MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Welcome to our inaugural issue of the College of Education’s Faculty Research and Innovation newsletter. This newsletter is a review of 2015, highlighting the outstanding research and scholarly work and accomplishments of faculty in the College Education, and impacts on the larger community. In this issue you will find a wide-ranging array of activities focused on PreK-16 and beyond education as closely aligned with the University of Texas at Arlington’s four Strategic Plan initiatives: Health and the Human Condition, Sustainable Urban Communities, Global Environmental Impact, and Data Driven Discovery. I hope you enjoy this issue.

The UTA Strategic Plan can be found at: http://www.uta.edu/strategicplan/.

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UT ARLINGTON AWARDED $2.62 MILLION HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION GRANT FOR IDEAS CENTER, NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT

Dr. Carla Amaro-Jiménez, Assistant Professor, is Co-principal Investigator of a $2.62 million dollar grant awarded to UT Arlington that will enhance services for transfer and other non-traditional students and help more underserved students earn college degrees. Dr. Maria Martinez-Cosio, assistant vice provost for faculty affairs is lead principal investigator on the grant-funded initiative. See more information at: http://www.uta.edu/news/releases/2015/10/HSI-DOE-grant.php

FACULTY MEMBERS TOMMERDAHL, YOON WIN INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAM COLLABORATION GRANTS

Five collaborative research projects involving faculty from seven colleges and schools ranging from innovations in pain management to personal security have won inaugural Interdisciplinary Research Program awards through a University of Texas at Arlington initiative aimed at advancing true interdisciplinary research and enhancing the University’s competitive position and national reputation. Projects were funded for up to $20,000. Dr. Jodi Tommerdahl teamed up with faculty from the College of Engineering and the School of Social work. Dr. Jiyoon Yoon’s winning proposal was a collaboration among the College of Architecture, Planning and Public Affairs, the College of Engineering and the College of Science. Their winning proposals are listed below.

Title: The Dallas-Fort Worth Community Opportunities for Resilience Education: Climate Science Education Model for the Public and K-12
Awardees: Yekang Ko, Dong-Jun Seo, Jiyoon Yoon and Jun-Hak Lee

The North Texas region lags behind other large metropolitan areas in addressing climate change, partially due to lack of public awareness and political support for climate action, researchers assert. This project is helping to overcome barriers by developing an interdisciplinary education model to improve public understanding of climate-related extremes such as floods, droughts and heat waves for proactive community planning and action for resilience of the Dallas-Fort Worth area. See more information at: http://www.uta.edu/news/releases/2015/07/IRP-2015-awards.php

AERA PAPERS ACCEPTED FOR 2016 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

In fall 2015, 17 College of Education faculty members received notice that their research papers were accepted for presentation at the 2016 Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) to be held April 8-12 in Washington, DC. The AERA Annual Conference is the largest and most prestigious gathering of scholars in education research. It is a showcase for new and innovative research in a wide range of areas including early childhood education, literacy, science and mathematics education, higher education, digital learning, and ESL/bilingual education. College of Education faculty members presenting at the conference are: Drs. Taryn O. Allen, Y. Leaf Zhang, Carla Amaro-Jiménez, Kathryn Pole, David Sparks, Maria Adamuti-Trache, Kathleen Tice, Mary Lynn Crow, Holly Hungerford-Kresser, Daniel Saunders, Ernest

The research team is building a wireless, wearable device to be embedded in a hat. The device detects brain signals related to anger. A person who is growing angry will receive an alerting signal from their watch or smart phone reminding him/her to practice anger management techniques learned in therapy sessions. UT Arlington’s system will help to establish a systematic method to help individuals control anger responses.
Johnson, Huda Sarraj, Joyce Myers, Melissa Hulings, Denise Collins, Joohi Lee, and Bradley Davis.

**FACULTY AFFAIRS ANNOUNCED**

**FIRST CLASS OF FACULTY FELLOWS**

The Division of Faculty Affairs selected our own Dr. Holly Hungerford-Kresser and Dr. Peggy Semingson of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction as the 2015 Inaugural Year Faculty Fellows. Faculty fellows are chosen by a peer committee after submitting proposals describing faculty development projects. Each fellow worked with faculty Affairs to implement their projects during the fall 2015 semester, continuing through spring 2016.

Dr. Hungerford-Kresser's project involves developing a new faculty mentoring program. Dr. Semingson's work is creating electronic resources such as videos and podcasts, designed to help faculty promote student engagement and increase their productivity.

Faculty Affairs plans to add more Fellows in the spring 2016, so please watch the Faculty Affairs newsletters for an announcement. See more information at: http://www.uta.edu/coed/news/releases/2015/news-releases8.php

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION 2015**

**ACES WINNERS**

On March 25, 2015 two students from the College of Education received awards at the Annual Celebration of Excellence by Students (ACES) symposium. The ACES symposium is a university-wide event that showcases the best of students’ research and creativity. Undergraduate and graduate students work with faculty mentors to write and submit abstracts for the competition. College of Education award winners are listed below.

**Stephanie Gutierrez** won the Provost's Award for Undergraduate Research in the poster presentation category. Ms. Gutierrez was a UTeach Arlington student who earned her bachelor's degree in biology at UT Arlington. She is now enrolled in the Ph.D. program at Purdue University in biology and biology education.

**Title:** Examining Descriptive Patterns and Differences in College Students’ Beliefs about the Nature of Science, Scientific Reasoning Ability, Religiosity, Understanding of Evolution, and Acceptance of the Theory of Evolution

**Presenter:** Stephanie Gutierrez, Biology Undergraduate, UTeach

**Mentor:** Dr. Ann Cavallo

**Rebekah Carlile** won the Provost's Award for Graduate Research in the poster presentation category. Ms. Carlile was in the Mind, Brain, and Education (MBE) program who has now earned her Master's degree in MBE. Rebekah works at Cook Children's Hospital in Fort Worth, working to initiate a program using storytelling and playwriting as an aid for the cognitive and emotional development of children.

**Title:** Combining Playwriting and Cognitive Neuroscience to Build Narrative Skills in Chronically Ill Students

**Presenter:** Rebekah Carlile, Curriculum & Instruction MBE Graduate

**Mentor:** Dr. Marc Schwartz

In spring and summer 2015, Dr. John Smith, Interim Dean of the College of Education, mentored undergraduate education McNair Scholar, Kinsley Munoz on her research, titled: Comparison of the Newbery and Bluebonnet Awards in Children's Literature. Look for her research to be presented at the 2016 ACES symposium to be held March 23 in the University Center. See more information on ACES at: https://www.uta.edu/gradstudies/admitted/ACES/

See information on the McNair Scholars program at: https://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/current/academic-support/mcnair/index.php
Dr. Bradley Davis and Dr. Taryn Allen stayed busy summer, 2015 working on research, publications, and other scholarly activities.

Dr. Bradley Davis engaged in a Question & Answer session with the Texas Tribune regarding the topic of Cyberbullying. Transcripts of the interview are at: http://www.texastribune.org/plus/edu/vol-2/no-14/q-bradley-davis/

Dr. Allen was interviewed by The Chronicle of Higher Education on her research on Latino students enrolled in HBCUs.

Dr. Taryn Allen was the recipient of a $49,568 grant from the Greater Texas Foundation for the grant titled, Engineering their Career: The Academic and Professional Experiences of Latino Engineering Students who Enroll in an HSI with Dual Credits. She was also named a member of the 2015 class of Greater Texas Foundation Faculty Fellows along with being named as a Faculty Fellow for the Penn Center for Minority Serving Institutions granted by the ELEVATE Faculty Development Program.

Students in the Master of Education (M.Ed.) and Master of Education in Teaching (M.Ed.T.) programs in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) participated in the annual poster presentation of their Capstone Classroom Research Projects on May 7, 2015 in Maverick Activities Center (MAC). Areas of emphasis for these graduate degree programs included science education, mathematics education, open option, and Mind, Brain, and Education.

The graduate students worked with Dr. Mohan Pant or Dr. Jodi Tommerdahl throughout the spring 2015 semester to complete their Capstone Research to prepare their posters for the day of presentation. Capstone Research posters featured the following sections: (a) Abstract, (b) Background of the Problem, (c) Statement of the Problem, (d) Research Questions, (e) Significance of the Study, (f) Methodology, (g) Results, (h) Discussion, and (i) References. Twenty six student presented their work at the poster session. Some faculty members who attended were: Dr. Ann Cavallo, Dr. Holly Hungerford-Kresser, Dr. Joohi Lee, Dr. Leisa Martin, and Dr. David Sparks.

Dr. Pant and Dr. Tommerdahl would like to thank Dr. John Smith, Former Chair of the Department and now Interim Dean of the College, and Raynette Taylor, Administrative Assistant of the C&I Department for coordinating the program. The 2016 poster presentation is scheduled at the same venue on May 5, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. A formal announcement of the event is forthcoming.

The Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (ELPS) hosted its third Annual Research Day March 28, 2015. Twenty-seven graduate students from Ph.D. cohorts 2 through 9 presented their research to over 60 participants. During this half-day conference, there were 15 research presentations, four poster presentations, and eight roundtables. The event concluded with a panel discussion moderated by a recent graduate of the program, Cynthia Miller (Cohort 5). A panel of four students from Cohorts 3-8 offered advice and personal insights based on their journeys in the program. Students from Cohorts 6-8 organized the event with assistance from faculty sponsors, Dr. Maria Trache and Dr. Barbara Tobolowsky. The 2015-2016 Research Day took place March 5, 2016, Trimble Hall, 8:30 am – 1:00 pm. A re-cap of this year’s event will be featured in a forthcoming issue of this newsletter. For more information go to: https://www.uta.edu/coed/educleadership/research-community/research-day/index.php
Dr. Ann Cavallo, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, was presented with the University of Texas at Arlington Award for Distinguished Record of Research on May 5, 2015. Each academic year, the University of Texas at Arlington recognizes outstanding faculty researchers with awards. The University Award for Distinguished Record of Research or Creative Activity recognizes faculty members for achieving significant national and international impact through their research and scholarship or creative activity over their career. See more information at: http://www.uta.edu/coed/news/releases/2015/news-release8.php

**2015 Research Briefs**

**PUBLICATIONS:**


• Zhang, Y.L., & Allen, T.O. (2015). Improving engineering transfer from


**Funded Grants, Gifts, and Contracts**


- Allen, T.O. (PI), 2015. Faculty Research Associate, Center for Mexican American Studies, College of Liberal Arts, University of Texas at Arlington, $1,500.


- Cavallo, A. (PI) & Sparks, D. (Co-PI), 2015. Energy and Environmental Science Education Institute for Teachers. Luminant, Rocky Mountain Coal Mining Institute, Texas Mining and Reclamation Association, Texas Westmoreland Coal Company, $30,000 (designated gift).


**Presentations**


AAHHE graduate fellows to faculty: The experiences of pre-tenure Latina/o faculty. Paper presented at the annual conference of the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education, Frisco, TX.


• Adams, M., Genova, H., & Robertson, M. (2015, November). The power of remediation through writing: Growing young writers and raising test scores. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Writing Project, Minneapolis, MN.


• Robertson, M.K. (2015, July). Influences on teacher decision-making in high-stakes assessment contexts. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Literacy Association, St. Louis, MO.

• Schwartz, M.S. (2015, March). Mind, brain and education: Identifying educational challenges and solutions. Invited keynote at the annual conference of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, Atlanta, GA.


• Sparks, D. (2015, March). What science teachers need to know about stereotypes and stereotype threat in the classroom. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Science Teachers Association, Chicago, IL.


• Tommerdahl, J. (2015, November). Engaging students in research. Invited paper presented at Southwestern Adventist University, Keene, TX.


• Allen, T.O., & Zhang, Y.L. (2015, November). “I don’t have your nine
numbers, so I have to work a little bit harder*: Portraits of undocumented Latino students who enrolled in an HBCU. Paper presented at the annual conference for the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Denver, CO.


Notes: College of Education faculty members denoted in bold print; * indicates UT Arlington students.

NEXT ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

- UT Arlington achieves Carnegie I Research Institution rating
- UT Arlington’s online graduate programs ranked 30 out of 267 Best Online Programs by US News & World Report
- New research and innovation accomplishments of faculty and students in the College of Education
- Faculty presentations at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting
- Update on faculty grants, collaborations, publications, and professional presentations

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