Greetings to the friends of the College of Education! Much has happened since our last newsletter – a very successful accreditation visit, several grants awarded to the college and its faculty, much financial support from donors for scholarships and faculty development, graduation for many fabulous new alums, many alums of education faculty, funding received for a new and refurbished ropes course, the development of a network of diverse community leaders and committees to inform our programs, and much more! You will read about some of this excitement in this edition of the newsletter.

I’d like to call attention to the growing voice that we have as a college in state policy conversations. On January 7th the Minnesota department of Education held a summit at MSU regarding the Testing Commission Report and issues pertaining to the Governor’s education policy and budget recommendations. Attendance at the region was outstanding and we provided and facilitated strong input to the process. MSU has emerged as an innovator of new programs focused on meeting the most pressing needs for schools – providing initial programs for persons already teaching without a license in high need areas (special education, science, math, etc.), developing highly needed certificate programs and customized professional development to districts (e.g., differentiated instruction, data analysis for the improvement of learning, etc.), and developing principal academies and leadership development programs for newly hired and experienced school and accountability content. The COE is represented on several state boards, work groups, and legislative action teams. We are called upon frequently to provide expertise in the form of research reports and testimony at the legislature regarding such topics as early childhood programming, alternative licensure programs, leadership preparation, and developing roles regarding teacher licensing.

We hope that you will read our newsletters and web pages, and that you will come to our events with anticipation. Please communicate your thoughts and ideas about the college via e-mail (michael.miller@mnsu.edu), telephone, or personal appointment. “Conversation over coffee” is starting again and we will be communicating with you in other formats soon.

Message from the Dean - Dr. Michael A. Miller

Reaching Other Professionals: Minnesota Teacher Alternative Preparation Program

Dr. Scott Page, Professor of K-12 & Secondary Programs

The Department of K-12 and Secondary Programs at Minnesota State University, Mankato recently received a $100,000.00 grant from MnSCU to develop and implement an alternative pathway into teaching. As a result, the Minnesota Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (MNAPP) is currently being designed for mid-career individuals and middle-age retirees from other professions who hold at least a college degree, and are steeped in relevant content to transition into teaching without the hardship of leaving the paid workforce. Instead of requiring participants to follow a traditional approach for teacher preparation (academic course work and supervised student teaching) before taking over a classroom, MNAPP will have candidates move into their own classroom after a short period of intensive training. Candidates will continue their studies on-line through seminars, while receiving structured mentoring and support as they teach.

MNAPP will implement a two-phase approach. Phase II will begin in the summer with candidates taking an intensive course, “The Nuts and Bolts of Effective Teaching,” based on Charlotte Danielson’s framework and the Standards of Effective Practice. During this phase, candidates will be introduced to best practices, information about professional roles and responsibilities, professional and ethical responsibilities of educators, parent communication, the inclusive classroom, and technology. Phase II will have the candidates taking full responsibility for the classroom supported by intensive mentoring and supervision, along with monthly seminars.

For additional information please contact Scott Page at 507-389-1607 or scott.page@mnscu.edu.

Full-Day Field Experiences Offer Students a True Taste of a Teacher’s Day in the Classroom

Dr. Kari Maza, Professor of Elementary & Early Childhood Education

The Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education began providing students with full-day field experiences for the first time during Fall Semester 2004. This is a change from half-day experiences and is the result of considerable efforts by Dr. Peg Ballard and the faculty that teach in the Elementary Education major. Students who are pursuing degrees in Elementary Education at MSU complete their methods classes in two blocks. Among the courses students take in Block I are Social Studies and Literacy Methods. Block II includes Math and Science Methods. The bridging of theory and practice occurs during an intensive three week field experience in each block.

With the reorganization of the Elementary Education Major, field experiences become more structured and the time students spend in the classroom became more consistent. But it was felt by the faculty as a whole that students often begin their student teaching experience with only a partial understanding of the teacher’s day.

The solution was an all day experience. Scheduling all of these full day experiences has been a challenge. However the benefits have been immediately evident. In effect, the students now have two mini student teaching experiences prior to their actual student teaching.

They will have had a wealth of teaching experience and will have designed, planned, prepared and presented numerous lessons prior to student teaching. In addition they form stronger and more enduring professional relationships with their cooperating teachers during field experiences and have the opportunity to observe, interact with and understand children in ways that were never possible before. Finally, and perhaps most beneficial, many students entered their student teaching in the past with little or no teaching experience in one or more of the subject areas. Literacy is often taught in the morning. If a student had had only morning field experiences that student might never have observed or taught Science, Math or Social Studies. The full day field experiences provide all students with teaching experience in all of the subject areas in the curriculum.

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New Aviation Scholarship

Stephen Klick of Daryland Healthcare Solutions in Glenwood, Minnesota contrib-ited $100,000 toward an aviation scholarship. Last year Mr. Klick, an MSU alumnus and father of one our recent aviation graduates, con-tributed this scholarship. His contribution shows dedicated support of the program that offered flexibility in meeting the educational needs of his son Casey who graduated in the Spring of 2005. This program views the success of its recent graduates, such as Casey, as one of the most telling advertise-ments of the benefits offered by MSU Aviation.

Not only will the scholarship help current students delay the extra costs associated with entering an aviation career, but it will also perpetuate the lineage of successful aviation grad-uates.
Governor Tim Pawlenty Appoints Dr. Jean Haar to the State Board of School Administrators

“I am honored and appreciative of the opportunity to serve our profession and the state of Minnesota,” was Dr. Jean Haar’s reply to her appointment to Minnesota’s Board of School Administrators (BOA). Dr. Haar’s talents and dedication to education were recognized on January 26th when Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty appointed Dr. Haar, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership, to the BOA. The BOA consists of ten members, all of whom are appointed by the governor. As a member, Dr. Haar will participate in decisions on the licensing of school administrators, approving higher education programs and continuing education courses for school administrators, and enforcing the code of ethics for school administrators. Speaking of her responsibilities, Dr. Haar said, “I view my position on the Board of Administrators as an opportunity to be actively involved with the promotion of quality school leadership for all Minnesota schools.” Dr. Haar has been an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership at Minnesota State University-Mankato since 2002. Her career in K-12 education included working as a classroom teacher in Rutland, South Dakota and as principal of Duluth High School in Clear Lake, South Dakota. Haar received a B.A. in English and a M.A. in Educational Administration from South Dakota State University in Brookings, and a Ph.D. in Administration, Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She is appointed to the Board position as a higher education faculty member and will serve a term which ends January 3, 2009. Dr. Haar replaces Kenneth LaCroix on the Board.

Recipient of the McCarthy Scholarship Aims High to Serve Others

Jeet Saeus, a senior who is double-majoring in Social Studies Education and Political Science at Minnesota State University, Mankato, neither backs down from civic involvement nor opportunities that further her desire to teach and aid the community. This year Jeet is the selected recipient of the Agnes and Rhea McCarthy Scholarship, the largest scholarship offered annually by the College of Education. The scholarship criteria include the applicant’s academic standing, financial need, and community and campus involvement. Jeet’s community and campus involvement is admirable. She is a member of both Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority Pi Sigma Alpha Political Science Honor Society, a volunteer with Girl Scouts, one of two Assistant Managers at the MSU Annual fund, and Program Coordinator for Public Achievement at Dakota Meadows Middle School in North Mankato. Jeet says she has wanted to teach since she was young, but her interest in political science began with her Civics class in 9th grade and grew when she was a page with the Minnesota State Legislature and participated in Girls State. She applied her education and skills at Dakota Meadows Middle School. As Program Coordinator for Public Achievement, she has only taught middle school students about current events, but leads them in activities that inform the general public and provide relief for international disasters. “This position has really made me appreciate the work the coaches do with their teams,” she says. “In the ‘real world,’ teachers are the coaches. Many of the teams are to the point where they are getting approval for their projects, and they are putting their knowledge for both their team’s topic and interest in civic involvement to work. It makes me want to be a coach again!” Jeet is enthusiastic about her education at MSU, Mankato. “Being a double major has really encouraged me to look outside of Social Studies,” Jeet stated. “Taking different political science classes has opened my eyes to different perspectives, and has allowed me to learn more about my personal interests of behavior and participation in politics worldwide. These are great tools for me to use when I am in a classroom.” Although a native of Richfield, Minnesota, Jeet’s goal after student teaching this fall is to move to the east coast where she can be near the seat of our nation’s history and future. Jeet credits those teachers whose classes were dynamic for her career interests today. “It is because of my high school social studies teachers and their classes that I am sitting where I am today. We watched videos, ran mock campaigns, wrote papers, played the stock market game—a little bit of everything to keep kids like me interested. I want to make that same impact and share my passion for social studies with kids today.”
Major: (P) Douglas Goodfellow, Assistant Professor of the Department of Military Science and Leadership

The Korean Connection: Second Generation Student of Minnesota State University, Mankato

Prepared for MSU students, faculty, and staff by Devon Parrott and Andrew Neuswanger

Yunhui is a second generation student of Minnesota State University, Mankato. Her parents, Bruce and Shirlee Ruble, graduated from the University of Minnesota in the 1970s. Yunhui is currently a senior majoring in elementary education with a minor in social studies. She is also pursuing a minor in social studies. Her many accomplishments in her first year in college have led her to be ranked the number two cadet in the ROTC class of 2008 and making the Dean’s list. Yunhui speaks Korean and is currently working on Japanese. Like most young adults, she enjoys listening to music and watching movies. An accomplished softball player, she will again play for the Army Women’s Slow-pitch team in Youngs, South Korea this summer. She is also active in Bible study and attends church on a regular basis.

Pursuing a degree in elementary education, as a member of the elementary education learning community, and of the Maverick Battalion Army ROTC, she has excelled both in and outside the classroom. But what else would you expect from the daughter of an MSU alumnus?

Like her father, David Voelker, and her mother, Mary Jean Metag, Yunhui chose to attend MSU. Her dad, Major Voelker, who is currently stationed in South Korea, grew up in the nearby town of Faribault, Minnesota. David, a 1991 graduate with a BS in Psychology and the number one cadet in his ROTC class at the then Mankato State University, can be credited with influencing his daughter to attend his alma mater. As he mentioned when visiting the campus experiences at the college for anything.”

Yunhui has shared the fact that her brother Bruce, who is 17 years old and a junior in high school, is considering MSU in the fall of 2006. Who knows, her 10-year-old brother David may also carry on the family tradition.

The Korean Connection: Second Generation Student of Minnesota State University, Mankato

Major: (P) Douglas Goodfellow, Assistant Professor of the Department of Military Science and Leadership

Anyway you look at it, South Korea is a long way from Minnesota. 12 hours by air, 15 time zones away and 8,000 miles to the west. Time and distance didn’t stop one student from attending the college of her choice. Yunhui Elisabeth Voelker began her first year of college in the fall of 2004. Pursuing a degree in elementary education, as a member of the elementary education learning community, and of the Maverick Battalion Army ROTC, she has excelled both in and outside the classroom. But what else would you expect from the daughter of an MSU alumnus?

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Our Sincere Gratitude to the College of Education’s Generous Donors

Dear Alumni and Friends,

It is a great time to be working for MSU. It is especially exciting to be involved with the College of Education’s outstanding leadership, faculty, staff, and high caliber students. As the Director of Development, I’m proud to be an alumnus and honored to be able to work for these tremendous students. I have a deep passion for MSU and the importance of preparing students to obtain skills and knowledge for leadership roles in the state, the nation and the world.

For the past decade, I have been working at MSU and have so many wonderful memories. I will never forget the individuals that mentored and supported me when I was a student here at MSU and I’m so grateful for the scholarships that I received. I will always work hard for MSU students to ensure that the dream of a college education can become a reality.

On behalf of the students in the college, I express sincere gratitude to the donors who make all of our scholarships possible. Our students are fortunate that alumni and friends want to help them pursue their educational goals. The scholarships were established by people who care about education, and who want to make a difference in the lives of students. Often times, I have the opportunity to hear the wonderful stories of our alumni and their experiences at MSU. Many of these stories include memories of financial hardship; these memories are often the inspiration for today’s scholarships.

Take a moment to reflect on your years as a college student, and how others may have helped you achieve your goals. Consider making a gift to the students who follow in your discipline, or in the discipline of someone you admire. Your support may be the determining factor that allows a student to complete a college degree. Gifts can be made in a variety of forms, including cash, securities, real estate, life insurance, planned legacy gifts, and bequests. You can also pledge a gift to be paid in installments or take advantage of a company match.

If you have any questions about giving to the College of Education, please feel free to contact me. If you just want to chat and find out what’s happening at MSU or request a personalized tour of campus, it would be my pleasure because it is always great to hear from alumni and friends of the College of Education. Also, I’m currently working with the dean to assemble the College of Education development advisory council. I can be reached by e-mail at lucette.wildt@mnsu.edu or by phone at 507.389.5279.

Gratefully,

Lucette Wildt
Director of Development

Want to make a gift now? Click on the “Give to MSU” link at http://www.mnsu.edu and support students in the College of Education. Prefer the mail option? Please make checks payable to the MSU Foundation; attention Lucette Wildt, Director of Development, 126 Alumni Foundation Center, Mankato, MN 56001.

Want to volunteer? Stay connected at http://www.mnsu.edu/alumni/volunteer/

Heritage Members

MSU Heritage are individuals that have left a planned legacy gift to MSU. The group shares a common mission and commitment to build strong academic programs which will enable MSU students to obtain skills and knowledge for leadership roles in the state, the nation and the world. We are deeply grateful to the members listed and hope their leadership will inspire others.

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