

Innovation in EDUCATION

FALL 2015



Access, Success and Equity ... Turning Research Into Practice

Bowe school joins PDS network

Strengthening bonds in its back yard, the College of Education partnered with the Thomas E. Bowe School in Glassboro this fall, its seventh professional development school (PDS).

Rowan and Bowe faculty will join to improve instruction for students with diverse abilities, with a goal of empowering teachers and improving the literacy learning of all students. Rowan teacher candidates will work with Bowe students, while professors and Bowe teachers provide professional development for faculty. Bowe faculty become part of a larger research network with Rowan professors.

"My mantra is that PDSs are centers of pedagogy," said Dr. Lisa Vernon-Dotson, associate dean, who works at the school with Maryl Randel, a new faculty member in inclusive education with a joint appointment in the departments of Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education and Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Education.

"This is where our students who want to become teachers need to be to learn about the profession of education and how to work with students — students who are on, above and below grade level; students who are from a different racial/ethnic background; and students who have identified disabilities or struggle without disabilities. It's a place where they can see everything."

"It brings current research to practice and ensures that teachers are up to date and providing the highest-quality education to their students," Randel said. "Our teacher candidates will be part of that and will be able to see it in action."

Vernon-Dotson welcomed this alliance and the benefits it will bring to all involved. "All schools should be PDSs," she said. "We need more partnerships like this."

Dr. Ali Houshmand, president (right), and **Dr. Monika Shealey**, dean (second from right), celebrate with (from left) **Mayor Leo McCabe**, **Gloucester County Freeholder Heather Simmons**, **Glassboro Superintendent Mark Silverstein** and the students and staff.



Message from the dean

As we embarked on a new academic year, the College of Education introduced a new organizational structure.

This framework will enhance interdisciplinary collaboration and support our work ahead. The new departments are Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education; Language Literacy and Sociocultural Education; and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics Education.

Last year, we developed our new vision and mission statements. This latest step of department restructuring continues our effort to define our organization and its goals.

In addition, this fall the College of Education partnered with Glassboro Public Schools to designate a new professional development school (PDS) — the Thomas E. Bowe School. We also unveiled new banners at our other PDS partner schools, recommitting to professional development in these schools and our exemplary collaborations.

The banners, which we unveiled with fanfare at each school, also symbolize our commitment as we live out our tagline: Access, Success and Equity — Turning Research Into Practice.

I invite you to join us in supporting this mission.

In service,

Dr. Monika W. Shealey
Dean

Eta Psi Chapter chalks up numerous awards

Rowan's Eta Psi Chapter of the Kappa Delta Pi (KDP) International Honor Society for Education hauled home a cartload of awards from this year's biennial convocation.

Earning the Achieving Chapter Excellence Award for the third consecutive session, Eta Psi also received the 2014-15 Community Service Chapter Program Award, 2014-15 Membership Chapter Program Award and 2013-14 Professional Development Chapter Program Award. In addition, Rachel Burrell, '15, a Vineland resident majoring in elementary education and writing arts, received the 2014-15 Distinguished Chapter Officer Award and Lauren McVey, '14, a Cape May resident who majored in elementary education and American

studies, received the 2013-14 Distinguished Chapter Officer Award. Furthermore, Rick Heggan, '15, a graduate of Rowan's Master in Science Teaching program, who is a Hammonton resident, received the 2015 Association for Teacher Educators/KDP National Student Teacher of the Year Award.

During the October convocation in Orlando, executive board members also led a poster presentation.

"It says a lot about the drive and dedication to the community that this chapter has received the Chapter Excellence Award for the third consecutive time," said chapter co-counselor Dr. Martha Graham Viator, associate professor, Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Education, who also received a 2014-15 Northeast Regional



The Eta Psi Chapter of the Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society for Education received a number of awards during this year's convocation.

Chapter Counselor Award.

"We're being compared with chapters in colleges not only across this country but countries around the world," said chapter co-counselor Dr. Cori Meredith Brown, assistant professor, Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education. "To be nominated

in these specific categories as a Chapter of Excellence is really a testament to our candidates, to their knowledge level, to their organizational efforts and to their ability to collaborate and communicate effectively not only with one another, but with the community at large."

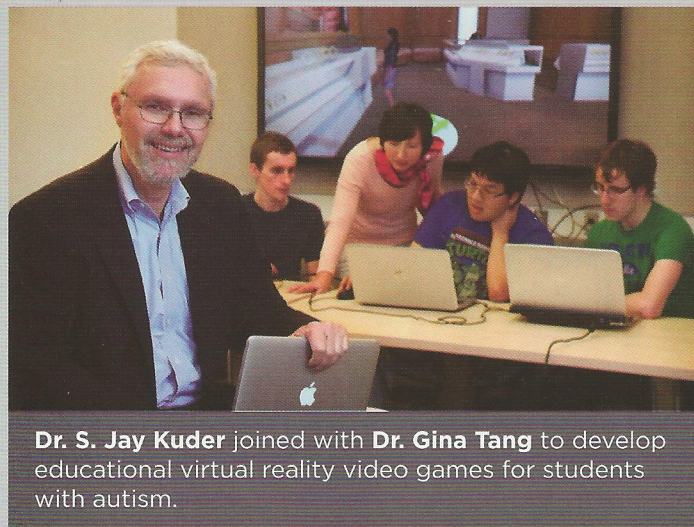
Team develops video game as a teaching tool

For many adolescents, few pursuits are as much fun as negotiating the twists and turns of virtual worlds in video games.

Capitalizing on this appeal, Rowan University researchers are designing virtual reality video games as teaching tools to help students with autism practice specific skills.

"Our hope is that this will help these individuals learn how to navigate and deal with certain social situations," said Dr. S. Jay Kuder, professor and chairperson, Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education.

Several years ago, Kuder collaborated with KenCrest Services in Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, to develop Mi-Stories, videotaped scenarios



Dr. S. Jay Kuder joined with Dr. Gina Tang to develop educational virtual reality video games for students with autism.

that students with autism watch to learn social skills that may challenge them.

Subsequently, he partnered with Dr. Gina Tang, professor and associate chair, Electrical

and Computer Engineering, Henry M. Rowan College of Engineering, to develop a virtual reality video game prototype.

Within the game scenario, players select gifts for friends

and purchase them at a virtual reality mall. "The individual has to make the right choices and navigate through the game so he or she can complete the task successfully," Kuder said.

As the Rowan team seeks funding for the project, Rowan students are testing the game. Kuder expects high school students with autism to test the game in the spring.

"Because it's a virtual world, students are protected," Kuder said. "They're not out in the community where they might be embarrassed or get in trouble. It gives them a chance to practice these skills in a safe environment, and hopefully their teachers or parents will help them make the transition and practice these skills in the real world."

New club promotes understanding

As small-scale versions of society, classrooms blend students of different cultures, backgrounds and views.

The College of Education launched the Diversity Club last fall so that future teachers can learn to help students embrace those differences.

"Students have said that they want a place to discuss issues involving diversity that are important to their peers," said Dr. Susan Browne, associate professor, Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Education. "They also want to learn about diversity on campus, around the community and the world at large, and they want a place to engage in cultural experiences."

Such activities are essential for future educators, said Surinder Kaur, D'17, a doctoral student in the educational leadership (K-12) program and an active member of the group.

"The lively discussions make each individual a well-rounded citizen," said Kaur, of Voorhees, a science teacher at Woodrow Wilson High School in Camden, where she is also chair of the English language learner program. "It prepares educators to handle social injustice issues in their classroom, as well as guide their students on the right path."

This fall, the group joined with the Muslim Student Association to present a panel discussion: "Islamophobia Is Not a Myth." Moderated by Dr. Kenzo Sung, assistant professor, Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Education, the panel included Dr. Issam Abi-El-Mona, associate professor and chairperson, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math Education; Madji Fall, M'11, teacher, Glassboro Public Schools; Naveen Khan, '17, from the Muslim Student Association; and Dr. Zeynep Zennur Isik-Ercan, associate professor, Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education.

As classrooms become more diverse, the College prepares students to meet the needs of these populations. "That's primarily what our focus is, to embed it in all that we do and help our students think of diversity as something that is not added on, but part of our everyday practice," Browne said.

Former freeholder/teacher establishes endowed scholarship

Riletta L. Cream, a retired Camden County freeholder and teacher, has spent a lifetime pouring her energies into her home community. Her recent gift — The Riletta L. Cream Promise Scholarship — will help future educators continue that mission.

Born and raised in Camden, Cream began her career as an educator in 1949. Teaching in four elementary schools, she later served as principal of the Sumner School, Cooper's Poynt School and Camden High School. Cream also was a Camden County Freeholder for 15 years, retiring in 2011. For her service, the R.T. Cream Family School was named in her honor.



Riletta L. Cream (left), who established the The Riletta L. Cream Promise Scholarship, meets with **Dr. Monika Shealey**, dean.

Her endowed scholarship, established with a commitment of \$40,000, will fund annual scholarships for Camden students who major in teacher education at Rowan University.

"By providing a pipeline and support for students who come from Camden and have an interest in teaching and giving back, we hope they're more likely to go back into the neighborhoods where they grew up and are more vested in the success of the students because they have ties there," said Dr. Monika W. Shealey, dean. "We hope this scholarship will have an even greater impact on the educational climate of Camden."

Shealey applauds such efforts, which are integral to the College's mission. "For us, this is an issue of access along with diversity because we understand the national demographics of the teaching workforce," she said. "We know we need to prepare more diverse students for the workforce and particularly prepare them for some of our neediest schools. You'll find many of those schools in the city of Camden."



From left: **Dr. Kenzo Sung**, **Dr. Zeynep Zennur Isik-Ercan**, **Naveen Khan** and **Dr. Issam Abi-El-Mona** discuss the problem of Islamophobia.



Alexandra Pasqualone, '14 (left), who earned degrees in history and secondary education, and **Brittany Grasso**, '15, a liberal studies (geography/chemistry/physics) and elementary education major, are two of 19 Rowan students who have received Fulbright scholarships in the last 16 years. Grasso is teaching in South Korea and Pasqualone in Turkey for their English Teaching Assistantships.

New faculty join college

Five new faculty members are sharing their talents with College of Education students:

- **Dr. Elif Balin**, assistant professor in the Counseling in Educational Settings program, Educational Services and Leadership Department. Research interests include: career development and counseling needs of international students and recent immigrants.
- **Dr. Yu-Chun Kuo**, assistant professor of instructional technology, Department of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math Education. Research interests include: integrating technology into teaching and learning in K-12 and higher and continuing education.
- **Dr. Catherine Michener**, assistant professor in the Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Education Department with a focus on bilingualism and language minority students in K-12 schools. Research interests



New faculty members joined the College of Education this fall: Left to right: **Dr. Kenzo Sung**, **Dr. Catherine Michener**, **Dr. Yu-Chun Kuo**, **Dr. Elif Balin** and **Maryl Randel**.

include: instructional effects on literacy in multilingual and multicultural classrooms.

- **Maryl Randel**, instructor, Departments of Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education and Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Education. Research interests include: improving literacy instructional opportunities for urban youths with and without identified disabilities.
- **Dr. Kenzo Sung**, assistant professor in the Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Education Department. Research interests include: understanding the interplay between shifting education policy and practices, political-economic forces and social movements in urban communities.

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