



GRADUATE PROGRAM IN EDUCATION

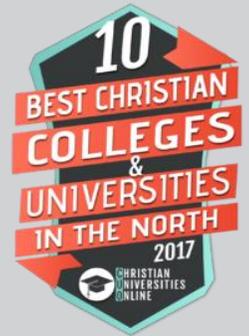
Fall 2016 Newsletter



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Dear colleagues and friends,

It is such an honor to serve as the director of the Graduate Program in Education at Messiah College, because we have the best students and the most committed faculty and staff I have ever known.



It is exciting to tell you that I am not alone in my observation. The Christian University Online (CUO) publication just announced its regional rankings of the best Christian Colleges and Universities in the north for 2017. I am pleased to say that Messiah College was selected number one in the region.

CUO seeks to "highlight intentionally Christian colleges and universities that excel in categories of personal attention to their students, selectivity, readily available financial aid, and overall student satisfaction. Christian Universities Online strives to be the go to and trusted resource for students and their parents in deciding which school to attend. At CUO we understand how important a decision this is and offer up this ranking as a tool to help guide your decision-making."

We are proud of this distinction, and it would not have been possible without our excellent students, alumni, supporters, faculty, and staff.

Congratulations everyone!!
Warmly,

Nancy J. Patrick

Nancy J. Patrick, Ph.D.
Director of the Graduate Program in Education



A Double Messiah Alumna

by Nancy J. Patrick

For as long as I have known Elizabeth Brake, she has felt a genuine call on her life to work in a career, where she teaches and supports students with disabilities to help them succeed in school. She entered Messiah College as a first year student in 2003 with a plan to become a special educator. Her plan changed when she discovered that her own physical challenges could potentially hinder her ability to manage a classroom full of children, which is a requirement for teacher certification in Pennsylvania. In spite of this disappointment, Elizabeth still wanted to teach and support students with disabilities, but she would have to find a different way to do it.

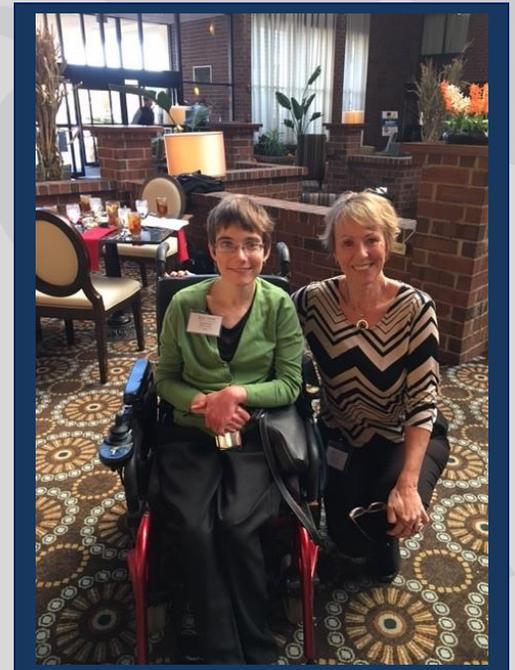
During her sophomore year, she discovered the field of disabilities services in higher education and knew that this was to be her life's work. She completed several short field experiences in the Messiah College Office of Disability Services, where she worked with Dr. Keith Drahn on a project to improve campus housing accommodations for students with physical disabilities.

These experiences confirmed to Elizabeth that she was on the right path. Her passion to pursue this field motivated her to design an individualized major, so that she could prepare for a position in disability services in higher education. As a result, Elizabeth graduated from Messiah College with a bachelor's degree in Education and Family Services.

Since that time, Elizabeth has worked very hard to develop the skills and professional competencies required for her career path. She earned a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling at Edinboro University in 2011 and will soon finish a second master's degree in Special Education from Messiah College. She is currently fulfilling her internship semester in the Office of Disability Services at Messiah College under the mentorship of the program's director, Amy Slody. In her internship, she is providing academic coaching to students and adapting text to accommodate the needs of learners.

Elizabeth is also writing a program to increase student recruitment, retention, and successful transition to work after graduation from Messiah College, and she is networking with other professionals in disability services at other institutions across Pennsylvania. Additionally, on November 11, 2016, Elizabeth will present her master's thesis, "Bridges to Employment for College Graduates with Disabilities" at the Annual Pennsylvania Council for Exceptional Children Convention.

We are thankful to Elizabeth for sharing her talents, knowledge, humility, graciousness, faith, and strong background in her internship service to Messiah College. We want to wish her the very best as she seeks employment in the area of disability services after she finishes her program at Messiah College in December.



Where are they now?

The Graduate Program in Education came into existence in the Fall of 2011. Since then more than 70 students have completed the requirements of their track and successfully exited the program.

Students from our program have gone on to work as TESOL directors, enter Ph.D. programs, acquire positions as higher education instructors, and teach abroad.

Below are the accounts of how three of our graduates have used the experience that they gleaned from the Graduate Program in Education in their careers.



Shaina Snyder '16
TESOL

I was born and raised in rural Pennsylvania, so I never imagined that one day I would be living and thriving in Tokyo—the most populated city in the world. Yet here I am! It was Messiah College that provided me with the opportunity to embark on an exciting new career path after I found myself dissatisfied with social work—the field for which I had prepared during my undergraduate studies. I chose the M.Ed. program with a concentration in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), and it was my first step toward a new passion.

After completing just a few courses (happily managing to stay debt-free by working full-time, while enrolled in the grad program), I felt I had gained enough confidence and knowledge to step into a classroom. I traveled to Washington, D.C., to interview for an English conversation school (*Eikaiwa*) in Japan. Thanks to the course *Applied Linguistics: Grammar and Phonology in TESOL* that I had just completed at Messiah, I passed the interview's

grammar, vocabulary, and teaching methods test with flying colors.

With that, my teaching career began in Tokyo in September of 2014. As all new teachers are, I was overwhelmed and uncertain; however, I had the advantage of taking a TESOL methods and field experience course at the same time that I began working in Tokyo. This gave me a support system and the knowledge that I was able to immediately apply to my teaching.

Most recently, two unexpected doors opened—an offer to teach conversational English full time at a university in Tokyo, and an invitation to present at CELT Seoul in South Korea. Key to these opportunities was the support that I received from Dr. Dormer, a professor at Messiah College, my advisor, and a respected professional in the field of TESOL. The professors at Messiah were truly invested in my education. Through their dedication, encouragement, and understanding, I was blessed with an excellent education. My overall experience at Messiah College also allowed me to receive introductions to professional opportunities and job references.

In a few short years I have gone from a social worker with no background in the field of education to a university professor living abroad. I am thankful for the connections that I made at Messiah College. My classmates and professors were professional, thoughtful individuals from whom I eagerly learned. Although I still have much to learn, I am excited to see where I can go from here with the education that I received at Messiah College.

Good day, from Virginia's colonial capital! My name is Sierra McDonald, and I graduated from Messiah's Special Education program, after which I taught at Sheppard Pratt Health System. While I loved teaching history in the residential treatment facility, I longed for a less stressful atmosphere. After visiting Colonial Williamsburg, I found that I loved the joy and knowledge that flowed from the interpreters with whom I interacted.

The town was overflowing can only be acquired from my second trip to walked into a job fair. To offered me a job working in Interpreter, and I accepted.

The main goal of my job is to historical and seemingly and turn them into living, for people today. The role I changes daily, which is the job. Learning about exercise if we do not apply goal every day is to help others see themselves in the heroes of our past, so that they can rise to the challenges we face as a nation today.



Sierra McDonald '15
Special Education

with historical experiences that a living history museum. During Williamsburg, I accidentally make a long story short, they the historic area as a Sites

interpret, or translate, lifeless stories from the past, breathing, and meaningful lessons play in bringing the past to life something that I greatly value about the past is nothing more than a rote it to our lives and learn from it. My

The experience and knowledge that I gained during my time as a graduate student at Messiah has helped me to be well prepared for the diverse groups of people that I come into contact with every day. I am able to hone my ability to read the needs of my audience to gauge their level of understanding. Each course that I had taken added to my "bag of tricks" that I use to help engage a varied group of learners. I gained valuable wisdom to handle a multitude of behavioral and educational challenges, all of which further help me to meet the various needs of those taking a tour. It also allows me to dialogue with my brilliant and dedicated colleagues about the challenges that we face on tours.

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation is making a concentrated effort to put into place accommodations that will make a trip to Colonial Williamsburg memorable and special for those with varying needs. I am determined to be an advocate and to help shape the Colonial Capital into a more welcoming and accommodating place for everyone. If you happen to find yourself in the Colonial Capital, say hello and introduce yourself!



MY path to Messiah College and the TESOL certificate program began many years ago, before I moved to Japan. At that time, I taught a Japanese children's English class at my church. The Japanese government had sent doctors and their families to the United States for three-year stints, so that Japanese doctors could study for advanced degrees at Washington University. This meant there were a lot of families in the area that needed English language skills.



Class at the Okinawa International Center

When I felt the Lord calling me to Okinawa in 2006, I continued to teach young children there, many of whom were Japanese, at the Christian international school where I served as a missionary teacher. A short time later I went to the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) conference in Asia, where I was blessed to attend Dr. Jan Dormer's workshops on TESOL. After the conference, I incorporated some of her activities into the class that I taught at the international school.

In the meantime, I had begun teaching English to Japanese adults in my apartment. Some were members with me in the village chorus, and some were friends I had met at the village pool or while out and about. I had never been trained to teach adults, so this was new territory for me. I wanted to share my faith with them, but I did not speak Japanese well enough to do so without an interpreter.

While in Korea at the ACSI Conference in 2014, again, I participated in Dr. Dormer's workshop, where I was given a flyer about Messiah's TESOL Certificate program. My daughter and I were both interested in this program since it could be completed online. I contacted the College about enrolling and began as a "non-traditional" student. (I am a mother, grandmother, and new great grandmother.)

I had told the Lord when I went to Japan, that I would give Him what was left of my life and would stay on the island until He called me home to heaven or back to the States. I am no longer at the international school, but I now work in a special education position at an elementary school. The school administration has allowed me access to the ESL classroom for my field experience requirements, and my internship has been done in various classes here on the island. I observed and taught in several classes locally and taught private lessons as well. Currently I have two classes--a family class and a church class, both are taught in rental rooms over a health food store. In addition, I teach a class on another island once a month.

Now, as I finish up my internship, I want to thank Messiah College and Dr. Dormer, in particular, for the opportunity to participate in this program. It is said that if you want a quality learning experience, you should follow the educator, not necessarily the school. This has been good advice for me. I have learned so much, and I will continue with my volunteer and community classes better prepared to meet the needs of my students—adult or child.

Mary Davenport, '16
MC TESOL Certificate





It's Not About Me...By Dr. Maude Yacapsin

Recently, Dr. Maude Yacapsin was invited by Messiah College student Anna Marie Clark to present a paper at the Uniquely the Same Conference that was held in Monroeville, Pennsylvania, on October 21-22. Dr. Yacapsin welcomed Anna Marie's invitation. However, she quickly realized that this was no run-of-the-mill conference—it was one where her unique gifts could be used to help others in an area that has resonated with her for years.

For some time, Maude has been interested in reaching out to Sunday school teachers and Catechists to provide support and resources, but she often encountered challenges along the way. Says Maude, "In the past I hit several roadblocks ranging from disinterest to financial challenges to postponement. My heart knew there was a need. It was difficult, but I prayed, remained patient and understanding, knowing that God would intervene. And He did, in His divine way, through Chapel and by meeting a Chapel attendee, Anna Marie Clark."

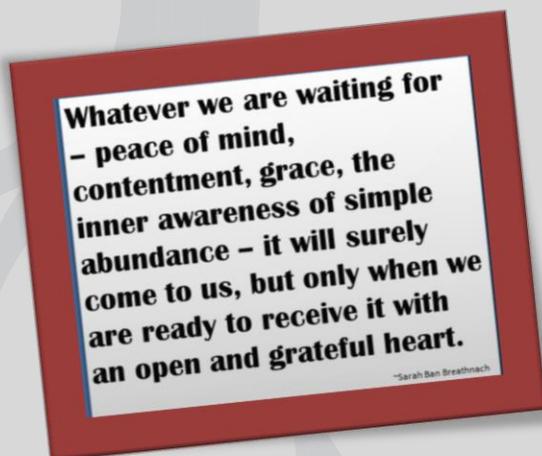
So why this conference? What is Uniquely the Same? This is what their [website](#) has to say:

For more than six years, the volunteers of Uniquely the Same, Inc., have been serving people and families affected by disabilities and economic disadvantage. Frequently, those we serve tell us their greatest need is authentic friendship – for someone to come alongside the lives of families and individuals in order to give them practical assistance in confronting the hurdles they face every day.

So Uniquely the Same, Inc., [was] established in order to encourage intentional, loving, solutions so that all people can pursue a high quality of life.

Maude presented two sessions at the conference on classroom management to an audience that included social workers, personal care assistants, Sunday school teachers, catechists, caregivers, college faculty, students, and pastors. Although conference goers represented a wide variety of skills, a common theme echoed throughout--despite ability, disability, talent or gift, everyone, in God's eyes, is *Uniquely the Same*. Anna Marie also presented at the conference, that was held at her church, along with many other like-minded individuals who are passionate about serving others. Both Anna Marie and Dr. Yacapsin hope that they can bring the conference to the Messiah campus, so that others may share their unique gifts and pursue God's work.

Anna Marie invited Dr. Yacapsin to speak at the Uniquely the Same conference after a chance meeting at chapel. Maude calls this Divine Intervention—we do too.

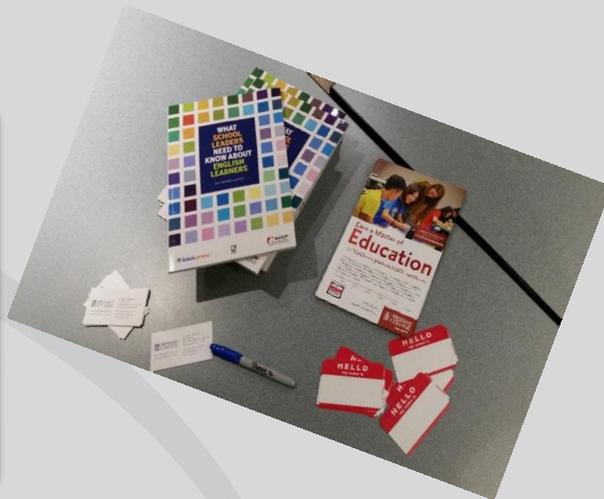


~TESOL News~



This fall Dr. Jan Dormer traveled to Mozambique to hold training seminars for local K-12 teachers and seminary professors. She also spent time observing classes, meeting with teachers, and attending leadership meetings to determine the direction and needs of the school.

While there, Jan delivered math manipulatives that Dr. Carol Buckley obtained as a donation from the College library for the school in Mozambique. Pictured right are the first, second, and third grade teachers (from left to right) with the tools.



During two Tuesdays in October, the Graduate Program in Education hosted brunch events for administrators from local public and private schools. The events were organized to provide support, ideas, and resources—including a copy of Dr. Jan Dormer's new book—to the schools' sometimes beleaguered ESL staff.

In her new book, *What School Leaders Need to Know about English Learners*, Dr. Dormer emphasizes the benefits that English Language Learners (ELLs) can bring to a school environment.

Upcoming Conferences

Pennsylvania Association Council for Exceptional Children 57th Annual Convention
November 11, 2016
Best Western (800 E Park Drive)
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
<http://community.cec.sped.org/pa/paceconference/new-item>

2017 Autism Conference
February 9-10, 2017
Coastal Georgia Center
Savannah, Georgia
<http://www.2017autismconference.com/>

PDE Annual Conference
March 8-10, 2017
Hershey Lodge and Convention Center
Hershey, Pennsylvania
<http://www.pattan.net/category/Training/PDE+Annual+Conference>

TESOL 2017 International Convention & English Language Expo
March 21-24, 2017
Seattle, Washington
<https://www.tesol.org/convention2017>

CEC 2017 Special Education Convention & Expo
April 19-22, 2017
Hynes Convention Center
Boston, Massachusetts
<http://www.cecconvention.org/convention-workshops/>