

Motor Development Program Provides Service to the Community and Teaching Experience for Teacher

“Againnnnn!” If you were in Mitchell Hall on any Thursday evening, you might hear an enthusiastic voice, asking for another opportunity to fly.

Under the leadership of Drs. Manny Felix and Garth Tymeson, the Motor Development Program (MDP) provides individualized instruction in the areas of aquatics, fitness, skill development, and community-based recreation to approximately 40 persons, between three and eighteen years of age, with cognitive and/or physical disabilities. Individual and group lessons, interaction with nondisabled peers, community-based training, and interdisciplinary service delivery are key components of the MDP. The MDP meets year-round in conjunction with the UW- La Crosse academic schedule. The Motor Development Program serves two goals: to provide a valuable service to the community and to provide undergraduates with a guided, positive learning and teaching experience.



Children and young adults from the Greater La Crosse community as well as Physical Education and Adapted Physical Education teacher candidates get the opportunity to fly with tethered support through the Motor Development Program.

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Motor Development Program (Cont.)

Physical education teacher candidates gain first-hand experience working effectively with children with cognitive and physical disabilities. As part of ESS 231 Introduction to Adapted Physical Education (3 credits), all physical education teacher candidates work in the MDP as part of their first experiences in teaching physical education. Those working to add Adapted Physical Education to their teaching license return to the Thursday program as a staff coordinator to teach mini lessons to the children and to serve as leaders and mentors to those beginning their teacher education program. In this way, Adapted Physical Education teacher candidates see growth in the children over a two to three year program and learn how to design learning goals and assess development for the children based on individual needs. Sadie Sabatino, School Health, Adapted Physical Education and Physical Education teacher candidate who

has completed student teaching experiences at Viroqua High School, Holmen Middle School and Sand Lake Elementary School noted that the Motor Development Program provided her with the skills to teach all children. She said, "When I started here, I had to chase a child who was not able to stay focused, and to see him today, waiting his turn on the climbing wall is just amazing. I learned so much through this program. I had no idea how to begin to support these students, and now I feel confident." That confidence is evident in the APE students as they learn to provide social, physical and challenging support to the children and young adults in the community.

Meet Xiong Vang, Recruiter/Advisor for the School of Education

Xiong Vang, Recruiter/Advisor for the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, is from Wausau, WI and graduated from Wausau West High School in June of 2001. He received an Associate Degree from the University of Wisconsin Marathon County (UWMC) in May of 2004. In the fall of 2004, Xiong transferred to UW-La Crosse and graduated with a Bachelors of Science in Physical Education in May of 2007. In May of 2008 he again graduated from UW-La Crosse, this time with a Master's of Science in Physical Education with a concentration in Adventure Education. Before obtaining this position in January 2009, Xiong was a substitute teacher for the School District of La Crosse.



Xiong's hobbies include playing various sports and camping. Although he engages in many sports, he regularly plays soccer, basketball, and table tennis. He also enjoys camping because "it's relaxing, and it allows extended time for me to enjoy the outdoors." He reads during his leisure time and finds family time to be valuable, especially being away from his family for the past five and a half years for school and now work. He notes that "Although my wife and I and two sisters, who all are also attending UW-La Crosse, are down here in La Crosse, the rest of the family including many aunts, uncles and cousins are in Wausau."

Xiong's role as the Recruiter/Advisor focuses on the recruitment and retention of students of diverse backgrounds as well as students in high demand teaching subjects such math, science, and special education. The diversity component pertains to students of color, disadvantaged students, and underrepresented students

Meet Xiong Vang, (Cont.)

such as females in math and science education. Xiong says, "Being an alumnus of the University and having gone through the Physical Education program here at UW- La Crosse helps me greatly when recruiting prospective students and advising students gave me a head start as far as having the basic knowledge of the School of Education. In addition, when recruiting, I can draw from personal experiences and know of support services that are available to students." Xiong's office is 320 Morris Hall and his email is vang.xio2@uwlax.edu. He says, "Please feel free to stop by or contact me anytime."

Adapted P.E. Faculty Member Receives National Honor

At the recent national conference of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) held March 31 - April 3, 2009 in Tampa, FL, Dr. Garth Tymeson (Department of Exercise & Sport Science) was honored with the Professional Recognition Award. This prestigious award is given by the American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation (AAPAR), one of 5 associations under AAHPERD. AAPAR is specifically dedicated to enhancing quality of life by promoting creative and active lifestyles through meaningful physical activity, recreation and fitness experiences across the lifespan with particular focus on community-based programs. The Professional Recognition Award is given to a person who has provided outstanding national leadership through service that benefits individuals with special needs. This service has a significant mark on the lives of others through teaching, athletics, entertainment, serving in public office, or in some other way to enhance the positive image of individuals with disabilities in society.

Dr. Tymeson is a full professor in the area of adapted physical education and is instrumental in providing many university- and community-based programs offered to children and adults with disabilities through the UWL Center on Disability Health and Adapted Physical Activity. He has directed many programs for children with disabilities including Hoops for All, Tee-ball for All, Buddy Baseball, and Soccer for All. He is also the Director of the Physical Activity Mentoring Program which matches a college mentor with a person with a disability to provide physical activity and nutrition education to participants. This program is only one of eight funded by the national "I Can Do It, You Can Do It" physical activity programs (Office on Disability, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) for persons with disabilities. Also, Dr. Tymeson has recently served the past three years as President (President-elect, Past-President) for the National Consortium on Physical Education and Recreation for Persons with Disabilities. His outstanding dedication and commitment has directly resulted in the creation of a highly visible and effective advocacy organization to better serve individuals with disabilities on a national level. Congratulations Dr. Tymeson for your well-deserved award and thank you for all that you do in the Adapted Physical Education teaching minor and for the many physical activity programs for persons with disabilities!



Students in the Adapted Physical Education Teaching Minor pose with Garth Tymeson (back right) during a class celebration to honor his national Professional Recognition Award.



School of Education Outstanding Student Teachers



School of Education honors outstanding student teachers.

Pictured from left to right are: Katie Strey, Physical and School Health Education, Malory Mundt, Physical and School Health Education, Stacy Robers, Early Childhood-Middle Childhood, Allison Fitzwater, Broad Field Science Education, and Benjamin Lodahl, Broad Field Social Studies

2008-2009 Teacher Educator of the Year Award

Barb Gander, UW-L
Early Childhood teacher educator, receives the Student Wisconsin Education Association 2008-2009 Teacher Educator of the Year Award for her substantial contributions, counsel, and continuing support of Student WEA.

UW-L Student WEA Chapter, under the leadership of Dr. Joyce Shanks, wins the award for Local Chapter Excellence, in recognition of outstanding special events, political and citizen action, and networking with the community.



Pictured from left to right are Student WEA members

Mandy Schmalz, Krista Wilhemson, Barb Gander, SWEA President Sara Bradley, and Jennica Kundert.

Undergraduate Research a Valuable Opportunity for SOE Students

As a future teacher, Caitlin Helgesen was thrilled to receive funding from the university for her study, "Mexican Immigrant Challenges in the United States Public School System: A case study of two schools." The grant enabled her to travel to Guadalajara, Mexico to administer surveys to the American equivalent of ninth grade students, as well as teachers and an administrator. She surveyed the same populations, as well as Mexican immigrant students, at East High School in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Her research explored how cultural expectations and structural school day differences may affect the transitions of Mexican students to American schools. Although as a case study it had a small scope, her research and time spent living in Guadalajara taught her a lot about the Mexican culture and school system. She notes, "It was neat to see how a typical Mexican school is run, and how little differences may affect transitions. For example, in Mexico, the students take 'talleres' instead of our elective classes. A 'taller' essentially functions as an internship; a student stays with one 'taller' for three years, after which a student could enter that field if they so choose rather than going on to the next level of education. This is quite different that U.S. electives, which function more to give students choices and to let them dabble in different areas rather than to train them for a particular career."

Before this academic year, Caitlin had never encountered research beyond what she could read in an online journal. She says, "I stumbled across undergraduate research funding when another student came into one of my classes last fall and talked about her own project. I had never realized that grants were available for non-science related research projects, and suddenly a whole new opportunity began unfolding for me. That class period changed my life forever; now I can not only say that I have completed original undergraduate research, but I also had the honor of speaking at the UW-La Crosse Celebration of Student Research and Creativity and the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, held at UW-La Crosse this year." In addition, she can add to her resume that her research was published in two different publications put out by the two venues. She wants education students to be aware of the research grants available to them and get out there to learn about the education systems in the United States and beyond. "It does not matter if you have a background experience in research or not—I readily ad-

mit that I made many mistakes along the way, and even had to check out a book from the library to learn how to properly analyze research," she says. "But all of the hard work and hours spent obtaining and analyzing research was well worth it. I would say that this experience taught me more than any other single project in my entire life, and it allowed me to network with schools and create international connections that I hope to build upon as I enter the field."



Caitlin Helgesen is an EC/A Spanish and EA/A English education major. She hopes to continue traveling abroad to learn about different educational systems.

Wisconsin's First Lady Visits UW-L

The First Lady visits a teacher education class in Morris Hall to discuss educational issues with teacher candidates. Pictured: Vanessa Auclair, Danielle Jordan, First Lady Jessica Doyle, Emily Lavoy, Angela Greis, Andrea Stiklestad



Wisconsin's First Lady Visits UW-L (Cont.)

Carol Witt-Smith gives First Lady, Jessica Doyle, a mosaic scrap glass recycling project, made by Casey McHugh. Casey made the project in Witt-Smith's Environmental Education course. The objective of the lesson was to integrate art and social studies history of mosaics in building materials, learn a new art form, and recycle both the colored glass and baby food jar or bottle. Carol shares with Mrs. Doyle how students learn to incorporate citizen action and pollution prevention in environmental education.



School Health Education Student Designs Community Advocacy Project

What better time for students to take responsibility in their education than by "owning their cause," wrote Gina Covelli of *The Sun Prairie Star*. UW-L student Holly Lasche developed an advocacy project for her 8th grade students at Sun Prairie Middle School. Through it, the students owned their cause and made an impact in the community. During her student teaching experience third quarter, Holly developed and implemented a performance task that required the learners to create a billboard that would advocate against drug and alcohol use. The learners chose their specific topic, with the option of working in groups or individually to complete the task. Learners developed an original slogan for the billboard that demonstrated their knowledge of the topic and clear understanding of the content related to it. Ms. Lasche developed a rubric with assessment criteria and distributed it to learners at the beginning of the project. As an incentive to the learners, one billboard was chosen by an outside party as

the winning billboard from all of the eighth grade classes. The chosen billboard and its designers were also pictured in *The Sun Prairie Star* for their outstanding work. Pictured below are the winning designers with their billboard:

"Get a Clue, Tobacco's Not For You!"



Pictured from left to right: Danielle Woody, Allison Birnschein, Holly Lasche.

This hands-on project gave the learners an opportunity to apply what they were learning in the classroom about the dangers of using drugs and alcohol. Additionally, learners were able to speak out through the billboards. For example, one student stated "... it was a chance for us as eighth graders to reach out and send a message to the younger students of the school" and she felt "they (8th graders) could connect with them (younger students)" on a more appropriate level. As a student teacher, Holly Lasche felt this was an excellent chance to share with the people of Sun Prairie what goes on in the health classroom at their community middle schools. To make a bigger community impact, Holly contacted the newspaper. Soon thereafter, a reporter visited her eighth grade health classroom, compiled an article that was featured in the paper, which included the above picture. The Wisconsin Educator Standard 10 states, "The teacher candidate fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being." Here is just one example of a School Health Education teacher candidate doing just that.

Learn by Doing at Milwaukee Public Schools

“Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) seems to have a way to intimidate student teachers and new teachers for that matter;” that’s what UW-L Student Brian O’Meara said before beginning his student teaching in MPS. The reason why Brian O’Meara, Physical Education teacher candidate, decided to student teach at MPS was to seek the diversity that can be found near a bigger city than a city like La Crosse, Wisconsin.

His school, Humboldt Park K-8, is located on the south side of Milwaukee and prides itself as one of the most diverse schools in MPS. He notes, that “students from many various ethnicities create a very rich environment to work in. This is an environment that I wouldn’t trade anything for. A lot of people figure that due to tough lifestyles of the inner city, students will be hard to manage in school as their lives are so chaotic outside of it. I have to say that whether you walk into a class in rural Wisconsin or urban Wisconsin, the similarities will outweigh the differences every time. Yes, kids will be kids and mouth off to you or not follow instructions. But every kid is allowed a bad day, and if they do that in my class, they can just sit on the bench and we can start anew the next class period. I forgot to mention that my student teaching is in Physical Education so the ‘bench’ is where my students get to sit if they are not following rules.” Brian borrowed the bench protocol from his cooperating teacher, and Brian notes that seems to work with most of the students. Brian notes that he borrowed a lot from his cooperating teacher and felt the opportunity to work in MPS with his cooperating teacher gave him a rich teaching experience. Brian says his cooperating teacher has been a great individual to work with. They share similar teaching paradigms and this has allowed for them to approach teaching more cooperatively instead of directly. Brian says, “He and I share a passion for experiential learning and he allows me to make mistakes, for then we discuss how I can make myself a better teacher. This is the same way he teaches, allowing the students to try and then we discuss what as a class we learned about ourselves and others. It is the “Crash and Learn” model. This way of learning has made me become a better reflective practitioner and allowed me to always be improving and not become complacent. All in all, MPS has been an overall excellent experience, and I would recommend to anyone that really wants a challenge and improve their quality of teaching to come to MPS and learn by doing.”

Brian O’Meara is a physical education teacher candidate who’s strengths lie in experiential education and trying to make gym a fun place for everyone. He plans to teach Physical Education and be the Athletic Director at a small K-12 school in Honduras for the next two years. He secured this position while he attended the University of Northern Iowa’s International Teacher Job Fair back in January.

SOE Math and Science Faculty Explore Digital Assessments of Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Ensuring all graduates have knowledge, skills, and dispositions to teach effectively is fundamental to teacher education in mathematics and science. Effective teaching requires teacher education candidates to possess both a solid understanding of their content as well as the specialized knowledge for teaching referred to as pedagogical content knowledge. Is there a common set of valid assessments that can be used to ensure preservice teachers in math and science have acquired this specialized knowledge? This is the question mathematics, science, and education faculty across Wisconsin, in collaboration with high school math and science teachers, have been trying to answer as part of the Grassroots Teacher Quality Assessment Model Project.

Sponsored by the University of Wisconsin System (UWS), teams from nine UWS campuses and four private colleges are taking a proactive stance to develop performance assessment tools that will be used during student teaching to document candidates’ attainment of relevant math and science content knowledge and skills. In the past two years, Student Teaching Assessment Research (STAR) teams have been examining current assessment practices within their institution and across institutions in order to identify the core content to be assessed.

The UW-L STAR Team includes SOE faculty Jon Hasenbank and Jennifer Kosiak from the Mathematics Depart-



SOE Math and Science Faculty Explore Digital Assessments of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Cont.)

ment, Tim Gerber from the Biology Department, and four area high school teachers. Over the past year, they have been working with the Institute for Innovation in Undergraduate Research and Learning, directed by Bob Hoar (Mathematics), to develop technology-enhanced performance measures to assess the content knowledge for teaching algebra and life sciences. These digital materials include the use of video podcast to capture handwritten solutions with voice-over explanations in a simulated teaching episode as well as a digital observation instrument to capture the scope and sequence of a lesson. Teacher education candidates Andy Belter, Kristin Radermacher, and Danielle Ballistrieri have created pilot podcasts for this project. Students report the project has been a valuable component in their development into effective teachers, and it has given them an opportunity to learn 21st century technology skills that they can use in their future classroom. Andy believes that “by having to reflect on how to represent a math problem to students before podcasting makes me become a better teacher of that content.”

Faculty and students can contact Jennifer Kosiak (kosiak.jenn@uwlax.edu) for further information of this project or if they are interested in getting involved. Information on this project is also available at the following websites.

Grassroots Teacher Quality Assessment Model: <http://tqi.uwsa.edu/fipse>

UW-L STAR Team: <http://www.uwlax.edu/faculty/kosiak/projects/index.html>

Dr. Kristi Mally Leads Nike Sponsored Physical Activity Initiative

“I’m so glad to see you, I almost couldn’t wait. Can you reach and wiggle as we count to eight? I’m so glad to see you, I almost couldn’t wait. Can you walk like your favorite zoo animal as we count to eight?” ...

Imagine a small room full of excited 3, 4, and 5 year old children smiling and squealing as they reached and wiggled their way around the space, acting like their favorite zoo animals. This atmosphere is contagious and it creates the most opportune moment for demonstrating the power that movement can and should play in young children’s lives.



Dr. Kristi Mally leads Nike sponsored Physical Activity Initiative (Cont.)

Wiggling and reaching were only a few of the many movement opportunities given to a group of 17 area children. Students and teachers at the Onalaska Head Start recently collaborated with Kristi Mally, Physical Education Teacher Education program director, as part of a Nike sponsored National Head Start Association physical activity initiative. The outcome of this collaboration will be the production and release of a professional training DVD which will be used to promote physical activity for young children, and to educate Head Start teachers and parents around the United States. The goal of this extensive project was to create a training tool that actually shows teachers how to use their indoor and outdoor space, along with their current curriculum, as a means of integrating developmentally appropriate physical activity throughout the child's daily life.

Dr. Mally created a series of indoor and outdoor activities, demonstrating a varied and creative approach to integrating physical activity throughout the day. She then spent time working with the young children, getting to know them and preparing them for their big film debut. Dr. Mally, the Head Start teachers, and the children spent five days filming with a crew from Chicago. A couple days were spent scouting the locations and preparing the script. One day was spent filming outdoor physical activities, using the small grassy area around the school and the structures at a nearby playground. Another day was spent filming indoor space activities, focusing on helping teachers figure out how to use small, crowded rooms effectively and safely. We also filmed a section to be used as a tool for understanding movement assessment. Lastly we took one child and went into his home, and demonstrated ways to increase daily physical activity time, using household objects. This section focused on helping parents understand how to fit one more thing into their already busy lives; demonstrating how physical activity can be integrated with other aspects of daily living. It was an overall incredible experience for everyone involved.

The final product is scheduled to be released in late June and will be used across the United States for Head Start teachers and parents. This project is one of many that Dr. Mally is currently working on related to physical activity and movement skill competency for young children.

Putting Learning into Action

Professional Development Schools (PDS) are schools that have joined with a university to accomplish educational goals that are mutually benefiting to each. The University of Wisconsin- La Crosse has partnership with Onalaska and La Crosse School Districts. At a PDS, University courses are held within the school context. These schools are clinical sites where cohorts of teacher candidates participate in structured learning experiences as part of their professional education programs.



Teacher candidates in Dr. Rita Chen's reading course learn about guided reading, tutoring and other activities associated with high quality literacy instruction. Most important, they learn how to put their learning into action with children at the Eagle Bluff Elementary School in Onalaska, one of the Professional Development Schools.



Building a Diverse SOE

At a recent Department of Public Instruction review, the UWL School of Education (SOE) was recognized for its sincere efforts to assimilate diversity within the SOE. The SOE recognizes the many benefits of creating a culture of diversity throughout the UWL campus and amongst all teacher education programs. Enriching the educational experience through diversity is essential in today's society to promote personal growth and a healthy society. Further, helping teacher candidates to develop knowledge and skills to effectively teach in diverse classrooms is crucial for today's educational environments.

The UWL School of Education (SOE) Inclusive Committee was recently created in January 2009 in order to facilitate the implementation of the SOE Inclusive Plan. This plan, adopted by the SOE in October 2008, identified four goals that the SOE would focus its diversity efforts. These goals are to: (a) recruit, retain, and successfully graduate teacher candidates from diverse backgrounds; (b) recruit, support, and retain faculty, staff, and administrators from diverse backgrounds; (c) enhance SOE curriculums to enable teacher candidates to effectively facilitate learning in diverse classrooms; and, (d) create new and enhance current partnerships with diverse external populations and agencies. Aligned with each of these goals, various related tasks have been identified and prioritized for implementation. Accomplishment of these specific tasks would demonstrate progress and commitment to assimilate diversity within the SOE mission and culture.

The Inclusive Committee includes Manny Felix (Physical Education Teacher Education), Peg Finders (SOE Director), Jennifer Kosiak (Mathematics), Guy Herling (College of Science and Health), Melissa Sprain (Physical Education Teacher Education), Xiong Vang (SOE Recruiting and Advising), and Cate Wycoff (SOE Office of Field Experiences). This committee serves in an advisory capacity to the SOE community to meet the goals of the SOE Inclusive Plan.

Any feedback for the SOE Inclusive Committee is welcomed and can be directed to co-chairpersons Manny Felix (608.785.8691, felix.emma@uwlax.edu) or Jenn Kosiak (608.785.8385, kosiak.jenn@uwlax.edu).

Arizona Cultural Teaching Experience 2009

One cannot truly experience all that Arizona has to offer in less than one week; however, you can definitely get close. From the beginning of the trip to the end of the trip, it is all like a dream. The Arizona Cultural Teaching Experience 2009 was a great experience. We left on the 10th of January as the temperatures were beginning to drop here in Wisconsin. What a relief the trip was with temperatures averaging in the mid-70's all week. We relaxed on Saturday night and then explored Phoenix on Sunday. We visited the Botanical Gardens, The Heard Museum, and climbed Camelback Mountain before we met the district and their employees at a dinner Sunday night. Throughout the week I visited three different teachers and their students. I attended each of their classes, one being a Science classroom and the other two being Physical Education classes. The hospitality and enthusiasm the district and employees shared with us were very impressive and only made me want to find my first job down there even more.



During this experience, I was primarily with Physical Education teachers. The first two days I was at Tuscano Elementary School where I saw grades K-5. Each class was only required and given one period for Physical Education a week which I found as a teacher very hard to work with. There being almost 650 students in the school and trying to implement and build skills for

the students in a variety of activities becomes very difficult. Although the Physical Education class is only offered once a week, the students still came with enthusiasm and excitement every day. The staff members also provided resources and strategies to work with overcrowded classrooms and lack of spacing which is a problem every school is facing in the Southwest at this time. I learned on a good week there are on average 40 to 50 students in a classroom which is a huge jump compared to the numbers that one sees in Wisconsin. Throughout the two schools I visited it was 85% Afri-

Arizona Cultural Teaching Experience 2009 (Cont.)

can American, Hispanic, and Latino. I am not sure if cultural shock is the correct word. One thing I observed and learned through observation and communicating with the students was how much dance was enjoyed. I know through experience when I went to school in the Midwest and still to this day that not many people enjoy to dance; however, in Arizona and in much of this area, dance is part of culture and no matter what the age- elementary, middle or high school- the students express much of their feelings and fitness through dance. I have enjoyed this experience and hope it can continue for years to come.

The last three days I visited Western Valley Middle School and two of the Physical Education teachers there. This was a change for me because I went from the excited elementary students to only about half of the students who really wanted to be in the classroom. As a teacher; however, this is what makes your job worthwhile. Differentiated instruction and figuring out what the students are like, what they want, and what arouses them can be difficult at times, but rewarding when you find the answer.



Chase Steiner is a School Health and Physical Education double major. He has been active in Physical Education Majors Club (PEM), Eta Sigma Gamma (ESG), School of Education Director's Council for the Physical Education Program, AmeriCorps, Arizona Cultural Teaching Experience, Eta Phi Alpha (EPA), and part of the Adventure Program here at UWL and plans to currently search for a job out of state.



“We had left our breath in Wisconsin...” This was our comment as fifteen teacher candidates from UW-L walked through the skyway. Mary Teclaw and her colleagues were greeted by Fowler School district employees and were shown to the school bus where “Barnes” would be the chauffeur for the next seven days. Mary reports, “We were invited to this beautiful weather in January to observe the cultural differences in Phoenix to those here in La Crosse.”

The fifteen students were split up between seven elementary and middle schools where we had two placements for the week. Teacher candidates' majors had ranged from Spanish to Physical Education, and each was paired up with a cooperating teacher who were in similar content area.

Arizona Cultural Teaching Experience 2009 (Cont.)

Many of the Fowler students were English Language Learners (ELL), and it was district policy to incorporate strategies within each classroom. The Western Valley Middle School used a technique where the students see their performance objectives on the board, they practice saying and writing their PO's in their assignment notebooks, and then they do it – See it, Say it, Do it. Each class was to implement this strategy within their lessons to reach the ELL learners.

The elementary schools had weighted their core subjects differently than ours. Mary TeClaw was placed in a second grade classroom where learners had spent three hours of their morning working on reading and language skills and only another hour on math. In the afternoon were their specials-music, art and PE. This was a typical day for most elementary classes. The emphasis was on reading and writing because they wanted to “up” their scores to receive more funding, therefore, more time was spent on these skills.

Evenings were spent in the hotel or with host family where UW-L students had time to debrief about the day. Mary notes, “Many times, on one side of the road were three story houses with three car garages and on the other side of the road were literally shacks of tin walls with farm animals in the yard. It was a daily occurrence that I had seen citizens riding their horses down the street – for pleasure or purpose I had not known. We all had learned that many of the students were homeless and the school provides pamphlets of information for these families in English and Spanish as well as help with the required uniforms for the students.” She reports, “In each education class that we take, the Conceptual Framework is emphasized and the vision of us to be globally responsive teachers is advocated. While on this trip we had learned not only the meaning of humbleness but the meaning of community and how to implement this in our own classrooms wherever we may end up, no matter our students’ backgrounds.”



Mary Teclaw is a double major in Physical Education and School Health Education with a minor in Adapted Physical Education. She is involved with the YMCA aquatics and youth sports and hopes to stay in the beautiful La Crosse area after graduation.

Debbie Reese, Assistant Professor of American Indian Studies

Culturally Responsible, not Politically Correct By Nancee Nelson

Being culturally responsible, not necessarily politically correct, is what Debbie Reese, an assistant professor of American Indian studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, encourages us to strive for. A person should also be culturally educated and culturally sensitive. Professor Reese spoke to School of Education students in Murphy Library on April 2, 2009 to discuss portrayals of Native Americans in children's literature. Best prac-

Debbie Reese, Assistant Professor of American Indian Studies

Culturally Responsible, not Politically Correct (Cont.)

tice, when referring to a Native person, is to be tribally specific. Professor Reese is a Nambe Pueblo. There are nineteen pueblos in New Mexico and she is from the upper village.

As educators, Reese wants us to be evaluating the books we offer in our classrooms from an informed perspective. When choosing books on Native Americans, we should look for the name of the tribe to make sure it focuses on a specific story, not a generalized idea. We should look for stories that have present day settings. We want our students to know that Native people are living, studying, playing, and working in the world today, not extinct. Be aware, also, of the nouns used in the books to describe Native Americans. For example, squaw should be replaced with the word woman, papoose with the word baby, and brave and warrior with the word native. Replacing biased language may include using the word soldier versus warrior and describing something as a battle as opposed to a massacre. The use of biased language conjures up images of a 'savage other' to be feared and civilized.

Reese went on to stress how important it is to make room for new choices of literature about Native Americans. She urges us all to take action by replacing the books in our classrooms, libraries, homes, and bookstores that tell stories of a white man's Indian. These have been imagined by someone who is not native. Laura Ingalls Wilder's, Little House on the Prairie series is an example of this and one Professor Reese would like to see pulled off of all book shelves. Native people are portrayed in these books as savages and barbarians. In fact, there had already been over 800 treaties entered into with the U.S. government by this time. Native Americans had a system of government and elected leaders. These books do not offer an accurate image of who Native people were. There are many children's books with inaccurate portrayals of Native people. While acknowledging that these are not written with malicious intent, Professor Reese says there are consequences to the imagery, nonetheless. According to research done by the American Psychological Association, among others, native children exposed to this kind of imagery suffer lowered self esteem and a feeling like they cannot make an impact in the world.

Professor Reese suggests we replace these books with some great Native authors like Louise Erdrich or Sherman Alexie. She encourages us to visit her blog: *American Indians in Children's Literature* as a source for help in choosing culturally responsible books in a targeted way.

Nancee Nelson obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in English in May 2007 at UW-L. She completed coursework through Viterbo University last year for a 6-12 English Education Teaching License and will be student teaching in the fall. She is currently taking coursework at UW-L to earn her TESOL Minor/Certification. She is completing an internship at Western Technical College that includes teaching Hmong refugees in the English language lab and Hmong refugees in the classroom who are on the path to earning their high school equivalency degree.

Crisis in the Classroom: What We Learn from Children's Literature

By Melissa Wiehr

Ms. Reese's discussion, ranging in topics from high school and university Indian mascots and their offensive nature to the depiction of Indians, notes that such images damaging to young children's development. Ms. Reese makes aggressive claims and provides reasonable ideas for giving attention to this topic in classrooms. Her most insistent desire is for teachers to critically look at literature before introducing it into the classroom, even a "classic" sometimes has no place in a classroom. Ms. Reese urges that literature that links Indians to animals and emphasizes the long-believed misrepresentations of this group does not deserve a place on the bookshelf. Traditional school activities such as a first Thanksgiving reenactment should be carefully examined before having a place in our curriculum. Images should represent culturally sensitive, accurate, and responsible information rather than the savage and uncivilized subhuman imagery that too often make their way into our schools and the literature we provide to our students. As stated by Ms. Reese throughout her presentation, just think of the effects these practices have on her daughter's self image and self esteem, and that of every other young American Indian



Debbie Reese, Assistant Professor of American Indian Studies

Crisis in the Classroom: What We Learn from Children's Literature (Cont.)

child. As teachers, we are obligated to correct these inaccuracies before they are passed onto yet another generation.

Ms. Reese offers a number of specific aspects to look for when preparing to introduce material on American Indians to young children. First, look for the use of specific tribe names rather than generalizations and inaccurate titles. Find material that represents American Indians in the present day setting as opposed to the past and look for a present verb tense rather than vocabulary that implies an extinct people. Watch out for biased language such as warrior rather than soldier and massacre as opposed to battle. These wordings only add to the negative view of American Indians. Finally, Ms. Reese suggests a list of culturally appropriate young adult literature written by American Indians themselves: The Birchbark House, a series in response to Little House on the Prairie, The Game of Silence, The Porcupine Year, Jingle Dancer, and The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, one that came with rave reviews from some of those in attendance of Ms. Reese's presentation.

If teachers pledge to care for and properly educate children, then accurately and respectfully representing American Indians is part of this promise. For a surplus of information on this topic and links to the official websites of specific tribes, resources, and activity ideas, I encourage all teachers to explore Debbie Reese's blog at americanindiansinchildrensliterature.net.

Melissa Wiehr is a MC-EA major with a minor in mathematics. She has worked extensively with diverse groups of adolescents as the Teen Camp Program Manager for the YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee Association and through various experiences throughout schools in the La Crosse area. Melissa will be student teaching in a Milwaukee Public School this fall and plans to teach in an inner-city area after graduation.

Debbie Reese Urges Us to Make Waves

By Scott Swdeen

It was Debbie Reese's goal to provoke, and that she did. A professor of American Indian Studies and a member of the Nambe Pueblo, Reese presented on American Indians and Children's Literature at UW-La Crosse on April 2. She urged an audience made up of future teachers, teacher educators, and anyone interested in how Native Americans are depicted in children's literature to confront stereotypes boldly.

Professor Reese pointed out four ways American Indians are depicted in children's literature. She gave examples of 'not-Indians' or people dressed in stereotypical American Indian garb (think headdress and peace-pipe). Another image of Native Americans present in children's books is what Professor Reese termed "The White Man's Indian"—an American Indian as savage, frightening, and ignorant. In this category, she singled out that classic of children's literature, "Little House on the Prairie." Reese advocated complete avoidance of the "Little House" series, and pointed out that the book says "The only good Indian is a dead Indian..." three times. It was a shock to learn this about a book that I myself have treasured. A third type of portrayal is the "noble" Indian. Often, these can be the most seductive misrepresentations, because they seem so positive. These Native Americans are often seen as wanting to "share" the land in Thanksgiving stories or as ghost-like figures trying to teach us how to live in peace with the Earth.

The last category, the *real* Native American, is perhaps the most difficult to find in children's literature. These books present American Indians as they are today, not a people of the past. Professor Reese recommended two books in particular, "Jingle Dancer" by Cynthia Leitich Smith and "The Birchbark House" by Louise Erdrich. She gave some up-front criteria for selecting books on Native Americans for the classroom: Does it use the name of a tribe? Does it have a present day setting? Does it use a lot of past tense verbs (Native Americans do not just live in the past)? And what types of nouns does it use (avoid squaw, papoose, brave, warrior)? As educators, Debbie Reese urges us to make waves. She wants us to go to our bookstores and

Debbie Reese, Assistant Professor of American Indian Studies

Debbie Reese Urges Us to Make Waves (Cont.)


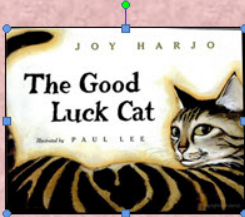
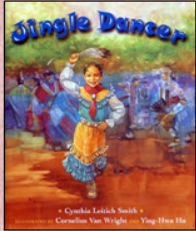
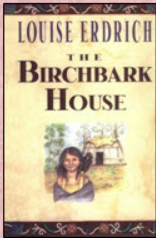
request books that have positive depictions of Native Americans and point out the ones that do not. She urges us to look at books on American Indians and consider how it would look in the eyes of Native American children? What does reading these books do to them? Will they be able to see themselves in this literature, or just a distortion? Finally, she urged us let go of stereotypes that we hold on to and, in some cases, treasure. As I look at my own "Little House" books sitting on the shelf, I realize that I can no longer hold on to the image of them one day being a part of my classroom. Will you be able to do the same?

**AMERICAN INDIANS AND
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE:**
A discussion of resources for PK-Middle School

With a Presentation by:
Debbie Reese, Assistant Professor, American Indian Studies,
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

-----**For School of Education Students**-----

Thursday, April 2, 2009
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