the Praxis II elementary content for their HQT requirements and continue to pull out groups of students for separate math (or any other content area) classes. At the middle and secondary level, however, special educators need to have HQT status in their specific content area. This status was formerly based on the **performance** level of students. This does not apply to the small number of students who are **assessed with alternative standards (PAAGE portfolio assessment)**.

Secondary special educators are often not HQT in several core content areas. So, this is where co-teaching comes in. Vermont schools will need to seriously look at co-teaching as a model of the future! This is something I have been saying to my students in the Special Education program here at SMC for several years and I am very excited! Vermont schools this year are required to work with their special educators on a plan for

professional development needs. Schools will need to figure out how teachers and special educators can work together to meet the needs of their students in an inclusive classroom. *The challenges ahead make education such an invigorating field!*

New For Aspiring Literacy Leaders

By Kristin Gehsmann, Ed.D.



This spring, we are pleased to present a new course in the Reading Concentration: **GED526A - Becoming a Literacy Leader: Tools and Strategies for Success**. Whether you're currently a literacy teacher-leader, a reading coach or reading specialist, or maybe you're just beginning to think about becoming a leader in your school or district, this is the course for you! Instructors Leslie Colomb and Paula Brouillette will share their years of first hand experience as a school principal and reading coordinator at the K-8 level. They will provide you with the knowledge, skills and resources you need to successfully lead improvements in literacy instruction and student achievement. Various models of literacy leadership, professional development, literacy instruction and literacy intervention will be examined.

This course is highly recommended for students in the M.Ed. and C.A.G.S. Reading Concentrations, though it's open to any graduate student with at least 6 credits in literacy/reading-related coursework at the graduate level.

This course is approved as either a literacy elective or general elective. If you have any question about how this course could fit into your program, please do not hesitate to contact Kristin Gehsmann (kgehsmann@smcvt.edu). Space is limited, so please register early!

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Spirit and Education Lecture/Workshop/Institute Series: 2008-2009

By Aostre Johnson

The *Talk About Wellness Initiative* has given Saint Michael's College a grant to sponsor a series of lectures/workshops and a summer institute relating to spirit and education. All talks/workshops are free of charge and open to the public. **Dr. Aostre Johnson, Professor of Education, is coordinating this series and may be contacted at ajohnson@smcvt.edu or 654-2436 for further information.**

The first talk was on **October 15, 2008: *Learning To Unlearn: Brain Neuroplasticity, Belief Systems and Inner Presence* by Dr. Sam Crowell**, Professor of Education at California State University, Director of the Center for Holistic and Integrative Learning, and author of several books on brain-based learning, including *The Re-Enchantment of Learning: A Manual for Teacher Renewal and Classroom Transformation* and *Mindshifts: A Brain-Compatible Process for Professional Growth*. Over 90 people attended.

The next workshop is on **Thursday, December 4, 2008 from 4 to 6 PM: *Spirit and Academic Skills: Can Teachers Educate for Both?* by Steven Levy, in Cheray Science Hall, room 101.** He has taught for 28 years at every grade level and is a consultant for Expeditionary Learning Schools, working with U.S. teachers on instructional improvement, with a focus on project-based learning. His awards include: Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, John F. Kennedy award for teaching history, and Disney National Outstanding Teacher. In this workshop, we will experience what it is like to teach and learn in a way that integrates spirit and skills. Is it possible to design curriculum and assessments that engage the

hearts and souls of our students, and at the same time promote mastery of standard-based content and skills? Absolutely, but it is hard work! Plans for the **Spring 2009 Series** are underway. A likely schedule is below, but contact Dr. Johnson for the finalized version, which may include date, changes and more talks; or if you are interested in a **one-credit graduate course, based on talks, speakers' writings, and several meetings.**

Wednesday, February 4, 4 to 6 PM: *A National Perspective on Educating for Character Development, Ethics and Spirit in Education* by Dr. David Streight. He has been Executive Director of the Council for Spiritual and Ethical Education since 2004, has spent thirty years as a teacher and school psychologist, and is a frequent workshop presenter. He is currently host for the teacher section of the PBS/WNET Website, *Religion and Ethics Newsweekly*.

Monday, March 2, 4 to 6 PM: *Schools with Spirit: Nurturing the Inner Lives of Teachers and Children* by Linda Lantieri, M.A. She is Director of the Inner Resilience Program, has 40 years of experience in education as a public school teacher and administrator, as well as a faculty member at Hunter College. She is the co-author of *Waging Peace in Our Schools* (1996), editor of *Schools with Spirit: Nurturing the Inner Lives of Children and Teachers* (2001), and author of *Building Emotional Intelligence: Techniques to Cultivate Inner Strength in Children* (2008).

Thursday, April 2: 4 to 6 PM: *School Spirit: Inspiring a Passion in Students for Quality Work* by Steven Levy. (See Dec. 4 bio.)

Katri O'Neill and David Rome Named 2008 Teachers of the Year

By Anne Judson

Congratulations to Katri O'Neill (M.Ed., 2006) and David Rome (M.Ed., 1997). Katri and David were nominated as teachers of the year for Milton Middle School and Burlington High School respectively.

New Graduate Education Assistant

By Amy Saks-Pavese

The Graduate Education Department would like to welcome our new Graduate Assistant, Kyle Chadburn. Kyle completed his Secondary Education Licensure and undergraduate degree in English here at St. Michael's College. His desire to continue his studies stems from the positive experiences Kyle has had with professors he characterizes as "personable, caring and interested in [his] passion to become a teacher." In reflecting on his experiences during student teaching, Kyle noted that his favorite part was interacting with students and seeing what direction they would go with the subject of the day. We are grateful to have Kyle working with us and sharing his enthusiasm and talents.

Student Spotlight: Scott Thompson

NAME: Scott Thompson
LICENSURE AREA: Math
 (working on school principal)
POSITION: Assistant Principal
SCHOOL:
 Milton Jr./Sr. High School

When did you know you wanted to be a teacher?

After college I had a hard time finding a job in the field of my degree (Environmental Science). I was fortunate enough to be offered a job as an Instructional Assistant. I fell in love with the students and within my first week of work I enrolled at Saint Michael's College to start working on my teaching license.

What other jobs have you held?

In between teaching assignments I have worked as a ski lift attendant and in an environmental testing laboratory.

Describe a favorite moment with a young person.

It's difficult to single out one single one moment. Everyday brings new moments worthy of mention. I'd have to say my favorite moments are when students achieve goals they never knew were possible.

What is one thing you would want your future students to know about you?

I'd like them to know I work in collaboration with students, teachers, and parents to help make their educational experience meaningful.

What do you hope a former student will say to you 10 years from now?

I hope they would say I cared about them and made a positive difference in their lives.

Saint Michael's College helps create an Arts Magnet Elementary School in Burlington

By Jonathan Silverman

The Saint Michael's College Graduate Program in Arts in Education is partnering with the Burlington School District and the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts to develop an Integrated Arts Magnet Academy at Wheeler Elementary School in the Burlington, Vermont School District. So, what is it? The Integrated Arts Academy offers its students an interdisciplinary curriculum and a dynamic approach to learning where the arts are integral to academics. Students actively create, communicate through, and respond to their own and other's work in the disciplines of visual arts, dance, music, media arts, and theatre. Adhering to Vermont Standards of Learning, the thematic program enhances the understanding of and connections between the fields of knowledge. Creativity is pervasive in the student-centered curriculum and demonstrated in the physical environment. Collaboration among students, staff members, and community arts partners enriches the in-depth learning in the arts and develops the skills and dispositions necessary for 21st Century learning.

Why Wheeler and why SMC? An Integrated Arts Magnet School at Wheeler is the district's response to create equity and excellence in all schools and respond to the needs for 21st Century learning. The SMC Arts in Education Program offers its skills and experience with professional development and resources to assist in the effort to build an exemplary Arts Magnet School. In addition, the SMC Education Department hopes to provide an inspiring site for student teachers to work with a diverse population and engage in innovative curriculum. A foundations professional development course for all Wheeler staff will take place over the next 6 months in preparation for the pilot year, beginning fall, 2009. This course, taught by Joan Robinson from the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts and an adjunct faculty member in the SMC Graduate Education Program, and Jonathan Silverman, Coordinator of the Arts in Education program, is designed to both introduce arts integrated philosophy and practice and to invite the Wheeler professional staff to make connections to their own curriculum planning. For further information about the Wheeler Elementary Integrated Arts Magnet School please contact Jonathan, jsilverman@smcvt.edu.

Update on Project CREATE: Curriculum Reform for All Teachers of ELLs Applied Linguistics Department and Education Department

By Claudine Bedell

Project CREATE continues its hard work to meet the needs of all English Language Learners (ELLs). CREATE will be hosting a winter conference on Friday, December 12, 2008. The focus of the conference is *Shared Responsibility for English Learners*. Additionally, Project CREATE will be offering Collaborative Action Projects (CAPs) which provide mini-grants of \$5000 or less to teams. Teams will be made up of faculty working together from Applied Linguistics and Education and one of the three partner school districts – South Burlington, Burlington, and Winooski. The work will be to revise curriculum at Saint Michael's College to become more responsive to teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students and develop field placements that model culturally responsive teaching in local area schools. Lastly, Project CREATE will be sponsoring an annual lecture series starting in the spring of 2009 to inform SMC faculty, students and local area teachers about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. The first set of three lectures in the spring will be on implementing Worldwide Design and Instructional Assessment (WIDA) English Language Standards that were adopted by Vermont in recent years and are required when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students in Vermont.

Strategy Corner: The Pond Survivor Challenge A Quick Summary from ADL Science Teacher Wendy Doane

Students were studying how organisms adapt to survive. They were given prepared slides of pond organisms to study. After learning how to identify these organisms under the microscope, they prepared a small presentation on one organism. The focus of the presentation was on the characteristics each organism has to help it survive in the pond.



Each class then voted on the organism they thought could best survive pond life. After the vote, the whole class got behind that one organism. Students were given the choice of being on the research team, which put together a powerpoint with all of the adaptations that help that organism to survive, or they could join the costume team. They were given one class period to work. At the end, the powerpoints were created and the costume fashioned! We then had a 7th grade meeting. Each of my classes presented their organism, only the top one survived....all others were voted out of the pond.

The powerpoints were short and clear. The costumes were the creations of imaginations pushed to the limit with resources available and time, but very very creative.

Wendy Doane is a graduate of the St. Michael's Elementary Licensure Program.



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Congratulations Newly Hired GED Students!

Anthony Baker
French, Noble High School, ME

Andrew Reid
Science, Mill River High School

Megan McSweeney
3rd & 4th grades, California

Kerri O'Connell
Social Studies, Mount Anthony High School

Peter Garrett
Special Educator, Vergennes High School

Eileen Hartigan
2nd grade, Sacred Heart, New Orleans, LA

David Parker
Instructor, Michigan State University

Maegan Chevrefils
Special Educator, grades K-2, Porter's Point

Leisa Halligan
EEE Special Educator, Burlington

Jenn Drager
Special Educator, Brown's River Middle School

Stephanie Taylor
Assistant Principal, U-32 High School

Ed Oravec
Interim Principal, Morristown School

Lynn Reynolds
Special Educator, Richmond Elementary

Conor Driscoll
Social Studies, Vermont Commons School

Katie Cross
2nd grade, Orchard Elementary

Melita Mernicky
5th-8th grade Art, St. Albans Town School

Holly Nicolle
Special Educator, Camel's Hump School

Janelle Ashley
Special Educator, Barstow Elementary

Angela Chaffee
Art, H.O. Wheeler School

Christina Wadsworth
6th grade/Literacy Aide, Weybridge Elementary

Maria Paris
Special Educator, U-32 High School

Suzy King
ESOL Teacher, Burlington High School

Scott Thompson
Assistant Principal, Milton Middle/High School

Lashawn Sells
1st grade, Lewis & Clark Elementary, VA

George Slusser
Science, Milton High School

*Don't see your name? Contact Kyle Chadburn
(kchadburn@smcvt.edu) for corrections.*