Happenings in Education

A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

“When all is said and done, we simply must make teaching in this country an honorable profession—since it’s in the classrooms of America where the battle for excellence, ultimately, will be won or lost.”

Nationally renowned educator and Messiah College graduate Ernest L. Boyer made that comment in his speech, “School Reform in Perspective,” that he delivered on April 16, 1993, to the Education Writers Association. At that time he was serving as the president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Previously he had served as the U.S. Commissioner of Education under President Jimmy Carter. Dr. Boyer passionately believed in the vital importance of dedicated and effective teachers as well as the absolute necessity for equality of education for students, in an unequal society.

It is with this sentiment in mind that the Boyer Center is hosting the Ernest L. Boyer Center Symposium on October 3, in Boyer 131, beginning at 9:00 am. Consider attending all or as much of this event that you are able. More details can be found at the symposium website and on page 3 of this newsletter.

There have many been many changes within the Department of Education since the last issue of this newsletter—Dr. Barnes has retired, and we miss his presence on our floor. And there are a few changes yet to come. This is Dr. Voelker’s last semester at Messiah, and she too will be heartily missed. But she has plans to move to Arizona to be closer to her baby granddaughter. While we are sad for our loss, we can’t help but be excited for her. We have some work ahead of us to fill the holes left by these two individuals, but I am confident that we will find qualified faculty with a heart for Messiah and for our students.

Department of Education, Chair
Dr. Milton Gaither’s most recent article, “The History of North American Education, 15,000 BCE to 1491,” was published in the August 2014 issue of History of Education Quarterly. This article was inspired by his previous work in which he sought to fill a gaping hole in the history of education. Gaither notes that “there has been next to no work done on the history of American education before the arrival of Europeans.”

From his most recent research, Gaither presents three types of education that emerged within the various North American tribes:

- “landscape learning,” or learning about the environment that was passed on from generation to generation and enshrined in tribal languages themselves;
- “cultural learning,” or technologies that were developed and spread through cross-continental contact; and
- “learning from mistakes,” or painful lessons learned from the dire consequences of some hunting and agricultural technologies that ended in societal collapse.


The current issue of PROSPECTS, UNESCO’s prestigious Quarterly Review of Comparative Education, features an article written by D.r. Obed Mfum-Mensah with Sophia Friedson-Ridenour. In “Whose voices are being heard? Mechanisms for community participation in education in northern Ghana,” the authors report on “a study of community participation in education in northern Ghana,” the authors report on “a study of community participation in education in northern Ghana,” the authors report on “a study of community participation in education in northern Ghana,” the authors report on “a study of community participation in education in northern Ghana.” The article seeks to investigate three components of community participation on education—how members of a community were engaged to participate in education; who engaged the participants in education.; and what factors either enhanced or inhibited people’s involvement in education. The authors discuss five approaches found to engage both the community and the individual in education at various levels. Their research found that “regardless of the level at which members participate, doing so empowers the individual and the community.”
On October 3, 2014, The Ernest L. Boyer Center will host a one-day symposium entitled “Making Connections: Translating Ideas into Good Practice for School Renewal.” The symposium was inspired by the ideals of “The Basic School.” This was a vision to transform elementary education that was outlined by the late Ernest L. Boyer, Sr. The symposium will provide opportunities to consider ideas for school renewal in our current educational context. The symposium is the culmination of Dr. Don Murk’s efforts to bring the vision of The Basic School to reality today.

The program for the day also featured speakers Dr. Paul Boyer, president of Boyer Associates; Dr. Lillian Brinkley, NAESP mentor trainer; and Mr. Patrick Callaghan, executive director for elementary education at South Western City Schools, Grove City, Ohio. The day will also include a panel discussion featuring principals who have successfully used the ideals of The Basic School within their elementary schools. All should plan to attend all or a portion of the day’s events.

Math Design Collaborative

During the past few months, our own Dr. Carol Buckley has been heavily involved with Math Design Collaborative (MDC), a nation wide initiative that provides teachers with instructional tools to help effectively implement and understand Common Core State Standards and other rigorous standards. In short, it allows teachers to adapt lessons to meet the needs of students. MDC engages students in formative assessment lessons. Through a "productive struggle," students build fluency with procedural skills and increase mathematical reasoning and understanding. Students participate in both group and individual tasks while teachers support understanding through questioning techniques.

Rather than following pre-determined steps to find an answer, students use mathematical reasoning to solve non-routine problems.

To learn more about Math Design Collaborative, check out this video that can also be seen on the PDE SAS website.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_AnZP5gReQ&feature=youtu.be
Please consider joining us as we host our annual Fall Research Forum. Our featured speaker is Dr. Melinda Burchard, who will be presenting on the following topic:

**Assessing Professional Development Needs and Gains of Teachers for Multi-Tiered Instructional Practices**

This research presentation is about scale development and utility of the Multi-Tiered Instruction Self-Efficacy Scale, MTISES. The presentation will include the need to assess teachers’ self-efficacy for multi-tiered instructional practices, the scale development process, the research study methods, psychometric properties, and the utility of the tool in multi-tiered educational practices. The very strong validity and reliability of this tool will be detailed for use in assessing professional development needs and gains of faculty in response to professional development. The forum will take place on Thursday, October 30, from 4:30-6:30 pm in Boyer 131. We hope that you can join us.

Are you interested in teaching abroad after graduation?

Alliance Academy International in Quito Ecuador is currently looking for December graduates who may be interested in teaching kindergarten or first grade starting in January 2015. The school provides teachers with housing, food, and a travel stipend. If you would like to learn more about the chance to teach in Ecuador check out the school’s website [www.alliance.k12.ec](http://www.alliance.k12.ec). For more information on the specific positions available or Alliance Academy International, you can contact Lois Wells at lwells@alliance.k12.ec.
This past summer, seven Messiah students were hired as full teachers in the Summer English Institute (SEI) program. Melissa Landis, Amanda Willson, Carey Heisey, Ashley Nace, Amelia Jackson, Hannah Lane, and Chris Boggess were able to complete two of their TESOL minor courses while working with SEI this summer. Dr. Jan Dormer was asked to create and oversee the curriculum and assessment for the SEI program.

Dr. Dormer partnered with Messiah Education graduate student, Sarah Mueller, to produce the curriculum for this summer program. They created a project entitled “Create a Nation” for their curriculum. Each class was responsible for constructing their own country. The practice required students to develop and use language related to geography, education, government, religion, and economics. Our Messiah teachers led their students in acting as ambassadors and hosts of their countries by practicing the language of diplomacy and developing skills in cross-cultural and linguistic learning. Through this entire process the curriculum sought to help students develop creative and critical thinking skills.

Congratulations to our Messiah students for their completion of this wonderful teaching experience.