Summer 2009
Inviting Success
Inspiring Children on Our Campus

Raising Achievement
Helping Teachers Helps Students

Research Matters
National Consortium Moves to WSE
The Watson School of Education at UNC Wilmington has consistently been recognized for the quality of our teacher and administrator preparation programs. In recent years, we also have strengthened our commitment and initiatives in supporting in-service educators, children in the community and research efforts, as well as networking with other colleagues in professional organizations and recruitment.

In this issue of Legacy Hallmarks, a number of our initiatives are highlighted. The support we provide for in-service educators seeking National Board Certification has continued to facilitate many educators in the region in achieving this level of recognition for their teaching excellence. The expansion of our collaborative efforts with Teacher Cadet programs in surrounding school districts will result in more young people selecting the field of education as their profession and assist in reducing the teacher shortage in the region.

The tutoring services offered through the Betty Holden Stike Ed Lab provide a rich learning experience for our students and a powerful outreach and support for children and parents. The Junior Seahawk program also offers children in the community exposure to science, math and technology. The Science Olympiad, which involves hundreds of schoolchildren in the area, also exemplifies the Watson School’s support for outreach initiatives.

In October 2008 the Watson School hosted a national conference, CREATE, focusing on evaluation processes and policies for educators. Educators from 22 states attended the conference and had numerous opportunities to network and to share their research. This national professional organization soon will be housed at UNCW and will provide another venue for the Watson School’s focus on educational excellence.

The Watson School is proud to continue our support for public school children, new and experienced educators, school systems and professional organizations. Please join us as we continue to improve and expand our efforts and programs.

Karen Wetherill
Interim Dean
National Board Certified teachers help their students achieve more and are more likely to stay in teaching longer than other teachers, giving them more opportunities to help more students according to a recent congressionally-mandated National Research Council study.

The council’s report stated the “evidence is clear that National Board Certification distinguishes more effective teachers from less effective teachers with respect to student achievement.”

Watson School of Education’s commitment to providing support and guidance to teachers seeking National Board Certification is paying off both for teachers and North Carolina students. Teachers participating in the WSE National Board Support Program are about a third more likely to earn certification than other teachers in N.C. The state pass rate for all candidates is 42 percent, while the rate for candidates in the WSE program is 70 percent. The gap widens further when you compare participants who took advantage of all the services the program offers. Initial candidates who participate in seven to nine of the nine monthly support sessions passed this rigorous national certification at an outstanding 85 percent rate.

The WSE National Board Support Program began in 2001 and is led by Beth Metcalf, teacher-in-residence, and Karen Wetherill, interim dean. It provides support for first-time, retake and renewal candidates. From August to May each year, candidates work with UNCW faculty, National Board Certified teachers, Metcalf and other trained entry readers to complete the intensive assessment process.

Metcalf commented, “One of the questions I get asked all the time is ‘Why do I think the Watson program sees so much success?’ I truly believe the program’s success is a result of two factors. We provide on-going support to candidates through the entire process from pre-candidacy to renewal. Also, we see supporting National Board candidates as professional development for both the support provider and the candidate. This makes the exchanges much more meaningful, collegial and purposeful.”

What is truly impressive is what the candidates themselves say about the program. These comments were received as part of the anonymous exit surveys:

“The WSE National Board Support sessions were extremely helpful. They broke down the questions in a way that focused my thoughts and writing. My confidence in achieving this goal has greatly increased by participating in these sessions.”

“The support that I have received from the teacher-in-residence was above and beyond my expectations as it included Web resources and referrals to seasoned faculty who were able to offer me assistance in my particular field! I have been most impressed with the knowledge base, professionalism, dedication and commitment offered by the UNCW program! It is the quintessential support program and could easily be a model for the nation!”

Karen Wetherill, interim dean, and Beth Metcalf, teacher-in-residence, lead the National Board Support Program at UNCW.
Outreach is a central part of the Watson School of Education’s mission. Throughout the year, the Watson School provides a variety of services to the community including intensive tutoring to area students, day camps for children in under-represented communities and competitions in science and math.

The Betty Stike Education Lab provides a resource for the community and a means for the university’s teachers in training to gain hands-on experience working with K-6 students. Filled with books that match students’ coursework, computers and a digital blackboard, the lab models a working classroom.

“The idea is for it to be a support structure for the curriculum,” said Brian Brinkley, director of the ed lab.

Parents can enroll students in the ed lab at the beginning of the school semester. The program pairs each student with an education undergraduate for 10 weeks. The standard courses include 20 hours of instruction in reading, 10 hours in math and 25 hours in math and reading. For children with special needs, either 10 hours of special needs testing in the fall or 10 hours of special needs tutoring in the spring is available. Parents can customize the tutoring services to meet their child’s needs.

Andrea Weaver enrolled her son Matthew in the program when she realized that he needed assistance in reading. While Matthew has an intense interest in science and nature, he struggled with reading until he began the program.

“It really helped his confidence in reading,” said Weaver. “He realized that he could learn about anything he wanted to learn about if he improved his reading.”
The cost to the parent for the instruction averages $10 an hour, according to Brinkley. Parents can apply for scholarships and assistance through the ed lab.

In the summer months, the Watson School offers parents of students ages 11-14 from under-represented communities a chance to enroll in the Junior Seahawk Summer Academy. The summer academy is a one-week day camp aimed at giving students a hands-on exploration of science, math and technology.

The summer academy combines real-world science experiments with an emphasis on improving students’ literacy. For students reading below grade level or with learning disabilities, the curriculum reinforces the connections between the science, math and technology experiments and reading skills. The camp also offers students and parents information about educational opportunities and assistance available after graduation.

Enrollment in the program costs $40 and includes follow-up sessions throughout the year, according to Assistant Professor Angelia Reid-Griffin. Registration is first come, first serve, and only 60 spots are available. Reid-Griffin said that any parent with a student interested in the program is welcome to register his/her child. “We don’t turn anyone away,” she said.

In addition to these community services, the Watson School acts as a host site for the North Carolina Science Olympiad. University faculty, students and community members offer support and act as judges for the on-campus competitions, said Dennis Kubasko, associate professor. In past competitions, engineers, architects and other professionals from General Electric and McKim and Creed also have assisted as judges.

The olympiad offers teams of area students who excel in math and science a chance to put their skills to use in competition against their peers. Events range from intellectual competitions where students are quizzed on their knowledge of subject areas like ecology or astronomy to engineering challenges.

In the “junkyard challenge” event, students are given a list of items that they can bring to the competition, said Kubasko. When they arrive, they are told what they have to build and must race the other teams in turning their “junk” into a working science experiment.
The Watson School believes so strongly in research and its role in improving the lives of N.C. schoolchildren that WSE dedicated $55,953 to funding faculty research. Last year, 35 faculty received mini-grants totaling $45,453, and 21 faculty received Ambassador Travel Grants totaling $10,500.

WSE hosted 121 Teacher Cadets from five counties for “Teachers of Tomorrow” Day in February, 2009. Cadets experienced teacher professional development from UNCW faculty, toured the campus and attended workshops on the admissions, financial aid and scholarship processes.

The Watson School has been rated “exemplary” by the State Board of Education. Only seven out of 47 North Carolina teacher education programs received this honor.

The passing rate for Watson School graduates on the Praxis II Specialty Area Tests required for licensure is 98 percent.

Forty-two educator preparation and licensure programs are offered by the Watson School at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Total enrollment exceeded 4,300 for fall semester 2008.

CREATE Conference Held at UNCW

The Watson School of Education hosted the National Evaluation Institute’s Consortium for Research on Educational Accountability and Teacher Evaluation (CREATE) Conference October 9-11, 2008. Public school and university educators, representatives from professional organizations and educational consultants from 22 states attended. CREATE works to improve student learning, development and achievement in PK-12 schools, institutes of higher education and other educational settings by developing and disseminating sound practices related to personnel, student and program evaluation, research and policy.

The conference at UNCW featured nationally recognized experts in these fields including Robert Marzano, Marzano & Associates; James Stronge, The College of William and Mary; Tom Guskey, Georgetown College; Don Yarborough, University of Iowa; Chris Gareis, The College of William and Mary; Anne Jolly, PLT Works; and Eric Hirsch, University of California at Santa Cruz New Teacher Center.

In addition to hosting the conference, UNCW is now the new home of CREATE. The consortium is moving here from its previous headquarters at Western Michigan University. Watson School of Education faculty members have traditionally been very involved with the consortium. Currently, Buddy Coleman, assistant professor in educational leadership, and Michelle Parker, assistant professor of educational leadership, are on the CREATE Board of Directors.

More than 270 educators, consultants and graduate students attended the 2008 CREATE conference.

Presenter Robert Marzano (center) celebrates with Bob Rodosky, CREATE’s 2009 Millman Award winner and Barbara Howard, incoming 2009 president.
Preparing Tomorrow’s Leaders

The Watson School of Education develops highly competent professionals to serve in educational leadership roles.

Education Programs for Teachers and Administrators
The Watson School of Education offers a wide variety of academic programs at the undergraduate and graduate level, as well as programs for teacher licensure.

Undergraduate Degree Programs:
• Education of Young Children (Birth-K)
• Elementary Education (K-6)
• Middle Grades Education (6-9)
• Secondary Education (9-12)
• Special Education (K-12)

Licensure is offered for students earning degrees in:
• Biology
• Chemistry
• English
• French
• Mathematics
• Music
• Physical Education
• Spanish
• Social Studies

Students who have earned bachelor’s degrees can complete teacher licensure through four alternative pathways programs.

Add-on Licensure Programs:
• Academically/Intellectually Gifted
• Curriculum/Instruction Supervision
• English as a Second Language
• Reading Specialist
• School Administration

Graduate Degree Programs:
• Master of Arts in Teaching in Secondary Education and Middle Grades
• Master of Education in Curriculum/Instruction Supervision, Elementary Education, Language and Literacy, Middle Grades, Secondary Education or Special Education
• Master of School Administration
• Master of Science in Instructional Technology
• Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership and Administration

For more information on academic programs, go to www.uncw.edu/ed.

Did You Know?

The Watson School is the fourth largest producer of teachers at the undergraduate level in the state of North Carolina.

All courses required for licensure are now offered at least once per year at night, online, during the summer or at extension sites, in addition to classes scheduled on weekdays and selected courses on weekends.

Results from the National Survey of Student Engagement indicate that Watson School students are highly satisfied with their programs. More than 94 percent of them reported that they would likely attend UNCW and WSE again if they could start over (NSSE survey 2007).

During the past 10 years (from 1998 – 2008), undergraduate enrollment in the Watson School of Education increased from 2,313 to 3,637 (57 percent growth). Graduate enrollment increased from 262 to 725 (176 percent growth); and the number of licensure-only students has increased from 38 to 239 (529 percent growth). During the past five years, undergraduate and graduate enrollment has increased by more than 638 students.

*Totals include extension programs. Based on fall 2008 semester data.
Watson School of Education Points of Pride

The Watson School’s grant efforts focus on obtaining funding for collaborative initiatives that address P-16 needs of the schools in the southeastern region. Funded grants totaled more than $1,375,000 during the 2007-08 academic year.

The Watson School is a host site for the North Carolina Teaching Fellows and Principal Fellows programs.

The Watson School’s national award-winning Professional Development System (PDS) serves 12 school districts and one charter school, providing professional development opportunities for 117 schools and more than 1,400 P-12 teachers. Partnership schools include the Cape Fear Center for Inquiry and the Brunswick, Camp Lejeune, Carteret, Clinton City, Columbus, Duplin, Jones, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender, Sampson and Whiteville City school systems.

The 16th annual Razor Walker Awards program honored four North Carolinians and one business for their efforts to improve the quality of life for children and youth in the state. The 17th annual award program was held April 20, 2009.

During the 2007-08 academic year, Watson School faculty published 53 articles, six book chapters, developed an educational game, produced a documentary film and made 121 presentations at international, regional and state conferences.

The Watson School of Education is the Eastern Regional Center for Science Notebooks for the North Carolina Infrastructure for Science Education (NC-ISE). The primary focus is on assessing science concepts through the use of student notebooks, with regional workshops designed and delivered for K-8 elementary and middle school teachers.