Research Speaks Conference

Research Speaks is a one-day conference to highlight research by faculty and students of the Watson School of Education. The day began with an international teleconference, with our colleagues and students in Belize. That conversation was followed by faculty presentations on collaborative research and the day ended with a poster session featuring faculty and student research. There were Nine, 10-minute presentations on “Teacher and Faculty Collaborative Research” shared between 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. These presentations focused on collaborative efforts that examined educational practices in classrooms, schools, and/or communities. The following presentations were shared:

**Authentic Assessment**
Dr. William Sterrett, Dr. Angie Reid-Griffin, Holly Konrady, Lisa Brackney, Tara Adams, Kelly Regan

**The Writing Continuum**
Dr. Deborah Powell, Melissa Nicholson Clark, Aly Allder, Zach Wilson

**Exploring Multimedia in the Classroom**
Dr. Marsha Carr, Kathy Britt, LaTanya Pattillo, Daniella Stamm

**How did North Carolina High Schools Improve their Graduation Rates**
Dr. Janna Robertson and Dr. Robert Smith

**Using Humanoid Robots to Support Children with Autism**
Dr. Amelia Moody, Erika Merriman, Kim Reinhardt, Isaiah Worthy

**Music and Literacy Integration for Literacy and Music Teachers**
Dr. Deborah Powell, Dr. Kennedy Ongaga, Dr. Daniel Johnson, and Jerry Buttrum

Left: Teams prepare for their presentations.

Right: The **Authentic Assessment** team presents.
What Works: Innovative Models and Best Practices in Education

“What Works” is a presentation series highlighting successful instructional strategies, academic programs, and community outreach within our partnership districts. This semester WSE students, faculty, and staff gathered to hear presentations concerning topics such as Strategies for Supporting ESL Students, Anti-Bullying Initiatives in Our Local Schools, Special Education Strategies in Our Region, and many more. Throughout the year, presenters from Onslow, Brunswick, Pender and New Hanover County Schools engaged participants in a discussion concerning what’s working in each of their districts. Link

2012 Annual Mentor Conference

Each year, the Watson School of Education hosts an Annual Mentor Conference to support mentors of beginning teachers across the state. The theme of this year’s conference was Preparation and Practice: Essential Training for Effective Mentors. The 2012 Conference hosted attendees both face-to-face and online via webinar. Mentors from 7 schools districts participated in six 30 minute sessions across two days. Topics included Reflective Judgment, Classroom Management, New Teacher Expectations, and many more. Link

Our Teacher-in-Residence in Action

Ms. Somer Lewis currently serves as the Teacher-in-Residence for the Watson School of Education at UNCW where she coordinates both the First Years of Teaching Support Program and the National Board Certification Support Program. Her professional teaching background began in the fall of 2003 as an English educator at New Hanover High School in Wilmington, North Carolina. During her career, Lewis has served as a partnership teacher and a beginning teaching mentor. During this academic year, she has organized several programs for our beginning teachers and those seeking national board certification.

National Board Certification Support Program

The Watson School of Education National Board Certification Support Program at the University of North Carolina Wilmington began in 2001 and continues to be a valuable resource for participants throughout the 2012-2013 certification cycle. Activities and delivery sequence are structured to provide intensive support for all candidates and to address the changes implemented each year by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Currently, support sessions are offered for initial, advanced and renewal candidates. The support program also hosts pre-candidacy workshops, offers Candidate Support Provider Training, and promotes a self-guided workbook for support.

Over the last ten years, the Watson School of Education National Board Certification Support Program has served over 1,000 educators in various capacities across the state of North Carolina.

Since 2001, the program has supported 799 initial candidates, 111 advanced candidates, and 39 renewal candidates through various workshops.

Since 2001, the initial candidate workshops have supported educators across 37 North Carolina school districts and 1 South Carolina district, including 191 teachers from New Hanover County Schools, 117 teachers from Onslow County Schools, 105 teachers from Brunswick County Schools, 77 teachers from Pender County Schools, and 67 teachers from Duplin County Schools.

Since its publication in 2009, the program has sold 260 copies of “10 Self-Guided Steps: Supporting Your Own National Board Certification Journey,” a workbook written and compiled by Beth Metcalf, National Board Certified Teacher and former WSE Teacher-in-Residence.

On December 7, 2011, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards publicly announced the 2011 class of initial candidates. The University of North Carolina Wilmington is ranked 20th in the nation, 7th in the state, boasting 41 alumnae recognized as NBCTs in 2011. Link
The Watson School of Education supports educators in the first three years of their teaching career through the First Years of Teaching Support Program. This program engages teachers in reflective decision-making focused on developing instructional practices that increase student performance. The three main components of the program are: onsite support and professional growth, online mentoring, and web-based resources selected to address the responsibilities of new teachers.

This year the FYTSP hosted three professional development days on the campus of UNCW. On April 20th, the final day of support, 12 beginning teachers, recognized as Promising Leaders from several of our partnership districts, conducted breakout sessions throughout the day. This Promise of Leadership Group is comprised of teachers in their second or third year who show leadership and innovation in the classroom. Teachers are nominated by their school system, mentored by a UNCW faculty member, and formally recognized by UNCW for their commitment and expertise with the Promise of Leadership Award. Link
In the Fall of 2011, Onslow County Schools initiated a collaborative effort to partner with P-12 schools in Belize. District representatives, administrators, and teachers from four Onslow schools partnered with Watson School of Education faculty members Dr. Susan Catapano and Dr. Dennis Kubasko to coordinate a field experience to Belize. Drs. Catapano and Kubasko lead student trips to Belize each spring. UNCW undergraduates complete their student teaching semester in Belizean schools while doctoral students engage in leadership development while in Belize. The Onslow County schools representatives who traveled to Belize this year plan to integrate what they learned in their classes in Onslow County. In the future, they hope to bring teachers from Belize to visit their schools in Onslow County. Congratulations to our Onslow Partners for establishing another international partnership!

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Above: San Pedro High School
Below: Students at Ambergris Caye Elementary School
Digital Storytelling

UNCW hosted the 4th Annual Digital Storytelling Contest on April 19th, 2012. This event has become a staple in the K-12 ESL community in New Hanover and in Pender Counties. This year we welcomed almost 100 ESL students from all grade levels along with their teachers. In addition to presenting their digital stories, elementary level students participated in a Literacy Live event while others went to a College-Bound Panel. The students did an excellent job of linking their stories back to the NC standards and class content, and are getting more and more proficient using the technology! We are so proud of them and their hard-working teachers. Kudos to Drs. Eleni Pappamihiel and Denise Ousley for organizing such a wonderful event!

4th Annual AIG Mini Conference

This year’s AIG conference was face-to-face and online with over 40 participants in attendance. It was held on April 17th from 9:30 AM-12:30 PM. There were two teams of teachers who presented model units that linked language arts and math learning outcomes with AIG and Common Core standards. Participants also engaged in breakout sessions where they worked to revise their own work. Keynote presenters were from New Hanover County Schools and Brunswick County Schools. The team from New Hanover County Schools included Karma Maples and Elin Ruben. The Brunswick County Team included Lisa Dolak and Kenetha Fulbright. The conference is archived at the following [LINK](#). Congrats to Drs. Eddie Caropresso and Angela Housand for organizing such outstanding professional development.
Spotlight on our Faculty

Martin Wasserberg, Assistant Professor in the Department of Elementary, Middle Level, and Literacy Education has been working on Project Y.E.S. (Youth Engagement for Success) at Rachel Freeman Elementary School for the last two years.

This semester, the more specific objectives of the project included the following:

- Including student perspectives (particularly the voices of traditionally marginalized students) in the research-based definition of teacher quality and successful teaching practices.
- Helping to facilitate collaboration between the Watson School of Education and “struggling” elementary schools.
- Facilitating a dialogue between pre-service teachers and the students they will soon be teaching (particularly students from traditionally marginalized groups), in an effort to increase the comfort level and positive engagement of pre-service teachers in new teaching environments.

In this respect, with the support of Mr. Adrian Pearson (Rachel Freeman principal), Dr. Wasserberg has been collaborating with groups of elementary school students (4th and 5th graders) on a weekly basis with help from an undergraduate research assistant, Julia Hagerty. These meetings began as dialogues centered around the question: “What kinds of lessons do we enjoy and learn from?” As a result of these dialogues, students have put together presentations that they presented on May 1st. The elementary students in essence, taught Dr. Wasserberg’s final EDN 300 class of the semester (teaching the students how to teach exciting lessons, in their eyes).

Spotlight on our Partners

Jones County Schools
Congratulations to Jones County Schools for being awarded over one million dollars in grants for this academic year! A significant portion of this money came from The Golden Leaf Foundation which awarded the district $750,000. We also congratulate superintendent Michael Bracy for being selected as the 2012-13 Regional Superintendent of the Year for the Southeast Region’s Superintendent’s Council.

New Hanover County Schools:
Holland, a 5th grade student at Bradley Creek Elementary, won the Barnes & Noble “My Favorite Teacher” essay contest. Holland honored Bradley Creek Elementary 5th grade Social Studies Teacher, Mrs. Kathy Wallen.

Sampson County Schools
Congratulations to one of our partnership teachers, Ms. Nicole Peterson, for being selected as the Sampson County Teacher of the Year for 2012-13!