

Eagle Edge

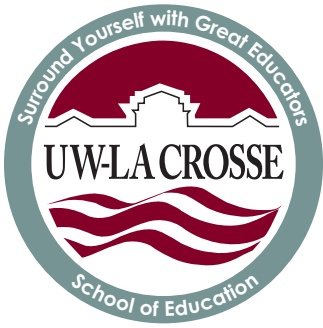
LEAD. EDUCATE.

COLLABORATE. INNOVATE.

SISTER CITIES

UWL strengthens sister city
educational ties with
Luoyang, China

Story on page 4



What's Inside:



Alumni profile:
Misty Lown

Page 7



UWL faculty earn grant to help
area K-12 teachers improve
student achievement

Page 8



Montessori Conference inspires
mindfulness, peace and joy in a
fast-paced world

Page 10



Alumna writes
historical fiction

Page 12



EPC Teaching
Excellence Award:
Amy Tischler, Ph.D.

Page 14

Eagle Edge

Spring 2017 | *Eagle Edge* is
published biannually for
UW-La Crosse School of
Education alumni and friends.

Direct comments to:

Dean Marcie Wycoff-Horn
UWL School of Education
1725 State St.
La Crosse, WI 54601 USA
608.785.6786
mwycoff-horn@uwlax.edu

Editor:

Lindsey Butts

Writer:

Kjerstin Lang

Art Director:

Florence Aliesch

Photography:

Michael Lieurance, '02

*The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse is
an affirmative action/equal opportunity
employer and is in compliance with Title
IX and Section 504.*

www.uwlax.edu/soe



COVER IMAGE:

Chinese middle school students from
Luoyang, China, experience a typical
Wisconsin winter day with help from
UWL students who helped guide the
students in activities while sharing
American culture.



Visit past issues of the School of Education newsletter

from THE DEAN



Marcie Wycoff-Horn, Ph.D.

After eight years of leading the School of Education, my commitment to the future of educator preparation is stronger than ever. The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse continues to be a leader in teacher preparation evidenced by the continued growth in programming, steady enrollment numbers, and extraordinarily high job placement rates. Over the fall semester, new global partnerships and urban education experiences took shape with our faculty and students crossing borders to drive new initiatives and connect with communities and children in diverse ways. Seeking new opportunities and strengthening current practices has resulted in incredible partnerships with teachers that are right here in our backyard, as well as throughout the country and world.

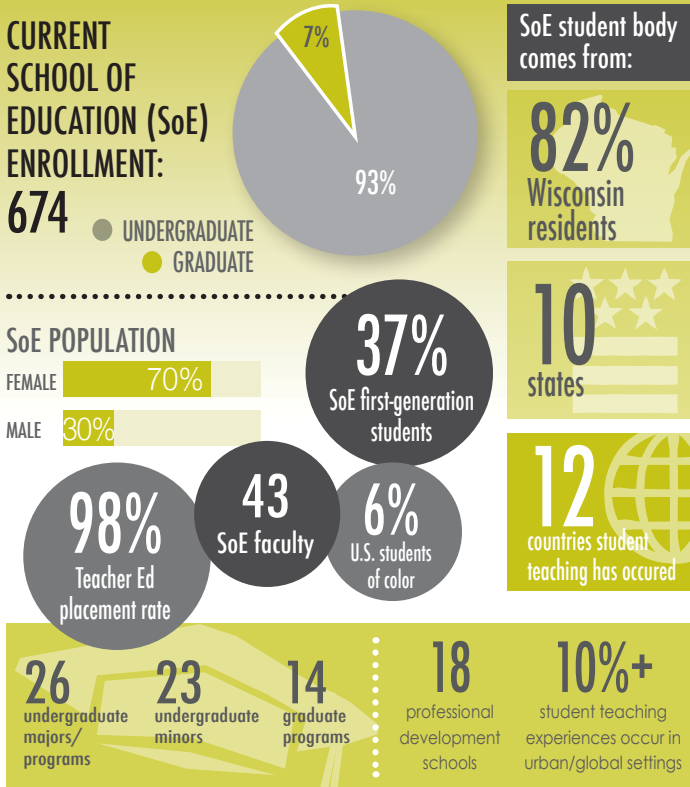
As a leader in the field of teacher preparation, our faculty and students are deeply immersed in local schools through the professional development school model. This practice

allows teacher candidates to immediately begin building valuable classroom experiences resulting in over 1,000 hours of school-based field work upon graduation. This, along with the wonderful talents of our faculty and staff, the generosity of our donors and the passion of our partners in education, are the reasons UWL continues in its mission to provide excellence in education and prepare qualified teachers. The stories you're about to read capture only a handful of the remarkable people, experiences, and accomplishments that are making dreams come true at UWL. I hope you will find them inspirational and that they leave you with that same sense of commitment about the future of education that I have the privilege of experiencing every day at UWL!

In partnership,

Marcie Wycoff-Horn, Dean

We teach to stimulate the mind and expand possibilities



Preparing educators for 100+ years

5 MOST POPULAR UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS

- IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION:
- MIDDLE CHILDHOOD – EARLY ADOLESCENCE EDUCATION
 - EARLY CHILDHOOD – MIDDLE CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
 - PHYSICAL EDUCATION
 - ENGLISH EDUCATION (SECONDARY)
 - SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION (SECONDARY)



SISTER CITIES

UWL strengthens sister city educational ties with Luoyang, China

Chinese middle school student Yan Jiayu, 13, thought American students didn't have study-related stress. Meeting UW-La Crosse students this winter, those perceptions melted.

Many of the UWL students Jiayu met worked on weekends and were just as busy during the week with school and other obligations. "... they have to work hard to go to a good university," said Jiayu. "They are just as hard working as us."

Every winter more than 20 middle school students from Luoyang, China, visit La Crosse to learn American culture and enhance English language with support from the city, La Crosse School District and UWL. Luoyang students have long visited UWL; however, for the first time this year, the Chinese students met with UWL education students as part of their two-week travel itinerary. UWL students introduced the middle school students to winter favorites including hot chocolate, cross-country skiing, and other activities related to American culture.

The interactions with UWL students demonstrates just one of the ways UWL's School of Education, Professional and



Continuing Education is advancing its collaborations with La Crosse's sister city in Luoyang, China — a partnership that celebrated 20 years in 2016.

Another important way the relationship is growing is a new UWL student study abroad experience in Luoyang, China this summer, May 22-June 17. The majority of the participants will be education majors.

Marcie Wycoff-Horn, dean of the School of Education, Professional and Continuing Education, says understanding other cultures prepares future teachers to enter classrooms that are growing increasingly diverse.

“It allows them to bring another lens to the classroom,” says Wycoff-Horn. “They look at the world differently and approach teaching with a new appreciation for a global society. Gaining a new perspective will better prepare them to become culturally-responsive educators, ready to support the needs of all learners.”

Education leaders from Luoyang see similar benefits. These middle school students will be tomorrow's leaders in a global society, says Li Cai-xia, director of Foreign Affairs Office of Luoyang No. 2 Foreign Language School.

“They will need to be culturally sensitive and understand the value of diversity in a multicultural environment,” says Cai-xia.

“The opportunity to continue and strengthen our relationship with UW-La Crosse School of Education provides the means to help us prepare our students to be active members in the multicultural world that is tomorrow.”

Embarking on the first study abroad trip to Luoyang

UWL sophomore Edith Osorio, a psychology major and at-risk child and youth care minor, says the trip to China will expose her to another culture, history and perspective. That will be important for her future — potentially working with at-risk youth.

She grew up in a Hispanic family and Hispanic neighborhood in Waukegan, Illinois. Coming to college at UWL, she has already experienced a cultural shift. “I appreciate those cultural differences and want to see more cultures around the world,” she says.

Students on the trip will attend classes and take excursions to places such as The Great Wall and the Terra Cotta Army. In classes and during tours, students will learn about Chinese culture, as well as topics such as the impact of globalization on teaching, poverty, and differences in the Chinese educational system. Students will also observe Chinese classrooms and do some practice.

Continued on next page.



LA CROSSE'S SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIPS

La Crosse has Sister City relationships with seven cities worldwide: Dubna, Russia; Epinal, France; Førde, Norway; Friedberg, Germany; Luoyang, China; and The Republic of Cameroon, Kumbo, West Africa.

Continued from previous page.

Joshua Miller, assistant professor of Educational Studies, will join the students to teach a class and a cultural lab. He traveled to China with Wycoff-Horn and Betsy Morgan, UWL's provost and vice chancellor for Academic Affairs, to establish the program. He calls that initial visit an amazing experience where he was invited to explore and ask questions.

In completely new surroundings, he was able to better recognize his position within society in the Midwest and feel what it was like to be "the other." He's looking forward to students engaging in that same feeling.

"How is being embedded in that culture going to affect them when they come back?," he asks. "I think it will increase their global perspective and how they will teach in the future."

Students will have the opportunity to not only take in Chinese culture, but also share their own culture and teaching practices in the U.S. related to topics such as collaboration and communication, says Miller.

Wycoff-Horn says many education majors are balancing heavy academic and student teaching work loads, which makes studying abroad during the academic year difficult. The new exchange experience allows students to continue earning credit toward their program in summer, and does not lengthen their time to degree.

Miller calls the partnership a win for UWL, its students and partners. "I hope we have the opportunity to keep this partnership growing going forward," he says.

Chinese students experience wintery Wisconsin

UWL Hannah Kiiskila, a UWL Spanish education major, volunteered to show the Chinese middle school students a typical Wisconsin

winter day snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. She says regardless of the language children speak or the country they are from, they share commonalities — like their desire to have fun.

"If you give kids an opportunity to have fun, there are a ton of ways to connect with them," she says.

While skiing through a wooded area of the trail, Kiiskila helped one boy step over a log in his skis. Kiiskila exclaimed, "Woah, Buddy!" as one of his skis nearly grazed her face in the maneuver. The middle school kids smiled at the new expression and laughed as they tried using it the rest of the day, she says.

Kiiskila, who plans a future in education, says the experience was a chance to broaden her cultural awareness, and learn how to better connect with kids from diverse cultures.

Similarly, Li Xiao, an English teacher at Luoyang Foreign Language School, says the visit was a good opportunity to see American culture, schools, as well as different people and different landscapes. The experience also encourages her students to be more active in class and willing to speak English.

UW-La Crosse provides the perfect conduit for the Chinese students to gain a firsthand understanding of the world beyond China, says Cai-xia.

"By gaining an understanding of American culture, our students are able to become more culturally sensitive and have a multicultural experience outside the classroom," says Cai-xia.



UWL students interact with middle school students from Luoyang, China during a two-week visit to La Crosse. A sister city relationship started between La Crosse and Luoyang more than 20 years ago.



ALUMNI profile

Misty Lown, '97 & '01

Owner of Misty's Dance Unlimited in Onalaska

- Earned a bachelor's in Spanish, minor in English
- Earned a Master's of Education-Professional Development
- Owner, Misty's Dance Unlimited in Onalaska, in its 19th season providing lessons in ballet, tap, jazz and more; more than 750 students weekly.
- Lown has licensed Misty's intellectual property; 159 affiliates in the U.S., Canada, Australia, Aruba and Dubai, serving more than 60,000 kids weekly.
- Owns "More Than Dancers," online magazine for kids who dance. In May 2016 the site had more than 200,000 visitors and one million social media engagements.
- Owns Ironside Self Storage with her husband, along with a dance wear store and dance competition with her school director, Shayna Stellflue.



What has been your company's biggest contribution to the local economy?

We employ 35 people with benefits. We raised \$400,000 for the Red Cross and have given \$200,000 in scholarships. We've also supported Cash for Classrooms and the La Crosse Community Theater.

In what ways do you link your UWL education to your success?

Just today I was telling someone how I still use the lessons that Dr. Greg Wegner taught me in my ME-PD program. And, there's not a day that goes by that I don't try to pay forward some of Dr. Robert Richardson's kindness. They were tough teachers, but they helped me rise to the occasion. I may not be teaching like I had planned, but my UWL education prepared me well to lead a world-wide movement in dance education.

NOTEWORTHY RECOGNITION:

- Guest blogger on SUCCESS.com and presenter at IF: Gathering Local and the U.S. Army Garrison Woman's Equality Day
- Recognized as "Teacher of the Year" by Eclipse
- "Outstanding Businesswoman of the Year" by the YWCA
- Awarded "Pope John XXIII Award for Distinguished Service" by Viterbo University
- "Philanthropy Award" from the Red Cross

A STRONG MATH, SCIENCE FUTURE

*UWL faculty earn grant to help area K-12 teachers
improve student achievement*



UW-La Crosse faculty continue to partner with in-service K-12 teachers to improve student achievement in Wisconsin – particularly in areas where students struggle such as math and science.

Physics Education faculty Jennifer Docktor and Physics Department Chair Gubbi Sudhakaran secured a nearly \$395,000 national Math and Science Partnership Grant that will allow UWL to offer workshops over a two-year period for area K-12 teachers on integrating technology, engineering, arts and mathematics with science. The first year of workshops will run March-June 2017, called the “iTEAMS” project.

The grant is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). The program has generated so much interest that the co-authors requested additional funds from the Wisconsin DPI to accept an additional 10 teachers into the workshop, bringing the total participants to 40.

Docktor, an associate professor of Physics, is a member of the Secondary Teacher Education Preparation (STEP) Program. As a Physics Educator, she serves as a teacher, mentor and advisor to future middle and high school science teachers. “In the U.S., student achievement in science and math lags behind other countries – especially in middle school and high school,” says Docktor. “In order to better prepare for a globally competitive workforce, we need to start with improving STEM education in elementary and middle schools.”

Docktor says the benefits are mutual when universities form partnerships with local school districts. “Teachers gain new

skills and confidence in teaching science, and higher education faculty learn more about how subjects are taught in K-12,” she says.

Docktor continually gets new ideas to improve her UWL courses for future science teachers by talking with local teachers. Her established relationships with teachers also help when UWL students begin their field experience and student teaching, she says.

K-12 teachers gain content knowledge and ideas for activities for their classrooms while developing networks with other K-12 teachers and faculty in higher education.

“If teachers are excited about science, they will pass on that excitement to their students,” says Docktor. “In the long-term, we could see students coming to UWL who are better prepared for math and science classes or more students choosing to pursue STEM careers as a result of their enhanced K-12 preparation.”

This isn't the first K-12 partnership

Under the leadership of Sudhakaran, the UWL Physics Department has run workshops since at least 2000. From 2011-2014, faculty in the Physics Department have provided professional development in physical science to 30 teachers in grades 3-10 in the districts of La Crosse, Onalaska, and Tomah through a project called “A LOT of Science.”

Jennifer Docktor and Gubbi Sudhakaran, UWL Physics Department, earned a two-year grant that will help in-service K-12 teachers improve student achievement in Wisconsin. Docktor teaches “Teaching and Learning Science in the Secondary School,” a science methods class for future biology, chemistry and physics teachers. Docktor also teaches content courses in the Physics Department including “Physical Science for Educators.”





Being mindful with Montessori

Conference inspires mindfulness, peace and joy in a fast-paced world

Standardized testing, hours of screen time, over scheduling of structured activities and stressed parents working long hours: meeting needs and requirements like these can be a struggle for schools and the children and families they serve, notes Ann Epstein, associate professor of educational studies.

Epstein helped organize the third annual Montessori Conference at UW-La Crosse Saturday, Jan. 21, which aimed to inspire more mindfulness, peace and joy in today's busy world. The three words — mindfulness, peace and joy — are pillars of Montessori, an educational style started by Italian physician and educator Maria Montessori in the early 1900s.

Montessori was deeply spiritual and trained as a physician. She combined her deep belief in people's responsibility to take care of one another, young children and the world with a scientist's

commitment to data-based practices, says Epstein. Today's Montessorians continue this multi-pronged approach of guiding children's learning in the context of striving for peace within ourselves, our classrooms and the world, says Epstein.

"Mindfulness provides a way for teachers and families to center themselves, to de-stress and re-focus," explains Epstein.

MORE ON MINDFULNESS

Ann Epstein recommends "The Mindful Education Workbook: Lessons for Teaching Mindfulness to Students." Rechtschaffen, D. (2016).

Education style is increasing in popularity

The conference attracted more than 100 Montessori teachers, administrators and parents from throughout Wisconsin and the Twin Cities area. It came at a time when Montessori education is growing in popularity in Wisconsin.

Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) went from 180 Montessori students in 1976 to more than 3,300 today, according to data compiled by MPS. MPS has seven Montessori schools and parent demand has led to adding two additional sites, according to an article in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

The La Crosse School District is home to Coulee Montessori Charter School, located inside Northside Elementary School, and Coulee Montessori Adolescent Program, located inside Lincoln Middle School. The local programs have seen steady interest, says Laura Huber, principal of Northside Elementary School.

The conference was an opportunity for Montessori teachers, administrators, parents and others in education to learn new ideas related to Montessori education, notes Epstein.

"But, more than that, I hope it helped people find that spark to inspire themselves ... and bring that back to their classrooms or homes," she adds.



ABOUT MONTESSORI EDUCATION

Montessori education combines multiple grade levels in one classroom where kids are encouraged, with some guidance from the teacher, to explore and be creative through self-directed activity.



DREAMING BIG

Alumna writes historical fiction

Mai Chao Duddeck beams when she sees students carrying the book she wrote. They ask, “Are you Pa Ying?,” one of the fictional characters she invented. Duddeck, an author, teacher and — yes — the inspiration behind Pa Ying, likes that her book is sparking questions.

Much of what people see when they look at one another is just the tip of the iceberg, she says. What many don’t see is the complex person hidden beneath. In her book, “Gathering Fireflies,” Duddeck tells the story of a young boy who uncovers his Hmong heritage, as well as the hardships of his grandparents who left their homeland to immigrate to the U.S.

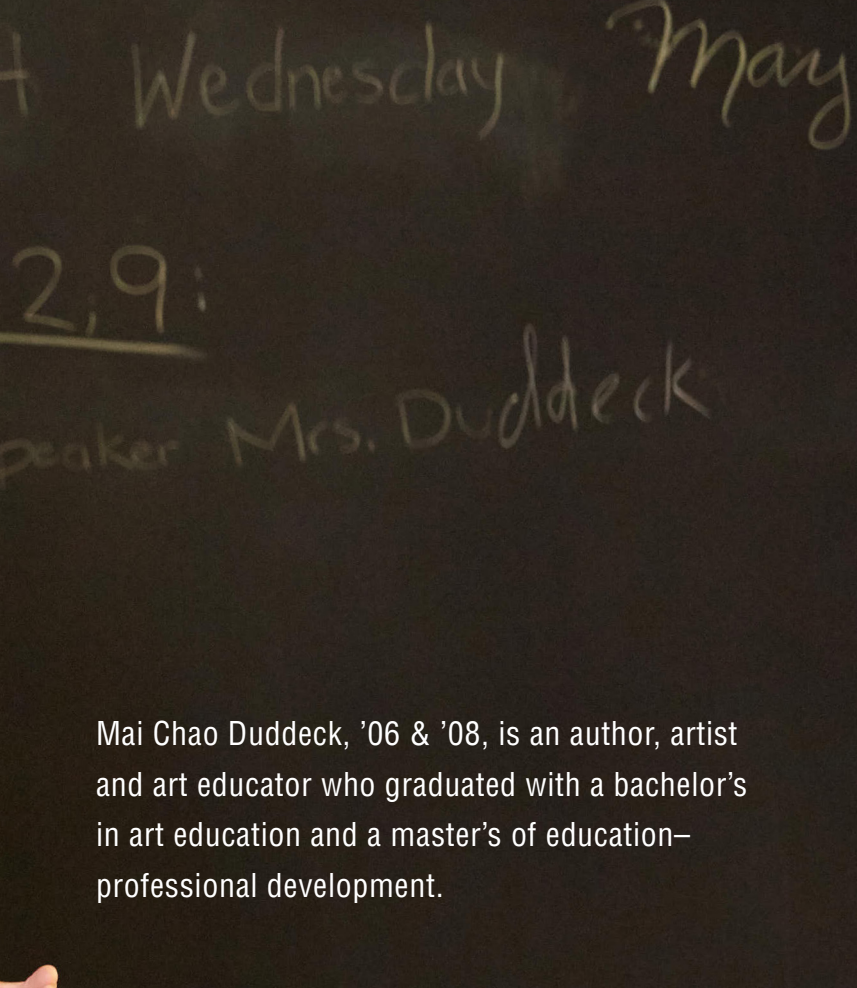
The historical fiction brings to light some of Duddeck’s own identity struggles growing up in La Crosse. She came to the U.S. with her family at age 10 from refugee camps in Thailand after the Vietnam War. She saw the poverty and inequality around her and the hardship her parents faced when moving.

Growing up in America, strict societal expectations dictated her to assume a traditional role in Hmong culture as a mother and housewife. Yet, she had ambitions to write, create art and earn advanced degrees. Many kids can relate to the challenge of meeting expectations versus following dreams, she notes. She hopes her book encourages them to pursue the latter.

“Just because someone says you can’t do it, doesn’t mean you have to accept it,” Duddeck says. “We can be creative, courageous and radical — we can be a part of change if we put our hearts and minds to it.”

Duddeck doesn’t just talk about following dreams. She does it. She wanted to tell accurate stories of Hmong people from her own perspective — something she found lacking in middle school literature, so she wrote “Gathering Fireflies.” When publishers told her the audience was “too limited,” she self-published. When social studies teachers were interested in having their classes read it, but didn’t have the funding, she worked with them to write a grant.

Duddeck is happy to see students and adults engaging in dialogue about culture, history and identity — particularly students learning more about one another.



FINDING VOICE THROUGH ART

Mai Chao Duddeck spoke no English when she came to the U.S. She remembers art classes being a safe place to communicate without words. She is grateful for UWL Art professors Jennifer Terpstra, Joel Elgin and Professor Emeritus Gary MacDonald who encouraged her to pursue her Hmong identity through art.

“They didn’t try to change my work, but encouraged me to grow and develop my ideas so I could articulate visually what it means to have an identity,” she explains.

Elgin and Terpstra say Duddeck’s artwork was richly charged with her life story and infused with emotion that invited viewers to learn about a vibrant culture, its history, migration and contemporary realities.

“Mai Chao encouraged me and her peers at UWL to question the things we value and the things we may take for granted, like the concepts of home, family and community,” says Terpstra.

Elgin still shows copies of her prints as examples of blending art and life. “I believe her life stories are of great importance and I am very happy to have been able to work with her as a printmaking student and now as a fellow teacher,” he says.

One of the most rewarding moments for a professor is to discover ways students make a positive and lasting impact within their discipline, says Terpstra. “What’s special about Mai Chao is that she has found a way to connect with and inspire such a diverse cross-section of people through her art, writing and teaching,” she says.

Mai Chao Duddeck, '06 & '08, is an author, artist and art educator who graduated with a bachelor’s in art education and a master’s of education—professional development.

“Fear is what makes us afraid to seek to understand others,” she explains. “We want to belong to this community, contribute to society and have people love us for who we are. These complex issues inspire me to write.”



Mai Chao Duddeck, '06 & '08 — an art teacher at Logan and Lincoln Middle Schools in La Crosse — wrote *Gathering Fireflies*, a book written in poetic verse. The book was purchased by the La Crosse School District as required reading for the district’s seventh grade.

EPC Teaching Excellence Award



Nominated by members of the EPC community, the award recognizes innovative teaching, advanced student learning, diversity and inclusion in the classroom and distinguished in the preparation of globally responsive teacher candidates.

Amy Tischler, Ph.D.

Years at UWL: Six

Teaches: I currently teach Elementary Methods in Physical Education, Introduction to Teaching Methods in Physical Education, Sociocultural Factors in Physical Education, and Diversity in Physical Activity. In past semesters, I have also taught Teaching Dance in Physical Education and Teaching Healthy, Active Lifestyles in Physical Education

History: I earned my bachelor's and master's degrees at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. For eight years I taught K-6 physical education (general and adapted) in the Livonia Public School District. A huge highlight from these years was time spent with students in my after-school jump rope program. Following my public school teaching, I returned to Wayne State University and earned my Ph.D. in Physical Education Pedagogy. During my doctoral program, I was fortunate to be assigned as a graduate teaching assistant, which allowed me to teach courses in the Physical Education Teacher Education program.

Favorite part of teaching: Spending time with students who are enthusiastic about becoming high-quality physical educators brings me great joy. I love getting to know my students. I also love learning from my students.

School of Education welcomes new faculty



Ah Ran Koo, M.S.
Art Education



Claire Mitchell, Ph.D.
Spanish Education

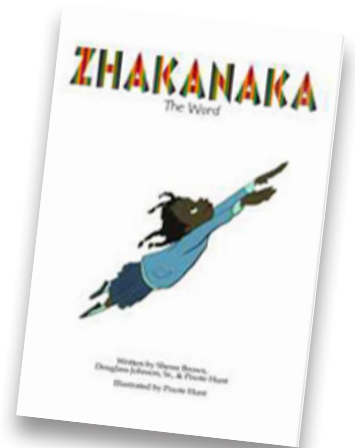


Rafael Ramirez, Ph.D.
Physical Education
Teacher Education

Supporting Multicultural Education

Visiting Author in April

Spring 2017 has been filled with grant and scholarship activities that will support multicultural teacher education students at UWL. The School of Education, Professional and Continuing Education partnered with the College of Liberal Studies, where Bethany Brent, Ph.D., and Kate Parker, Ph.D., secured funds to host “La Crosse Reads Little Read: Sheree Brown”. Brown’s book *Zhakanaka* focuses on anti-bullying and self-empowerment. While in La Crosse, Brown will be visiting four elementary schools and also facilitating a session for pre-service teachers.



Community Partnership

The School of Education, Professional and Continuing Education (EPC) partnered with the UWL Office of Multicultural Student Services to secure additional funding to support the ongoing Grow Our Own - Teacher Diversity (GOO-TD) Program. The City of La Crosse awarded UWL \$12,000 to support community members in pursuing an education degree leading to a teaching license.

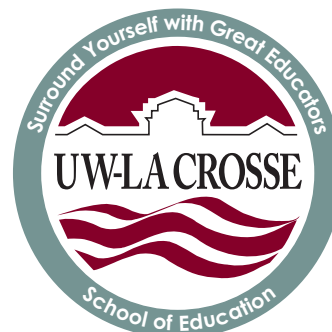
Scholarship established

Professor Emeritus Gregory Wegner and his wife Paula Wegner have established a \$300 scholarship to fund the cost of edTPA submission for a multicultural student in EPC. Wegner retired from the History Department in 2012, and was previously a Professor in the Department of Educational Studies. The 2016-17 scholarship award was given to Crystal Thomas who is a student teacher in Milwaukee Public Schools this semester.



Bethany Brent

Bethany Brent, Ph.D., Senior Multicultural Recruiter/Advisor in EPC, has lead the above initiatives and continues to seek out collaborations that support multicultural teacher education students.



A MORE DIVERSE TEACHING FORCE

Retired educators start scholarship for multicultural teacher education majors

“I admire their (the Kempf’s) commitment to education. Both of them, through their long careers inside schools and their scholarship donation, have shown they are committed to making education accessible for everyone.”

Nathaniel Edwards,
2015 Kempf scholarship recipient



Lee Kempf, '56, and Arly Kempf, of Fitchburg, WI, met while teaching at a school district in Michigan. They married a year later and continued careers in education. They hope their scholarship encourages diverse students to pursue a career path in education.

Students of color became the new majority in the nation’s public schools in 2014, according to government estimates. Yet, people of color continue to represent only a small minority of teachers.

Arly and Lee Kempf spent their careers in education where they noticed an increasingly diverse student body. At Madison Metropolitan School District, they saw firsthand the difference teachers of color had on students. For one, their presence helped students see teachers — often some of the first leaders and mentors in their lives — could be people from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. They also provided important mentorship to students, they say.

“We saw the need for teachers of color — teachers who can relate to some of the students that we couldn’t reach, but they could,” says Arly.

The two wish the district could have attracted a more diverse teaching staff.

That’s why Arly and Lee started a UW-La Crosse scholarship that supports a diverse teacher workforce in the future. The Lee & Arly Kempf Scholarship, started in 2013, provides scholarships to multicultural UWL student education majors.

They hope their contribution encourages students to pursue and continue paths in education.

Lee and Arly went into education because they enjoyed making connections with young people and introducing them to new ideas. Both

held careers in education for nearly four decades.

Lee transitioned from teaching to curriculum work, and retired in 1993 as a learning coordinator at what is now Whitehorse Middle School in the Madison Metropolitan School District. Arly retired the same year as a librarian for the district. Their careers included a four-year stint teaching at a military base in Madrid, Spain.

They hope the scholarship will give more people the opportunity to enjoy the same career path.

“We need really good students going into education,” says Arly. “We felt we needed to provide support — as much as we were able to give.”

UWL memories

What Lee Kempf remembers most about his UWL days was the connections he made. The relationships moved from the basketball and tennis courts to his physical education classrooms. He still keeps in touch with some of those friends today.

Supporting urban schools

Lee and Arly Kempf also donated to the UWL Summer Milwaukee Urban Experience program, a partnership between UWL and the Center for Urban Teaching (CfUT). Through the program, a cohort of students will live in Milwaukee and participate in a 10 week, intensive, authentic learning experience alongside UWL faculty in urban schools this summer.