

Education in *Action*

Fall 2010

A Newsletter from Rowan University's College of Education

Dean's Message



As educators, we believe in progress. We believe that by building stronger classrooms, stronger programs and stronger relationships, progress will blossom. With that progress, we will help to mold more successful, happy and well-adjusted global citizens.

It is with great pride that I share with you the progress that the faculty, staff, students and graduates of the College of Education have accomplished recently. In the next few pages, you will read about progress that showcases the heart of educators, while exemplifying the values and goals of learning communities.

I am proud to celebrate the early successes of two major initiatives within the College, as well as the individual accomplishments of a distinguished recent graduate, a newly hired staffperson and two faculty engaged in research. Each person involved in these successes believes in progress. I am proud to work side by side with educators so committed to our shared profession of education.

Carol A. Sharp

Carol A. Sharp, Ph.D.
Dean

Teacher Academy Thrives

Completing its second session this past summer, the two-week-long Rowan Urban Teacher Academy (RUTA) introduced 25 high school juniors to the profession of teaching for the first time.

Designed to attract students to the profession and shatter misconceptions about urban education, RUTA was created to fill a need in communities across New Jersey. "Over the next decade we're expecting a national shortage of

teachers, particularly in urban settings," said Steven C. Farney, assistant dean of the College of Education and RUTA committee member. "The need is especially acute in subject areas such as science, special education, world languages, bilingual education and early childhood education," he continued.

In its second installation, the academy invited three RUTA graduates, now college freshmen, to return for a second summer

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College freshman and Rowan Urban Teacher Academy (RUTA) graduate Melissa Calabrese (left) returned to RUTA this year as a program helper to mentor this year's high school students enrolled in the program. Here Melissa works with second grader Robert of Lanning Square Elementary School, Camden.

Recent Doctoral Graduate Honored

Laura Morana, Ed.D., had two reasons to celebrate this past spring: her dissertation was accepted, completing her doctoral studies and, on May 13, the Association for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) named her their Community Partners Award recipient for the decade.

“Laura is perhaps the best school leader I have known,” said Kathleen Sernak, Ph.D., associate professor of Educational Leadership and Morana’s dissertation chair.

Morana, superintendent of Red Bank Borough Public Schools, was both humbled and surprised by the award. Beginning her career 30 years ago as a bilingual/ESL teacher, Morana considers herself a lifelong learner in addition to an educator. That is why, she said, she pursued her doctoral studies. “One never stops learning,” Morana said. “I had a desire to be a part of the

educational learning process.”

As a doctoral candidate, Morana and her cohort attended classes off-site at the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association headquarters in Jamesburg. It was this flexibility in terms of structure and schedule that allowed Morana to fit doctoral studies into her demanding schedule.

With her dissertation a case study focused on “The Role of Superintendent as Mentor of Principals for Academic Excellence in Schools,” Morana now looks forward to continuing to promote excellence in Red Bank while implementing new skills she acquired from the doctorate program. ❖

For information about the Educational Leadership doctoral program, please contact Joanne Kennedy, Ed.D., program coordinator, at (856) 256-4721 or kennedyjo@rowan.edu.



Rowan doctoral graduate and Association for Children of New Jersey Community Partners Award recipient Dr. Laura Morana after she accepted her prestigious award.

Connecting Local To Global

“We can’t afford to be myopic any longer,” said Ane Turner Johnson, Ph.D., assistant professor of Educational Leadership. “To be relevant and to be good citizens, we need to think globally.”

In her work with Corine Meredith, Ph.D., assistant professor of Teacher Education, the pair is developing an action research project to integrate international themes and experiences in teacher preparatory programs. The goal, they said, is to develop a best practices

approach that can be implemented not just on Rowan’s campus, but also replicated nationally.

“We can’t afford to be myopic any longer”

“We have an opportunity to help students become citizens of the world,” Meredith said. “Our current perspective,” Johnson added, “of looking through our existing lens and thinking ‘this is what education should look like’ prevents us from

learning what educators are doing successfully in other countries.”

The three-part plan focuses on expanding curriculum, connecting with international learning communities using technology and improving community connections on the local level.

Passionately committed to the undertaking, Meredith said, “It’s not just a professional endeavor. It’s a personal pursuit.” The project is currently under review for consideration of a national grant. ❖

RUTA *continued*

to serve as mentors to the high schoolers. One mentor, Rowan freshman and Cherry Hill High School East graduate Melissa Calabrese, felt that the mentors helped to “broaden the horizons” of the high schoolers. Of their classroom experiences in Camden,

Calabrese said, “It was good for the high schoolers to have someone their own age and on their experience level to talk to about what they were seeing. It helped to keep the focus on the positives of urban education.”

During the August program students were exposed to an introduction of teaching, field trips

to urban school settings, classroom observations and the opportunity to create and teach their own lesson plan at Lanning Square Elementary School in Camden.

What resonated the most with Calabrese, however, was, “I made a difference in what the high schoolers thought about teaching and about urban areas,” she said. ❖

Progress of Federal \$3.2 Million Grant

After one year into its five-year grant award, the Garden State Partnership for Teacher Quality is well underway to reaching its goals. A collaboration between Rowan, William Paterson and Kean Universities, the multi-million dollar federal grant partnership was awarded to redesign both the teaching profession across New Jersey and the quality of education that urban students receive in high need subject areas.

Rowan’s \$3.2 million award, a portion of the larger \$10.8 million grant, will be applied over five years to develop a teacher residency program, reform pre-baccalaureate programs and grow community partnerships.



Urban teacher resident Madjiguene Fall at LEAP Academy Charter School.

“The program ensures that we focus on meeting the needs of schools and children in high need, urban areas,” said Jill A. Perry, Ph.D., associate dean of the College of Education, “while preparing highly qualified teachers with a dedication to urban education and expertise in areas of critical need.”

Over the past year, the College of Education has solidified partnerships with four new Professional Development Schools (PDS), expanding its reach into the community and developing newfound partnerships from which to learn and grow from.

The first five urban teacher residents are in the classroom, working four days a week at LEAP Academy Charter School in Camden, reported Perry. The next five urban teacher residents have been identified and are ready to begin the residency program.

One resident, Madjiguene Fall, is glad she got involved in the program. Before enrolling, Fall, who has degrees in business and liberal studies, spent 14 years as owner/operator of a tutoring company while also working in international business. “There’s a lot going on,” Fall said about being in

the classroom, “more than I ever realized as a parent.”

Most of all, Fall enjoys that she is able to immediately apply what

“The impact is that more teachers will be prepared to teach in all settings, including urban settings”

she’s learning to benefit children. “This program is so helpful to the students, but also so helpful to me and my future career as an educator,” Fall said. “I am so glad I got involved.”

Perry said, “The impact of the program is that more teachers will be prepared to teach in all settings, including urban settings.”

Grant coordinator and Associate Professor Gloria Hill, Ed.D, echoed Perry’s sentiments. “The challenges that exist in urban settings also exist in suburban settings,” she said. In Hill’s view the grant will allow learning communities across the state to make key changes in how teachers are trained to address diverse learners. “This grant will allow us to expand our boundaries of what’s possible,” said Hill. ❖

Career Comes Full Circle

When he first stepped foot on campus at Rowan — then known as Glassboro State College — as an undergraduate freshman in 1992, Spike Cook, Ed.D., had no idea that his higher education would eventually bring him back to campus 18 years later as an educational leader.

After spending the last eight years of his career as a guidance director at Delsea Middle School in Franklinville, this past summer Cook decided to embark on a new professional endeavor. Cook accepted the position of Executive Director of Student Services Center within the College of Education and started his new position at the beginning of the school year.

The mission of the Student Services Center is to provide students with the necessary support and guidance as they pursue their educational goals and courses through the College of Education. In his new role Cook is responsible for academic program advising, the Office of Field Experience, education professional certifications, and the John J. Schaub Instructional Technology Center.

Of his return to Rowan, Cook said, “Rowan is growing and expanding. It is an exciting time to be a part of the university.”

And while both the technology and the campus have expanded over the past 18 years, Cook still feels at home on campus. “It’s good to be back,” he said. ❖

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Volume IIII, Issue II • Fall 2010

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Education In Action is published periodically by the Rowan College of Education to keep the community informed about College resources, accomplishments and events.

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The College of Education invites curious alumni, prospective students and community members alike to take a YouTube virtual tour of the College online at bit.ly/RowanEducation.



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