COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND ALLIED PROFESSIONS

2019-2020 Issue 1

Ed.D Program Excels At Biltmore Park

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WCU's master's program in school administration and doctoral program in educational leadership faculty, (front, from left) Jess Weiler, Brandi Hinnant-Crawford, Emily Virtue, Cathy Andrews, Darrius Stanley, (back, from left) Kofi Lomotey, Robert Crow and Heidi Von Dohlen.

WCU Approved for Membership in University Council of Educational Administration

By Randall Holcombe

Leaders in Western Carolina University's College of Education and Allied Professions are hailing WCU's admittance into the University Council of Educational Administration as additional validation relating to the high quality of the university's master's and doctoral programs in educational leadership, and as an opportunity to have a say in crafting policies that affect the preparation of educational administrators nationwide. Organized more than 60 years ago, the UCEA works to advance the training and practice of educational leaders for the benefit of schools and children through research and improvements in preparation and professional development, and by influencing educational policy.

Western Carolina University provides two degree programs and a certificate program designed to prepare students for jobs as leaders in education; the Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership, Master of School Administration (MSA), and the Post-Master's Certificate toward Principal Licensure. Programs are designed for working adults with hybrid courses that meet both in Biltmore Park, reinforced and extended with regular online assignments and discussions. Fieldwork is embedded within each course, enabling students to apply their skills and knowledge to address authentic problems of practice.

"WCU's membership in UCEA is significant for a number of reasons," Kofi Lomotey, WCU's Bardo Distinguished Professor of Educational Leadership said. "Perhaps most importantly, it reflects acknowledgement from the field that our programs are strong and competitive with other educational leadership master's and doctoral programs nationally. Second, having full membership in UCEA provides WCU an opportunity – through the organization's plenum – to influence UCEA's practices and policies that impact the preparation of educational leaders at the pre-K through 12th grade, community college and four-year college and university levels."

The review process for membership in the UCEA included an application exceeding 500 pages and a site visit last spring during which the college hosted Terah Chambers, UCEA president, and Sara Dexter, UCEA senior associate director for two days. During that visit, Chambers and Dexter met with WCU administrators, faculty and students and also with local pre-K through 12th grade, community college and four-year college leaders.

For details about WCU's master's program in school administration, contact Heidi Von Dohlen at hbvondohlen@wcu.edu, and for more information about the doctoral program in educational leadership, reach out to Jess Weiler at jrweiler@wcu.edu.

A Message from College of Education and Allied Professions Dean, Kim K. Winter

Greetings from the College of Education and Allied Professions (CEAP) at Western Carolina University. Although we've been a part of Western Carolina University (WCU) since the very beginning, you'll find nothing complacent about the CEAP. What you will find is a vibrant, growing college that goes about, day by day, transforming our students, who in turn do their part to transform society, making a difference in the lives of others. We are the #changemakers. This past year has been an exciting time of change and new beginnings at WCU! Dr. Kelli R. Brown was named as the 12th Chancellor of the University and the campus welcomed her with open arms. In August, 614 students moved into Allen Hall, a residence hall named in honor of Levern Hamlin Allen, the institution's first African-American student and among the first students to be admitted to any of North Carolina's all-white state institutions of higher education. WCU brought the Lead the Way campaign to a close with almost $62 million in gifts and CEAP at the forefront of academic units with a 25% increase over last year. Records were shattered again as more than 12,000 students enrolled at WCU this fall. We are a large and growing college, with 2,400 enrolled students, 93 faculty, and 35 staff. A few major accomplishments or happenings in our college, include:

- $190,000 in scholarships was awarded to deserving students at our annual Honors and Awards Ceremony – a 15% increase over last year.
- The doctorate in Health Services Psychology (PsyD) welcomed its first cohort with Dr. Jon Campbell on board as Director.
- We expanded our presence in Jamaica by graduating the first cohort of Master's in Special Education students in Kingston this October.
- CEAP faculty and staff received approximately one million dollars in grant funds in 2019 thus far, including $120,000 to reinstate the Language Experience Afterschool Program (LEAP), a literacy program for English-language learners in Cullowhee. In addition, CEAP faculty teamed up with College of Health and Human Sciences to secure a US Department of Education grant for $1.25 million. Project INTERACT will fund the preparation of graduate students who will address the complex needs of children with autism spectrum disorders presenting moderate to severe intellectual disabilities.
- Nearly 100 students have participated in research and professional presentations with faculty mentors over the past year.
- Six faculty received major state and national awards such as Dr. Kofi Lomotey as a UCEA Hidden Figure, Dr. David Westling receiving the Gov. James E. Hohouser Award for Excellence in Public Service, and Dr. Roya Scales as the AERA Review of Research Award recipient.
- Ten faculty have published books this year so far and six have led travel courses to Utah, Germany, Netherlands, and Kenya, giving dozens of students the opportunity to expand their horizons and world view.

I'm more excited than ever before about the future of CEAP and the value it brings to WCU, our region, as well as our international community partners.

Sincerely,

Kim K. Winter

Kim K. Winter, Ph.D.
Dean & Professor
College of Education and Allied Professions
Western Carolina University

Student, Faculty, Staff, and Alumni Highlights

CODY THOMPSON

UNIVERSITY PARTICIPANT ALUMNI 17'

Cody Jay Thompson graduated the WCU University Participant program in 2017.He moved into his apartment in Cullowhee with his roommate Ronald soon after graduation. Living with a roommate has taught him various life skills such as responsibility, compromise, and respect for others. Cody had a full-time job with benefits lined up before he even graduated from the UP Program and he has since been working for landscaping company B.H. Graning. He's been there for more than two years and he has made progress since his first few months by earning the employee of the month for December 2018. During his first year of working, Cody relied on unpaid and paid supports to drive him to and from work as well as going grocery shopping. Cody was able to save up money through his NC ABLE account and buy his own truck to drive himself to work and different places, allowing him to be even more independent.

Independence has taught him how to be more responsible such as taking care of chores around the apartment, paying bills on time, and truck maintenance. He has also learned how to create his own schedule and choose supports that he wants to work with. In April 2018, Cody was interviewed by WLOS about his independence since graduation. In his free time outside of work and other responsibilities, Cody enjoys hanging out with his friends, volunteering in the community, and speaking at various events and conferences about his success and lessons learned about living on his own after college.

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NANCY THACKER

ALUMNA/PSYCHOLOGY '14

I am an Assistant Professor in the Counselor Education program at Auburn University. I completed my PhD in Counselor Education and MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK). I graduated from WCU in May 2014 with a BS in Psychology, minoring in Religion. I was also a member of the WCU women's basketball team from 2011-2014. Like many WCU alums, I developed invaluable relationships with faculty as an undergraduate student. The departments of Psychology and Philosophy & Religion fostered my curiosity with endless encouragement. I am especially grateful to Drs. Windy Gordon, Bruce Henderson, and John Whitmire who helped me find my way to the counseling profession. Their mentorship, with exposure to critical coursework and engagement in community service during my time as a Catamount, nurtured my passion to provide wellness-focused mental health care to vulnerable populations.

My clinical experiences during graduate study exposed me to the significant impact transition and loss can have on human growth and wellness. I began researching loss and grief and served as a mentor within UTK's Grief Outreach Initiative. I later co-coordinated the program while teaching a grief, loss, and trauma course. I developed specialty in theory and care for grieving vulnerable populations—namely, youth, rural Appalachians, and LGBTQ+ persons. In addition to my grief focus, I completed my dissertation on identity negotiation and professional development among marginalized counselor educators. My professional practice is grounded in explorations of social justice and equity. I am interested broadly in deconstructing hegemonic structures and their cultural derivatives, particularly as they impact mental health and wellness. As I train future counselors, I plan to continue conducting research around my interests and serving vulnerable groups. I hope to encourage my students to follow their curiosity just as I was encouraged at WCU.

KIMBERLY SMITH

STAFF/ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT ASSOCIATE, SCHOOL OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Although we have lived here only a few years, my husband and I feel that Western North Carolina has become our true home. When all of our children spread out over the southeast, attending college, law school, and one in the Air Force, we made the decision to follow our hearts as well and headed for the hills! Transitioning from having our blended family of 7 all together in our farmhouse in rural Mansfield GA, to now being an empty nester living in a small mountain cabin in WNC has been somewhat of an adjustment. However, my husband and I absolutely love the slow paced small town life and the outdoor activities. Some of our favorite moments are spent sitting on the porch swing watching the colors in the sky change as the sun sets behind the mountains. Moving to the mountains had always been in our plans, however I honestly was anxious about the transition of changing careers. I previously worked in marketing and customer service for an international plastics manufacturer. I began working with their US division during the startup stages and for 16 years I was able to train with some of the best. I watched the company grow into a world leader in many markets including solar energy panels and biodegradable plastics. It truly was a difficult decision to leave. Thankfully I have been blessed once again to work with another amazing and supportive group of people. The past few years has been a great experience thanks to the staff, faculty and also to the wonderful students that I have had the pleasure to work with here at WCU.

GRETCHEN REESE

GRADUATE STUDENT/MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING

Gretchen Reece is Master of Teaching (MaT) student in the adapted curriculum program. She is a strong student and is starting her second year in the program. She is a recipient of the Roads to Learning and Earning: Preparing Personnel to Improve Post-School Outcomes for Students with Significant Disabilities Grant. Gretchen is currently working part-time as the Transition Grant Coordinator at Western Carolina University while she pursues her degree. Her job responsibilities include improving post-school outcomes for middle and high school students with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities by working directly with graduate students, school personnel, related service providers, and families in rural communities of North Carolina to use effective, evidence-based practices that will improve transition from school to adulthood. Gretchen is deeply rooted in her advocacy efforts for individuals with disabilities to live and work inclusively. As an undergraduate student majoring in recreational therapy at Western, Gretchen started volunteering with the University Participant (UP) Program and has continued to be an avid supporter of the program and a true asset to the special education program.

ALEJANDRA GONZALE-CESPEDES

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT/ COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS//LEADERSHIP MINOR

Hello, my name is Alejandra González-Céspedes. I am a senior doubling in Communication sciences & disorders and Spanish. I am also minoring in leadership studies and special education with the adaptive add on. I decided to pick Western Carolina because I absolutely fell in love with the campus as soon as my family and I pulled in that morning in March for open house. I love the campus location, size, and really felt welcomed on campus. Western Carolina is also one of the few schools that offer communication sciences and disorders as an undergraduate degree and leadership studies as a minor. I remember receiving an email about the Freshman Leadership Institute. I decided to apply because it sounded very interesting and something I wish I would have done in high school. I was accepted into the program and knew that it was the biggest sign for me to attend Western Carolina University. Being part of the leadership program has molded me into the woman I am today and has helped me grow as a leader on this campus. I would not have made many connections or have been involved in many organizations if it was not for it. Last semester, my friends and I have also started our own club called Majeures con un Propósito which translates to Women with a Purpose. The club focuses on empowering women with a Latina focus, but it is not exclusive. We also have events, programs, and volunteer heavily. This is one of my proudest accomplishments and have also formed long-lasting relationships with everyone involved. I appreciate everyone that has been a part of my journey since I started. Western Carolina is one of my biggest blessings that God has blessed me with. After I graduate I plan on attending graduate school and pursuing my master's degree in communication disorders with a bilingual track, so I can serve as a bilingual speech pathologist and work with Hispanic children and adults that have communication disorders. I have picked this career because I was nonverbal until the age of four and attended speech therapy until I was in 4th grade. My therapists have impacted my life in a positive way and I want to be able to leave the same impact on others. I understand the struggle being bilingual and having communication disorders, but I cannot wait to be a change in this world.

Suite 201 Spotlight: OFE Launches a New Model for Intern II Professional Development

By Amanda Chapman

The best professional development is ongoing development. Beginning in the Fall 2019 semester, the Office of Field Experiences implemented feedback from our regional school partners to revise the professional development that we offer our Intern IIs. In the past, Intern IIs were brought to campus for one day split between professional development and a career fair. However, during the 2018-2019 school year, Amanda Chapman, Director of the Office of Field Experiences and Dr. Patricia Bricker, Associate Dean, visited with regional school partners and asked, "what do your beginning teachers need?" This question sparked great conversations about classroom management strategies, ACES, mental health awareness, social justice and more. From there the brainstorming and collaboration began and the ideas grew and expanded to include even more people. The result was creating four days throughout the Internship II experience, to address most of these needs.

To start the school year, an all-day orientation and training was provided to our interns. During this session, we focused on the key areas that would be most beneficial for our students prior to beginning their internship II experience. Presenters were asked to address these areas as "jumpstarts" or refreshers. Sessions offered included Partnering with Parents, Classroom Management Tune-up, School Safety, and ACES/ Trauma. Later in the day, all faculty serving as field supervisors received their orientation, and then joined their interns and clinical educators for a full-group orientation. Following the full-group session, each program had their own break-out session meeting space to allow them to go further in-depth about program expectations. This also allowed program coordinators and seminar instructors the opportunity to meet their students and their clinical educators, which had never happened in the past.

For the second professional development day, we focused on the feedback that our school partners provided about our pre-service teachers needing to be equipped to meet the mental health needs of their students. To this end, we offered Mental Health First Aid Certification Training provided by Dr. Kim Gorman and Dr. Kellie Monteith. All students who passed received a certificate and card. The training is active for three years and can be renewed.

Upcoming in the series is our Professional Development Day 3, which will cover "Wearing an Equitable Lens: Changing Teacher Perception and Practice" by Dr. Jess Weiler. We will also be hosting Craig White and Allison Scott from the Campaign for Southern Equality Supportive Schools. They will be presenting "Creating LGBTQ Inclusive Learning Communities". In preparation for our Career Fair this fall, Myra Watson will be presenting "Oh the Places You'll Go: Landing Your Dream Job". During this session, students will have the opportunity to work on their résumé and ask questions.

For Professional Development Day 4, students will be arriving on campus for the Education Career Fair and Aimee Dean's presentation on classroom management later in the evening. So far the feedback from students has been very positive and we are all looking forward to where these new ideas and collaborative efforts propel our students

University Gains $1.25 Million Federal Grant for Autism-Related Training

By Geoff Cantrell

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded a $1.25 million grant to Western Carolina University for groundbreaking instruction to prepare professionals for work with children with autism.

The grant will be distributed over five years to the university and used to train 60 graduate students in psychology, special education and speech-language pathology programs on how to address the complex needs of children with autism spectrum disorders. The first 12-student cohort will be selected this semester, with a Friday, Nov. 15, deadline for applications.

Autism refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates 1 in 59 children in the U.S. are on the autism spectrum.

The funding will create an instructional program titled "INTERprofessional Autism Collaborative Training" Project INTERACT, for short to address communication, behavioral and academic needs of those on the autism spectrum. Participating graduate students will have one year of graduate school tuition free, at an in-state rate, have access to a travel fund for continuing education and, upon completion of instructional requirements, receive a certificate of training.

The WCU project team will be led by Drs. Jon Campbell, director of the doctoral program in psychology; Karena Cooper-Duffy, professor of special education; Johanna Price, associate professor of communication sciences and disorders; Amy Rose, WCU assistant professor of communication sciences, and Bill Ogletree, Catherine Brewer Smith Distinguished Professor of Communication Disorders.

"Project INTERACT is an amazing opportunity for students in psychology, special education and speech-language pathology at Western," said Ogletree. "Given the interprofessional nature of training and the exceptionally talented faculty team, this project has the potential to change the face of service delivery for children with autism and their families."

The Project INTERACT leadership team includes (from left) Billy Ogletree, Amy Rose, Johanna Price, Karena Cooper-Duffy, and Jon Campbell.

Participating graduate students will work with nationally recognized faculty and with the families of local children with autism. The goal is to increase both the numbers and level of training of personnel serving children with high-intensity needs in the community.

"They will receive cutting edge training to provide services for children with autism and intellectual disabilities, a population that continues to grow in Western North Carolina, as it does across the country," said Price. "They will learn with, and from, each other through a series of integrated courses and clinical experiences.

"Families in our region who are affected by autism also will benefit as our students and faculty provide assessments, consultations and evidence-based interventions – not just now, but for years to come, as more providers will be specifically trained to assess and treat autism and how to work together."

For more information, contact Ogletree at ogletree@wcu.edu or 828-227-3379.

The Catamount School:
A Year in Review

By Katy Elders

As the Catamount School begins its third year as WCU's laboratory middle school, its staff, students, and families reflect on the year's success, challenges, and hopes for the future. Faculty and administration are dedicated to continuous improvement, but one central focus has remained unwaveringly clear—the Catamount School's commitment to its "Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child" model, to meet the needs of every student, academically, socially, and emotionally.

Last year, TCS staff and students jumped head first into project based learning, with a semester-long, interdisciplinary project in each grade level. Sixth graders explored food security in their region and constructed a community garden on campus. Seventh graders put their engineering and design skills to use to create the plans for space-efficient, disaster proof structures using environmentally sustainable materials. The eighth grade worked in small groups to produce public service announcements on different diseases. In true Catamount School spirit, these projects were collaborative, creative, and involved several community members and WCU faculty as mentors for students.

In addition to project-based learning, the Catamount School continued to hone its relationships with community members and WCU students, faculty, and staff to create enrichment opportunities for its students. Science classes traveled to Purchase Knob in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to work as citizen scientists with park rangers. Language arts classes traveled monthly to WCU's Hunter Library to explore resources and check out books. Math utilized innovative approaches to co-teaching models and small group instruction to focus learning goals. Social studies classes embraced civil rights head-on, and students used their content knowledge to form the school's first Student Equality Coalition.

The TCS Arts Program produced two student-led productions last year, in which theatre arts students directed, produced, costumed, and performed in fall and spring shows along with TCS chorus and band. Work of visual art students was displayed in a student gallery, as well in Bardo Arts Center, thanks to Dr. Erin Tapley and her students who have helped to facilitate arts classes for TCS. The Catamount Dance Crew, a boys' hip hop dance team, performed at local events and as WCU Basketball halftime entertainment.

As part of the university, TCS students enjoyed frequent trips to the WCU campus, where they gained hands-on experiences working with faculty at the Mountain Heritage Center, the Mosquito and Vector-Borne Infectious Disease Facility, and the International & Native American Heritage festivals. Students also spend one full day on campus each semester, where they work team-building and group dynamics with parks and recreation management students, and divide in small groups to explore their own interests: student council worked with WCU Student Government to create legislation, theatre arts students workshopped scenes with the Department of Stage and Screen, art students explored the studios of Bardo Arts Center, the TCS Robotics Team explored the School of Engineering, and music students got their first taste of a collegiate music program and commercial and electronic music studios.

With so much support from a range of local mentors and WCU students, faculty, and staff, TCS students chose to spend their final days of the year in service to the community. In the first annual TCS Day of Service, students donated their time and talents to local organizations, many of whom have provided mentors to our students in various academic capacities throughout the year. Students worked in four group rotations: they helped the Sylva Police Department by washing patrol cars and weeding and landscaping around the department; served the Community Table of Jackson County, doing deep cleaning and helping to maintain their flower beds, as well as assisting with preparatory work, rolling silverware and preparing bags and canned food. Then, groups moved to help the Sylva Community Garden, weeding garden beds and assisting with compost. Finally, they volunteered with Sylva Public Works Department, picking up litter downtown and along the river, as well as cleaning trash and recycling receptacles throughout Main Street of Sylva.

The partnerships evident in these events and programs have been integral in the success of The Catamount School and its students. Because of these opportunities, students can experience learning in a real-world context, develop personal and social responsibility, solidify their sense of belonging in their communities, and understand the limitless possibilities that accompany building these connections and strong relationships. Looking ahead, TCS students, faculty, and staff hope to further the school's partnerships to continue to create opportunities for students in its mission of supporting the "Whole School, Whole Community, and Whole Child."

THE CATAMOUNT SCHOOL

Parks and Recreation Management Visits Floyd, VA

By Zach Hesse, Intern, & Tanya Poole, Instructor

For the second year, Western Carolina University's Parks and Recreation Management class, Interpretation and Environmental Education (PRM 321), took an educational trip to Floyd, Virginia. The FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, a group who seek to preserve, promote, and enhance the Blue Ridge Parkway, helped plan and organize the trip. FRIENDS also purchased food for the group and an Intentional Learning Grant from WCU covered the cost of vans and lodging.

Despite the rain, students were still able to accomplish many of the trip's goals. Students worked with Plenty Farm & Food Bank, the local food assistance program in Floyd County, to plant vegetables and weed their hoop house. The class also helped at the thrift store, Angels in the Attic, by moving furniture and boxes into the shop. During group reflection, students shared that they were surprised by how much their help was needed and how non-profit organizations and agencies are so dependent on non-disabled volunteers to keep their programs running. The students were willing to do even more if there had been more time and less rain!

Students also worked with Blue Ridge Parkway interpretive rangers, a retired National Park Service staff member, and other educators and interpreters. These guests were able to share their first-hand experiences working with the Blue Ridge Parkway and the National Park Service, as well as share lessons on its history. The class improved their interpretation skills by taking a tour of Mabry Mill with Mike Ryan, a retired interpretive park ranger and historical author, and visiting the Carroll County Court House. Students learned about Appalachian music and were taught to play traditional and contemporary songs on the mountain dulcimer. Students demonstrated their understanding of interpretation methods by discussing how these interpretive programs were facilitated for them and how they, as future interpreters, might improve the programming. Students all completed an interpretive signage critique on signs throughout Mabry Mill in preparation for their final project. Based on student feedback and instructor observations and discussions, the trip allowed students to synthesize and apply the content from PRM course and helped students further develop their career goals.

Psychology Department Travels Abroad

By Dr. David Solomon

Continuing with its dedication to provide high-impact, experiential learning opportunities for WCU students, the psychology department led a group of students to Europe to learn about the root causes of prejudice and genocide. The summer of 2019 marked the sixth time that the Psychology of Hate summer course was offered. The two-week trip took students on a three-country trek including Austria (Salzburg), Germany (Munich, Nuremberg, and Berlin), and the Netherlands (Amsterdam and the Hague).

The travel course was designed to closely augment the more traditional book learning of a pre-travel online course which covered the social, historical, and psychological determinants of the Holocaust. For example, in the online course students learned about the history of Antisemitism in Europe, which evolved from religious-based discrimination in the Middle Ages into a more racially-based discrimination during the Enlightenment. The students learned about the impact that the loss of the Frist World War had on the German psyche, and how this event was instrumental in the rise of the Nazi party. The online class also helped students learn about the social-psychological research that later attempted to explain the behavior of the Nazi as students tried to answer the key question of the course: how could seeming normal people participate both actively and passively in the murder of millions of people?

The travel course then took students on the sometimes emotional journey of putting what they had learned into a real-world context. They stood in Dachau, the first concentration erected by the Nazis, which was initially designed to hold political prisoners but later held Jewish prisoners, gay men, priests, Jehovah's Witnesses, Romani, and those who had committed multiple minor crimes. Before it was liberated in 1945, an estimated 41,500 people had died there. Later, the students explored the Jewish Museum and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin. Both sites are experiential, intending to give visitors a feeling of unease but also hope. They also emphasize the stories of victims through artifacts and personal letters. In this way, visitors move beyond the often-quoted figure of six million victims, a number almost unfathomable in and of itself, to the realization that each person counted in that number was an individual person who had a life, family, relationships, and hopes. Near the end of the trip, students also gained a better understanding into the situation of one of the most well-known victims of the Holocaust when they toured the secret annex where Anne Frank and her family hid for several years. The Psychology Department hopes to continue to offer this course and is dedicated to developing other travel-related learning opportunities.

Colorado Couple Endows Scholarship in Effort to Save Environment Through Education

By Melanie Threlkeld McConnell

Dwight Ryland has seen some glorious views in his day, having climbed all 54 of Colorado's 14,000-foot mountains — some of them more than once — and skied his native state's majestic slopes.

But a dark cloud on the horizon has redirected his gaze and nudged the 77-year-old Ryland to put his money where his heart is: saving the environment through education.

"I don't think global warming is a hoax. I think it's very real," said Ryland, who with his late wife, Jessie, established the Dwight E. and Jessie D. Ryland Scholarship Fund at Western Carolina University for students majoring in math and science education. "Because of my concern about the environment and the planet — I felt technology got us to where we are with the industrial revolution — it may be science is the only thing that will get us out of it."

The Rylands established their endowed scholarship for deserving students in 2006 with a combination of cash, stock, and planned gifts and pledges totaling more than $800,000 to date, and they included one exceptional condition. Ryland said he jokingly told one scholarship recipient, "Well, really the only thing I ask of you with this scholarship is that you produce a child who saves the planet."

Fortunately, Ryland said, the student laughed.

Ryland is quick to give credit to his mother and the successive line of family ties for the money — his inheritance — which he has chosen to give away to various causes. He and Jessie had no children.

"The family money basically came from my grandfather, my mother's father, who was a Denver lawyer who got some mineral rights in lieu of a fee for a legal job he did," Ryland said. "That didn't pay off during his life time much, but about the time he died in 1963, suddenly these mineral rights started paying out. My mother was a very shrewd investor, so she grew that money and that's how it happened. I figure it's oil money, so I better turn it around."

Dwight Ryland on his last hike up Kit Carson Mountain in 1983, wearing a beret given to him by his Aunt Cora "Cookie" Cook, whom Ryland credits with persuading his parents to let him climb mountains as a boy. He buried the beret on the mountain's 14,171-foot peak in his aunt's honor.

Jessie Ryland, who died in 2015 at age 78, graduated from WCU with a Bachelor of Science degree in education in 1959 and a master's degree in education in 1961, the first in her family to get a four-year degree, Ryland said. She spent most of her working career as a high school counselor in North Carolina and Colorado before retiring because of health issues. She also worked as the associate dean of women at what was then North Georgia College from 1966-68. Jessie grew up in western North Carolina between Spruce Pine and Bakersville, Ryland said, meeting him in Rifle, Colorado, where she had moved in 1968.

The Rylands spent their free time hiking, skiing and camping (often in snow caves), and traveling around the world, until Jessie's health began to deteriorate. She suffered from aorta issues related to Marfan syndrome, a genetic disorder that affects the body's connective tissue. But she did climb two "fourteeners," Ryland said.

"Jessie was absolutely an amazing person," Ryland said of his wife of nearly 43 years. "She was completely nonjudgmental. I've never known anybody who was totally as nonjudgmental as Jessie was. She accepted everybody for exactly who they were. She had a personality where people liked her immediately."

Ryland's roots run deep in Colorado. Both of his parents were born there as were two of his grandparents. A great-grandfather, Job Adams Cooper, served as governor for two years, having moved to Colorado from Illinois.

Ryland credits his Aunt Cora Cook "Cookie," who was an early member of the Colorado Mountain Club and who climbed the 14,000-foot Maroon Bells, with persuading his parents to let him explore Colorado's great outdoors. "My parents did not want me to climb or ski, but she said, 'let the boy do something worthwhile,'" Ryland said. Ryland later honored her when he buried a beret she had given him on the top of Kit Carson Mountain on his last climb to its 14,171-foot peak in 1983.

Dwight and Jessie Ryland vacationing at the Grand Tetons.

Ryland said he and Jessie were environmentalists before it "became a political issue," building a solar house 40 years ago, when they lived in Grand Junction, Colorado, and adding solar panels to another house they lived in Westminster, Colorado. He moved to Boulder, Colorado, after Jessie died.

Now long retired, Ryland continues to walk regularly and shoot landscape photographs, a lifelong hobby. He serves on various community boards and supports environmental efforts through his philanthropic work. He and Jessie also endowed a doctoral graduate fellowship in alternative energy research at the University of Colorado, his alma mater (1964) and where he is a member of the university's Foundation Board of Trustees. He also supports Craig Hospital and the limb restoration program at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.

Dwight Ryland, with his wife, Jessie (left) and his mother, Lucille.

While Ryland doesn't hike much anymore, he finds cutting-edge adventures elsewhere.

"There's a surgeon at Anschutz who was a rodeo cowboy, and he's invited me to be a part of a team training in what's called osteointegration, where they actually implant a prosthetic directly in to the bone so there's no having to wear a socket," Ryland said. "It's a little intimidating for me because we're actually going to be working on a cadaver."

It's an appropriate opportunity for someone whose vision has been shaped by long-range views. "I was climbing at a time when it wasn't that popular," Ryland said. "At that height, you just see the more pristine nature of the environment and it's just a real clear look at what things ought to be and hopefully could be."

Health and Physical Education Program Highlight

By Dr. Tom Watterson

Be honest, when you read the Health and Physical Education (HPE) highlight - what was the first image that came to you? Was it a teacher/coach with polyester shorts, tucked in shirt, whistle around his/her neck, and tube shocks over the calf? This is the stereotype that our students in our program face every day. There is no other college program/degree that has this type of instinctual connection between the name and a vision of the graduate, but this assumption and picture of the graduate is the exact opposite of what WCU HPE program is all about.

We are teaching our future graduates that this "old school" health and physical education concept is exactly what we are working against. We teach activities that focus on the whole child and create experiences that the students can build on in their personal lives. We lead by examples in our classes, with new creative ways to teach and connect both the health-related content and physical activity, which combined properly is quality physical education. Our program combined both content areas several years ago, which allows our students to graduate and immediately be licensing to teach in either discipline.

Health and Physical Education has become a hot topic in our recent political climate. Whether, the discussion is about current obesity numbers, insurance premiums, or chronic disease, they all connect to your understanding of health. Unfortunately, the debate usually involves what to do with these problems after the fact, where in our health and PE program we are preparing students to tackle the problem before it starts. The practice of teaching team sports solely in schools has become outdated with students of today. A question we ask young adults is, "when was the last time you participated in a pick-up basketball, football, or soccer game?" Most can't remember, but they worked out in the gym yesterday, or participated in a 5K last week, or really enjoy a recent group fitness class. They are also very involved with their nutrition, tracking it on an app or just learning how to read food labels properly. We combine this content with latest in brain research that also shows how important activity is for your brain health. The more active you are the better your ability to process and store information, which in turn helps your academic performance. These are the new health and PE curriculums that we focus on here at Western.

Our students are also challenged to work through the common stereotypes of a "PE teacher", who is usually referred to as a coach. This is a tough process, because most people associate the PE teacher with the afterschool sports teams, but they do not realize the amount of work that is put into developmentally appropriate lesson and the need for proper health and physical education throughout the entire school day. This is where our program is unique in its approach to quality health and physical education. We strive to give or students real world application of the classroom content, with multiple settings of instruction.

The Catamount Lab Experience

We have a newly created lab school, which has allowed our students immediate access to practice what they have just learned in the classroom. The Catamount School is a lab school for 6th, 7th and 8th graders designed to explore innovative teaching approaches and applied learning opportunities in order to help every student discover his or her full academic potential. The HPE program at the Catamount School is designed to complement the goal of the school with providing students with age appropriate health related content and a bit of autonomy through PE Electives. Each PE unit is divided into three physical activity options, providing our WCU HPE students an opportunity to teach a wide variety of content. This semester alone the HPE students will have the opportunity to teach yoga, geocaching, dance, lacrosse, roller derby, circuit training, pickle ball, and outdoor education. The Catamount School HPE program allows our HPE students to learn to teach outside their comfort zones and grow as physical education professionals while allowing the Catamount school students to try something new or simply adjust their physical education experience to cater to their interests and/or comfort levels.

HPE interns provide physical education to Catamount School Students

Adventure Based Learning

Students in the HPE program also take a full semester class in adventure learning. Through this course, students will learn processes for the development of group dynamics, social-emotional learning in schools, 21st century skills, strategies for teaching resiliency, and inclusion, all through the lens of adventure education. They will value the process of establishing behavioral norms, learn games, trust, and initiative activities to facilitate adventure experiences for their students. Students will utilize the experiential learning cycle to derive value and meaning from their experiences. The mode for delivery for this class content is through structured activities that use natural and artificial environments to identify individual and group inter/intra-personal strengths and weaknesses, and from this awareness, promote positive personal growth. This class gives our students the perspective that "traditional teaching methods" might not be the best way to excite students into a healthy lifestyle, so being creative and using your environment might be a great way to connect to today's students.

Increasing Comfort in Adapted Education

Adapted movement and wellness is a required course for Health and Physical Education majors. In this course, students examine laws and educational policies pertaining to students with disabilities. Further, they learn about the characteristics of various disabilities and methods for including students with disabilities into health and physical education classes. Students spend two days a week in the classroom and are also required to go to a local elementary school one day a week, though most students choose to go to two. At the elementary school, the majors work in pairs with each pair assigned to a student with severe physical and/or mental disabilities. The majors are responsible for assessing their student's strengths and weaknesses. They then plan and implement lessons that are designed to improve their student's motor, manipulative and health related skills. Several outcomes are achieved from this interaction. The HPE majors have the opportunity to interact with students with severe disabilities over an entire semester. Throughout the semester the HPE majors are given the opportunity to learn how to adapt lessons for students with special needs. More importantly, the HPE majors are placed in a situation where they work with a student who is quite different from themselves. Often times this is the first time they have worked with students with disabilities. Our majors begin the course with a great deal of apprehension regarding working with students with special needs. By the end of the semester they have become quite comfortable working with someone with a disability. The change in the confidence of the Western HPE students working with a child with special needs from the beginning of the semester to the end is nothing short of powerful.

> Throughout the semester the HPE majors are given the opportunity to learn how to adapt lessons for students with special needs.

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Health and Physical Education Program Highlight *Continued*

Looking to the Future

Another unique aspect to the HPE program at Western, is the preparedness of our students to advocate for their profession. Each year our HPE majors have the opportunity to attend their state professional organization, NCAAHPERD-SM convention in Winston Salem, NC. This convention allows our students to meet and collaborate with student majors from other universities as well as learning about best practice, trends in physical education, and ways in which physical educators are working to defeat the childhood obesity epidemic and advocate for the future of health and physical education. This trip is made possible by an Intentional Learning Grant from WCU. While at the convention, the students attend presentations delivered by top-notch educators from across the country. The students also lead a presentation for other college's student majors, and highlight examples of our program's curriculum that prepare for creative and inclusive education in the future. This year's program will also include several of our own faculty and students' receiving recognition. Heidi Turlington, University Dance Instructor of the Year: Dan Grube, Outstanding University Teacher of the Year: WCU Students, Jacob Ocegueda and Ashlee Caraker who each won NCAAHPERD-SM scholarships as the outstanding male and female HPE majors in the state.

Lastly, our program brings a group of students to Washington, DC for the national Speak Out Day for Health and Physical Education each year. This event is led by SHAPE, Society of Health and Physical Educators, our national organization that promotes the profession of health and physical education. Each year they organize a day in Washington to lobby for legislation that can support health and physical education initiatives. Our students need to combine the content from the classrooms, their experiences in the schools, and their personal goals of the future of health and physical education and delivery a 15-minute presentation to varying members of the House and Senate and educate them (advocate) on the importance of health and physical education and try to influence (lobby) them on supporting the funding for increasing health and physical education in our country's schools.

Summary

Our students are making a difference in the schools with a fresh approach to health and physical education. HPE students embrace working with diverse populations across all age groups and learn to advocating locally and nationally for the need for quality health and physical education in all the schools. Our faculty are contributing research in the field on topics such as global education, improvement of brain function during physical activity, high intensity training, and using technology in a gym or classroom setting.

We've come a long way from those polyester shorts, knee socks, and a whistle!

Malesky receives Chancellor's Teaching Award

Dr. Alvin Malesky, Department Head and Professor in the Department of Psychology, was named the recipient of the Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award at the annual Faculty and Staff Excellence Awards on Friday, April 26, 2019. This recognition is the most prestigious on-campus award and recognizes superior teaching and meritorious performance.

The committee tasked with choosing the recipient of this year's Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award was impressed with Malesky's "commitment to continuous improvement and his success in the classroom with both graduate and undergraduate students," Morrison-Shetlar said in presenting the honor. "In addition, the committee noted his ability to help students meaningfully engage with the needs of western North Carolina," she said. "Alvin, congratulations for being chosen for this award and for the outstanding contributions to the teaching and learning enterprise which this award represents."

Malesky was also named a recipient of the scholarly development assignment program and will be on leave from Western in the spring 2020 semester to complete manuscript publications, editorials and a final book proposal on academic integrity in higher education.

Dr. Alison Morrison-Shetlar, and Dr. Carol Burton present Dr. Alvin Malesky with the Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award

Psychology Club at WCU

By David Scales

The Psychology Club at WCU is coming off its 55th year with record enrollment and participation. Coinciding with this is a record number of inductees into Psi Chi, the International Honors Society in Psychology. The club itself has seen a spike in members due to several high-profile activities and events including Valley Ballyhoo, a high-profile t-shirt sale, a fundraiser for a local children's charity, and participation in the annual Southeastern Psychological Association conference in Jacksonville, FL last March.

The club itself currently has 92 members, which is almost 20% of all majors in the department - a rate far higher than other department-oriented clubs on campus, which average between 4% and 13%. These numbers reflect continuing trends for the club, going back at least nine years. Jyll LiPetri, a senior in the department, says the club, "has been an excellent way for me to network for career opportunities. I think it's wonderful, getting to discuss with peer's CV's internships and grad school and things that are important to my future."

Additionally, membership in Psi Chi has increased dramatically. In the 2018-19 academic year, the department produced 40 inductees into this prestigious organization. David Scales, faculty advisor to both the club and Psi Chi, says that this increase in qualified applicants to Psi Chi is a testament not only to the high quality of students that the department is turning out, but to the quality of the faculty in the department, and the ability of students and faculty to work together effectively. March 2020 will also see the 50th anniversary of the charter of Psi Chi at Western Carolina University, and the club is working actively to mark this anniversary with special lectures and events to celebrate.

For more information about the Psychology Club at WCY or Psi Chi, please contact David Scales at wdscales@wcu.edu.

New Faculty & Staff

Human Services

Joseph Mixon
Counselor, Project Discovery

Jamy Beth Suminski
Counselor, Project Discovery

Erin Goodpaster
Counselor, Project Discovery

Emily Virtue
Assistant Professor

Merry Leigh Dameron
Assistant Professor

Jeremy Schultz
Assistant Professor

Cathy Andrews
Assistant Professor

Amanda Henderson
Visiting Instructor

Psychology

Kristen Reinhardt
Assistant Professor

Alleyne Broomell
Assistant Professor

Alicia Grande
Instructor

Dean's Office

Lynley Hardie
Business Officer

School of Teaching and Learning

Amber Henry
EC Teacher
The Catamount School

Laura Plantenburg
Instructor & Health Services Coordinator,
The Catamount School

Joy McGehee
Instructor

Suite 201

Nicole Parton
Administrative Support Associate

CEAP Snippets

- On Monday, April 29, 2019, students, parents, donors, friends, faculty, and staff gathered in the University Center Grand Room to celebrate College of Education and Allied Professions students receiving honors and awards at the annual awards ceremony. **$189,701 in scholarships were awarded to 115 deserving students.**
- School of Teaching and Learning faculty members, **Drs. Tammy Barron, Holly Henderson Pinter**, and **Kim K. Winter**, have published the article, "Supporting Student and Preservice Teacher Successes Through Co-teaching," in the Theory and Practice in Rural Education.
- **Dr. Andrew Bobilya**, Professor of Parks and Recreation Management, recently co-authored an article titled "Benefits of summer camp: What do parents value?" in the Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education and Leadership with scholars from Michigan State University, Utah Valley University and Southeast Missouri State University.
- **Dr. Kelly R. Kelley** and **Dr. David L. Westling**, co-founders of the UP Program, are drawing on their extensive experience with inclusive college programs to outline lessons learned and offer helpful advice for developing, organizing, and implementing such programs in their new book, "Teaching, Including, and Supporting College Students with Intellectual Disabilities."
- **Dr. Kofi Lomotey**, Bardo Distinguished Professor of Educational Leadership, has published an article, "Research on the leadership of Black women principals: Implications for Black students" in the *Educational Researcher*.
- **Amanda Clapp**, science teacher at the Catamount School, was selected for a year-long Kenan Fellowship. The Kenan Fellows Program for Teacher Leadership addresses the need for professional development for educators, and is the largest STEM-focused teacher leadership program in NC. Key components are a three-week summer internship with a mentor in a STEM setting, and 80 hours of professional development that promotes curricular design bridging STEM at work with school.

Counseling faculty members, Drs. Merry Leigh Dameron, Melodie Frick, Elizabeth Likis-Werle, and Heather Thompson presented at the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision national conference in Seattle, WA in early October.

- **Dr. Heidi Von Dohlen** partnered with the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) and the SERVE Center, as well as with her twin, Lisa Von Dohlen (a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, School Social Worker, and former Homeless Liaison). The research team examined Masters of School Administration (MSA) students' knowledge and understanding of poverty and homelessness in schools and sought to increase leadership capacity among aspiring school leaders to mitigate issues of homelessness and poverty in schools. This study provided an opportunity for school leaders to engage in self-assessment/reflection of their knowledge of poverty and homelessness, and to create school and district plans based on current school district data.
- **Dr. Adrienne Stuckey**, School of Teaching and Learning Faculty member, has published the article, "High School Teachers' Use of Behavior Prompting and Specific Praise: An Exploratory Study" in Research in the Schools.
- **Dr. Dan Grube**, Direct of the School of Teaching and Learning was recognized as the College/University PE Teacher of the Year at the North Carolina Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation, Dance and Sport Management conference. This is Grube's second time capturing that award, as he also was the recipient in 2005. He is now in the running for SHAPE America's Southern District PE Teacher of the Year honors. Grube said he is honored to be recognized with the award, but I'm mostly proud of our program. We have many great faculty who work with our students to help them be as successful as they can be, and we have great students, too, he said.
- **Heidi Turlington**, received the College/University Dance Education Teacher of the Year award from the Dance Association for North Carolina Educators. Turlington earned her master's degree in physical education at WCU in 2009 and has been an instructor in health and physical education for the School of Teaching and Learning since 2011. Turlington's nominator wrote that she is an "exceptional teacher and our students love her" and "her enthusiasm is contagious." Turlington said she is honored to receive the state award. "I am also proud of our dance students and health and physical education majors at Western," she said. "This award reflects well on them, also. Their enthusiasm makes my job fun and their creativity gives me new teaching ideas."
- **Dr. Merry Leigh Dameron**, Assistant Professor of Counseling, recently published an article in *The Urban Review*. Along with her co-authors, Dr. Dameron examined the impact of race, gender, and socioeconomic status on school counselors' alternative learning program placement decisions.

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