

views education

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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT BOULDER

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

EPIC informs public

High-quality research keeps
policy issues at the fore

If you Google the term “education policy,” you’ll get more than 2.4 million hits. These policies affect our daily lives, and they are the subject of constant tinkering by politicians. But how does one wade through this clutter? The Education and the Public Interest Center (EPIC) at the University of Colorado at Boulder provides a unique and growing resource for analyzing and digesting important policy issues.

Founded nearly a decade ago with the narrow but crucial goal of providing a central location to house policy work generated by CU-Boulder School of Education faculty, EPIC has evolved into a nationally prominent source for information about education policy issues. Reporters and policymakers seek out the Center’s expertise, and the Center’s work has been cited by publications such as *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal*. EPIC Director Kevin Welner stresses that the public and policymakers must “understand what research tells us, otherwise there is no way for research to guide policy.”

Welner, a professor in the School’s Educational Foundations, Policy, and Practice (EFPP) program, attributes much of the Center’s rapid growth to its partnership with Arizona State University’s Education Policy Research Unit (EPRU). Publications are generally released by the combined entity: EPIC/EPRU.

EPIC’s distinctive approach to education policy research resulted in a recent \$1 million grant from



Among the CU faculty who have authored briefs and reviews for EPIC are, from left, Professors Ed Wiley, Derek Briggs, Ken Howe, and Greg Camilli.

the Ford Foundation over a three-year period to bring the research base into discussions about racial diversity and school success. The School recently hired Nikki McCord to work with Welner in leading this effort, called the Initiative on Diversity, Equity, and Learning (IDEAL). McCord hopes to continue the efforts started by Welner with EPIC. Through IDEAL, she seeks to carry on the crucial discussion regarding the significance of racial diversity and its importance to successful students and schools.

One of EPIC/EPRU’s great strengths is its Fellows, a group of 100 accomplished academics who hail from colleges and universities across the

country. “What we’re doing is unique,” said Welner. “Our organization is dedicated to helping some of the nation’s top academic experts on education policy topics translate their knowledge into messages more easily understood by policymakers, the media, and the public. This approach appeals to a lot of people who decide to enter this field precisely because they think that the public schooling enterprise is vital to the nation’s future.

“It’s an amazingly accomplished group,” says Welner. “But we advance as academics typically by speaking to each other through professional journals and at conferences. That’s not enough for

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EYE ON RESEARCH

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Message from the Dean



“The Boulder school choice study had an immediate and substantial impact on policy and practice...”

For more than two decades faculty in the CU-Boulder School of Education have worked to craft a distinctive national identity through research focused on learning and educational policy, in schools and in out-of-school contexts. In this issue, you see examples of policy researchers like Professor Kevin Welner, whose research agenda is set by identifying pressing policy problems and then either undertaking his own original research or crafting clear presentations of existing research, all designed to bring the best information to the public and policymakers.

In their recent report on curricular stratification, for example, Welner and his colleagues summarized the well-established findings showing that students in low-ability classes receive poorer instruction and constrained learning opportunities. But the real importance of their work came when they documented the key features of successful reforms that “leveled up” the academic performance of low-track students without ever watering down the academically demanding curriculum for high-track students. Their policy brief also offered specific legislative language that would effectively implement their detailed recommendations.

Professor Janette Klingner, who authored the “Eye on Research” article about disproportional-

ity in special education, is an example of a policy researcher with expertise in classroom learning. Klingner applies her expertise in special education, bilingual education, and language acquisition to conduct detailed experimental studies of instructional interventions designed to teach reading comprehension strategies in collaborative groups. At the same time, she is also able to step out of classroom-focused research and examine policy structures that would lead to more appropriate placements in special education and to more effective interventions.

Professor Ken Howe was the founding director of the Education and the Public Interest Center (EPIC). In 2000, he and Professor Margaret Eisenhart carried out a comprehensive study of Boulder Valley’s open enrollment policy. They conducted extensive interviews with parents and educators, examined cost data, and analyzed student movement in and out of neighborhood schools. They reported generally high levels of parent satisfaction, especially for those exercising school choice, but also found that choice exacerbated racial stratification (beyond what could be attributed to housing patterns) and increased resource inequities among schools.

The Boulder school choice study had an immediate and substantial impact on policy and practice,

illustrating the significance of EPIC policy research. A partner school district was able to engage distinguished researchers to evaluate a controversial local policy, and the study had a national impact because of its comprehensive examination of a key educational policy. Locally, the Boulder Valley School Board took up the issue of racial stratification and implemented several policies to mitigate the unintended consequence of school choice—including centralizing choice procedures, augmenting high-needs schools’ fundraising as well as providing them additional district funding, and moving programs or implementing new ones to help redress stratification.

Assessment policy is another area of great importance where School of Education faculty are informing practice with a combined focus on highly technical research and subject matter expertise in literacy and bi-literacy. Looking around the School, I see educators and educational researchers who pursued this career because they wanted to make a difference, so it is not surprising that so many of us are directing our work to impact policy decisions. ■

Lorrie Shepard, Dean
Lorrie.Shepard@colorado.edu

EPIC CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

our Fellows. Being a Fellow helps us accomplish an important career goal generally unavailable through normal channels.”

One key way that EPIC/EPRU communicates research is by commissioning experts to write policy briefs and think tank reviews. The policy briefs offer understandable summaries of expert knowledge about a particular topic. For instance, a recent brief on “Universal Access to a Quality Education: Research and Recommendations for the Elimination of Curricular Stratification,” showed the benefits of challenging and engaging all students with high-level classes. Think tank reviews highlight the strengths and weaknesses of reports intended to influence policy but that would otherwise not be peer reviewed. Recent think tank reviews covered topics such as charter schools, teacher quality, and national standards.

Welner said EPIC “advocates in two senses.” The group focuses on the public interest served by public schooling, and it is highly supportive of excellent public schools being available to all students on an equitable basis. In addition, the group advocates the use of high-quality research in policymaking.

With its combination of in-depth research and an emphasis on the public interest, EPIC provides a valuable resource for those interested in making effective, equitable changes in public schooling. ■



Clockwise from top left: Bethy Leonardi, Kevin Welner, Nikki McCord, and Wendy Chi. Leonardi and Chi are PhD students who assist with research for EPIC. Welner is the EPIC director and McCord will support the IDEAL program. Missing from the photo is PhD student Amy Subert.



WISE awardees

What a fantastic beginning—with donors contributing \$3,000 (over three years), the new members of WISE, Women Investing in the School of Education, were given the rare opportunity to collectively decide how to spend their pooled resources.

With nearly \$20,000 to allocate the first year, members determined guidelines for giving and recipient eligibility, then they reviewed proposals, heard directly from the faculty themselves, and ultimately voted how to spend their money. WISE member Mary Ann Winter Looney said, “This was one of the most meaningful volunteer experiences I have ever had.”

School of Education faculty submitted 15 proposals and the following four were selected for funding:

- Elizabeth Dutro/Ruben Donato—\$5,000, *Recruiting and Supporting Students of Color and Researchers for the School of Education*
- Karen Germann—\$4,795, *Interactive Learning Technology*
- Vicki Hand—\$4,200, *Recruiting Students of Diverse Backgrounds into Teaching Math and Science*
- Jennie Whitcomb—\$5,000, *Using the Quality Urban Classroom for Feedback in the Teacher Ed Program.* ■

“This was one of the most meaningful volunteer experiences I have ever had.”

Mary Ann Winter Looney
WISE Member

WISE INAUGURAL MEMBERS

Linda Caldwell	Mary Ann Looney
Julia Charles	Susan Marine
Carol Coburn	Janet Orton
Jane Daniels	Barbara Quinlan
Melissa DeKieffer	Judith Rimple
Yvonne DiStefano	Karen Shay
Martha Evans	Mary Steinbrecher
Patricia Hagerty	Celeste Woodley
Jo Kearney	Patricia Hueni
Paula Klein	

**When there's a will,
there's a way.**

make

Your will may be your way to nourish promising, bright minds. Build the educators of tomorrow. Illuminate new thinking. Spark discoveries.

dream big

So dream big. Support your passion, make a real difference, and leave your imprint on the School of Education (and, perhaps, your mark on the world) with a bequest.

make a difference

To find out how easy it is to make a gift through your will, obtain sample bequest language, or learn about other planned giving options, contact Margot Neufeld at 303.492.2990 or margot.neufeld@cufund.org.

support your passion



UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
FOUNDATION

Partnering to build the educators of tomorrow.



The School of Education and WISE

(Women Investing in the School of Education) invite other women to discover the joys of giving together

WISE Membership Tea
May 27
2-4 p.m.
Niwot, Colorado

This tea, held in a WISE member's home, gives you a chance to meet the inaugural WISE women and discover if this giving-circle approach resonates with you. Please contact Senior Director of Development Margot Neufeld, 303-492-2990, Margot.Neufeld@cufund.org, for location information and to RSVP.

Four donors: One common theme for giving back

by Margot Neufeld

For many people, charitable giving through estate plans (bequests, wills, gift annuities, and other assets) makes a lot of sense. Here are accounts from four people who named the CU-Boulder School of Education in their estate plans. We want to thank them, and perhaps, one of these stories might inspire other donors and alumni to consider giving back in this way.

Susan Marine is not an alumna of CU or the School of Education. She is however, passionately committed to public education as a means to advancing a democratic society. She is a former member of the Boulder Valley School Board and a current member of the School of Education's Development Advisory Board. A sociologist by training, she appreciates that quality teaching is the heart of a good school. When she decided to make a gift to the University, she chose to name the School of Education as a beneficiary of her estate plans. "This was a very positive experience. I feel very good about this gift—it gives me peace of mind to know that I am taking care of something that is important to me—and besides, it is a great investment."

Dr. Sidney Weathermon is Texas-born but a Coloradan at heart. He is an alumnus of the School of Education three times—and remembers his advisor, Ken Husbands, with great affection. Sid started teaching in Boulder in 1962 and enjoyed a 33-year teaching career. Retired now, his estate plans have included the School of Education since 1991. "Our country needs good teachers," he says. "I am thrilled to help someone else get an education so that they can help other people. You know, I just love this place," he said of the university, "so it made sense for me to give back by helping aspiring teachers at CU."

Carol Reynolds is another three-degree CU Boulder graduate. She had a long career as a teacher in Colorado; she and her husband Charles recently established the Carol Robinson Reynolds and Charles L. Reynolds Endowed Scholarship, which will support graduate students in Education. When asked why she chose to give a scholarship and leave the School of Education in their estate plans she said, "I had an excellent education. My husband and I looked at other non-profits for charitable giving and we chose to support CU because we felt like we

should give back and make it possible for others to get the same experience I did." Though Carol lives in Texas, she is a Buff through and through.

Barbara Vogel Boyd came to the University of Colorado to be the feature baton twirler. She received her B.S. in Education in 1975 and is a teacher and avid CU football fan. In 1990 she and her husband John Boyd, adjunct professor, CU Law School, decided to put CU in their estate plans. Recently she said, "I feel a strong obligation to repay the university for shaping my life. I have sup-

ported CU by serving the alumni and volunteering for the School of Education. John and I want to support CU with a gift as well because we want the university to continue to be the best it can be."

If you are interested in giving back to the School of Education, please contact Senior Director of Development Margot Neufeld, 303-492-2990, Margot.Neufeld@cufund.org, or visit the CU Foundation site at <http://www.cufund.org/guide-to-giving/ways-to-give/>. CU Foundation advisors will assist with matching your desires to an appropriate giving plan. ■

"I feel a strong obligation to repay the university for shaping my life."

*Barbara Vogel Boyd
School of Education Alumna*

Special education

Understanding and addressing the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students



When I was a Bilingual Resource Specialist in California in the 1980s, one of my responsibilities was to help prevent the inappropriate placement of English language learners in special education. As part of this effort, I participated on Child Study Team and Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)¹ meetings at schools around the district to support the special education decision-making process. It was at these meetings that teams decided whether to evaluate students for possible placement in special education and reviewed assessment and other data to determine whether students qualified for special education. My role was to serve as the expert on distinguishing learning disabilities from language acquisition. I greatly valued this work because I felt as though I was making a positive difference in children's lives. Thus, when my colleague Beth Harry invited me to co-submit a grant proposal to investigate the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education several years later, after I had earned a PhD and become a professor, I jumped at the chance. We were awarded the grant.

For three years, Beth and I used ethnographic methods to study the special education referral and placement process for Black and Hispanic students of various ethnicities (e.g., African American, Haitian, Cuban, and Nicaraguan) in a large school district in the southeastern region of the United States. The purposes of the project were to: (a) understand and explain how the processes used to identify, assess, and place culturally and linguistically diverse students in high-incidence special education programs possibly contributed to their over-representation in such programs; and (b) identify referral and placement decision-making processes that successfully prevented over-identification and overrepresentation while also providing beneficial educational outcomes for students.

We based the conceptual framework for our work on the National Academy of Sciences' report (Heller, Holtzman, & Messick, 1982) on overrepresentation, which concluded that if any aspect of the curriculum and instruction in general or special education programs, the referral process, or the evaluation is problematic, then overrepresentation of a particular group must be seen as problematic. Our research examined children's experiences throughout these phases to determine factors that lead to overrepresentation.

We used a funnel-like approach to data collection, moving

from a broad description of county-wide placement rates and referral/placement policies, to an examination of the implementation of the referral/placement policies in 12 schools, to individual case studies of 12 students. We purposively selected the 12 schools to represent a range in ethnicity, socio-economic status, language, and schools' rates of referral. We observed in every primary and special education classroom in each of the 12 schools (with few exceptions), and interviewed administrators, teachers, and other support personnel in each school. Then we selected two teachers and their students from each school for additional observations. These 24 teachers represented a range in ethnicity, years teaching, grade level, teaching style and skill, and referral rate. Finally, we selected 12 students for in-depth case studies. Students reflected a range in ethnicity, English language proficiency, grade level, gender, and possible disability. We observed students in their general education classrooms, followed them through the referral and placement process, observed the meetings where they were identified as having a disability, and observed them in their special education classrooms. We interviewed them, their parents, their teachers, and other support personnel. School teams determined that five of the students had learning disabilities, three had cognitive disabilities, and four had emotional or behavioral disorders.

We found that many factors affected the placement process and challenged the belief that identification for special education represents "real," within-child disabilities in students. The factors that contribute to children being perceived as disabled include a complex weave of beliefs, policies, and practices at all levels—the family and community, the classroom, school building, school district, state and federal government, and the society at large. These included:

External pressures on schools: the state's accountability system

1. Pressure to do well on the state's high stakes test that led to a push to identify students for special education "before their scores count and can hurt the school."

In other words, some principals identified students with low achievement scores they thought might not do well on the state exam and encouraged psychologists to evaluate them. It should be noted that this was before the

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¹ Student support teams are also referred to as child study teams. IEP meetings are also referred to as staffings, placement conferences, or multidisciplinary team meetings.



From left to right: Elizabeth Kozleski, Arizona State University; Beth Harry, University of Miami; Alfredo Artiles, Arizona State University; Janette Klingner, University of Colorado at Boulder; and Grace Zamora Durán, U.S. Department of Education at an NCCRESt event.

eye on research

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

state included the scores of special education students when rating school performance.

General education: pre-referral phase

2. Poor instruction in general education classrooms, particularly in those schools serving the lowest-income, predominantly Black neighborhoods.
3. Lack of general education rather than special education support programs for those students who seemed to be struggling. Many school personnel conveyed that they had no viable alternatives for getting assistance for students other than placing them in special education.
4. Lack of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) strategies or culturally responsive pedagogy in some schools and many classrooms.
5. Pervasive negative attitudes about families, and a predisposition to blame them for children's struggles in school.

Administrative decisions

6. Hectic schedules, frequent interruptions, and conflicting curricular demands that allowed for very little sustained, focused instructional time.
7. Hiring practices that placed the "best" teachers in the "best" schools rather than the highest-need schools.
8. Discipline policies that in some cases relied too heavily on suspension (ranging from 1 student suspended out of a population of 1,379 over a period of a year in one school to 102 out of 603 in another school) rather than other approaches for helping students learn appropriate school-sanctioned behaviors. Also, many classroom teachers believed that they were not receiving adequate support from their school administrators.

Referral phase

9. Inadequate intervention strategies prior to or during the referral process.
10. Little discussion re: language proficiency at Child Study Team and IEP meetings (even for children still not considered fully proficient in English).
11. No attention to the classroom context when considering whether to refer a child for an evaluation.

Assessment and placement phase

12. The variability of the assessment process and its susceptibility to influence by numerous factors, including:
 - a. preconceived beliefs about the causes of children's struggles,
 - b. pressure for placement from teachers and/or administrators,
 - c. exclusion of relevant information on the quality of classroom instruction or the effects of the classroom environment on children's learning and behavior; and
 - d. inadequate consideration of language proficiency.
13. Misapplication of identification criteria when making decisions about disabilities.

Special education placement

14. Special education placement that was further compromised by the variable quality of the programs into which children were placed. The main factors affecting quality seemed to be teacher quality and class size.
15. Overly restrictive placement for some students in self-contained special education classes. Such students rarely were "mainstreamed" in general education classrooms for a portion of their day, as stipulated by special education law.

These findings led to changes in how the school district in which we conducted our research evaluated struggling students for possible special education placement. Our research also has helped the field understand the complex factors that can contribute to the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education.

This research resulted in two books by Teachers College Press (2006 and 2007), nine journal articles and two book chapters, and numerous conference and workshop presentations. Our book, *Why are so many minority students in special education? Understanding race and disability in schools*, became a Teachers College Press bestseller (Harry & Klingner, 2006).

Soon after Beth Harry and I completed our research project, the federal government funded us to establish a technical assistance center focused on addressing disproportionate representation, the National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCRESt) (with Alfredo Artiles and Elizabeth Kozleski). Through NCCRESt, I continued to explore issues related to disproportionate representation, particularly how to address the complex causes of the phenomenon. I was the lead author on a conceptual framework paper published by NCCRESt (Klingner et al., 2005). We suggested a systems change model for addressing disproportionate representation and closing the achievement gap. The cornerstone of our approach was to create culturally responsive educational systems. Our goals were to assist practitioners, researchers, and policymakers in coalescing around culturally responsive, evidence-based interventions and strategic improvements in practice and policy to improve students' opportunities to learn in general education and to reduce inappropriate referrals to and placement in special education.

Most recently, my School of Education colleague Leonard Baca and I were funded by the U.S. Department of Education to lead an Equity Assistance Center, the BUENO EAC. Our mission is to ensure educational equity for all students regardless of race, sex, national origin, or language. We assist public school staff, and state and tribal education agencies in providing equitable, high-quality education to all learners within our region: Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. Thus, as part of our work, we help school personnel address the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education.

I continue to do all I can to make sure that culturally and linguistically diverse students receive a culturally and linguistically responsive and appropriate education. In 2004, the federal government enacted a special education law that changed the way school personnel determine which students have learning disabilities, by looking at the extent to which they respond to research-based interventions. This is referred to as a Response to Intervention (RTI) model. Drawing on what I have learned from my research, I now focus on helping educators consider how best to implement RTI in culturally and linguistically diverse schools. ■

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Lew Romagnano: Alumnus remembered

The School of Education will miss devoted friend, alumnus, and colleague Lew Romagnano, who passed away at his home in Louisville, Colo., Jan. 11 following a brief illness. Romagnano earned his PhD at CU-Boulder in 1991 and was a professor of mathematical sciences at Metropolitan State College of Denver. He earned his MS in 1978 from Northern Arizona University and his BS from the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn in 1973. The following remarks form a heartfelt tribute to his legacy.

Dr. Romagnano leaves behind a legacy of mathematics leadership in Colorado and the nation through his work with in-service and prospective teachers, his contributions to mathematics education research, and his leadership in the development of the original and newly revised Colorado math standards. Beyond this enormous impact on mathematics education, Lew inspired everyone he knew with his great intellect and passion, and he warmed us with his compassion and wonderful sense of humor. He will be greatly missed.

Margaret Eisenbart
Distinguished Professor
School of Education
University of Colorado at Boulder

Lew, my friend and colleague, had many wonderful traits, but none was greater than his kindness, immediately evident by the twinkle in his eyes and his contagious smile. I first met Lew when I was a new graduate student and he a seasoned veteran, and despite the fact that his superior intellect and extensive experience dwarfed my own, he always approached our relationship as one of colleagues and collaborators. While his passion for mathematics education is legendary in Colorado and at the national level, he was also a philosopher, an avid runner, extremely

well read and very funny. He inspired many people, especially educators, to share the best of themselves with others. It is a blessing to have known such a beautiful person, and a profound sadness to have lost his presence.

Maureen Flory
Mental Health Program
Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

Lew was not just interested in mathematics, in teaching, in students, and in teachers; he was passionate about each of them. It was not enough that he had a deep understanding of mathematics; he wanted his prospective and current teachers to have it too—and teachers of every grade, not just high school. And, he wanted K-12 students to develop those same understandings. So he was not so much interested in “explaining” mathematics to students at all levels, but in empowering them to become mathematicians in their approach to the discipline and in enabling them to explain it to themselves.

Roberta Flexer
Associate Professor Emerita, Mathematics Education
School of Education
University of Colorado at Boulder

It's hard to believe that our colleague and friend Lew Romagnano is no longer with us—at least not

in person. Seems like only yesterday when we were new kids on the chopping block in the PhD program at the CU School of Ed. A quirky cadre of folks—both students and faculty—arrived there in the late '80s and early '90s. There were lots of intellectual sparks flying around (occasionally blood), and lots of laughs up in the grad student office at the end of the second floor hall. Lew was always in the middle of it all. He was the smartest guy in the room (I won't dare to comment on the smartest woman!)—his insights about making mathematics meaningful and worthwhile for “just plain folks”—not just math geeks—were up there with the leaders in the field. Lew was a guy who was comfortable in his own skin and who instantly made others feel cared about. Sweet Lew, you will be missed!

Paul D. Deering, PhD
Professor
College of Education
University of Hawai'i

Romagnano is survived by his wife, Ellen J. Helberg; mother, Charlotte Casten; sister, Beth Friedman; a great-aunt, two nephews, and several cousins. The above testimonials are edited accounts. For the full version, please visit: <http://www.colorado.edu/education/>. ■

Camilli joins Research and Evaluation Methodology faculty

Gregory Camilli received his PhD in Education from the Research and Evaluation Methodology Program at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Prior to accepting his faculty position at CU, he spent 23 years at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. In addition to teaching methodology classes in statistics, measurement, and meta-analysis, his research interests have focused on early education interventions, school factors in mathematics achievement, and multilevel item response theory (IRT) models. Camilli recently completed a term as co-editor of *Educational Researcher* and also serves as an associate editor of the *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics*. He is also a member of the Technical Advisory Committee for the state assessment program of New Jersey.

Most recently, his research has appeared in the *Teachers College Record*, *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Journal of Educational Measurement*, *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics*, and *Educational Measurement*,

Fourth Edition. His current research projects include the effects of affirmative action in law school admissions, the use of multilevel IRT modeling for identifying test items that are sensitive to instructional effects and the characteristics of different student populations, and Bayesian regression for meta-analysis. His research has been funded by the National Science Foundation, the Law School Admission Council, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the National Center for Early Education Research.

Camilli is impressed by the School of Education faculty's knowledge of current methodological and policy education research and how well the graduate students are supported. He joins the Research and Evaluation Methodology faculty as a professor. ■





Bob Roggow ('72), left, interviewed his former advisor and mentor, Associate Professor Emeritus Steve Hodge ('77).

A conversation with Stephen Hodge, PhD

by Bob Roggow

According to Steve Hartman of CBS Evening News, "Everybody Has a Story," as his award-winning program proves. I was reminded of this after a recent conversation with Dr. Stephen Hodge, retired associate professor emeritus of the School of Education. Steve does have a most intriguing and unique story.

Steve grew up in Sacramento, Calif., in an ethnically diverse community. He related that he did not distinguish himself in high school, and in fact, received less than average grades. After graduation, believing he was not college material, he enlisted in the Air Force with the expectation that this experience would help him realize a career as a police officer. Shortly after enlisting, Steve began a relatively rapid, and unexpected, journey that led to a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Missouri. This journey evolved due to the recognition of his intellectual talents, his discipline, timing, and mentoring by a variety of people.

Early during his military service, Steve received training in the Russian language which he mastered in six months. He was subsequently placed as an interpreter in the post World War II sector of Germany controlled by the Russians where, in fact, he was secretly helping to monitor Russian military planes and their locations in Eastern Europe. During his time in Berlin, he became fascinated with orphaned German children who lived in "holes" beneath the rubble of destroyed parts of the city. His day-to-day contact and interaction with these children helped motivate Steve to pursue an elementary teaching certificate through Sacramento State University in California following his military service. His intention was to teach.

During his senior year of undergraduate school, a professor encouraged Steve to enter a three-year doctoral program in educational psychology at the University of Missouri. He was given a teaching position in 1962 and completed the doctorate in 1964. Involvement with a Lab School on the Missouri campus further enhanced Steve's interest and knowledge base of children and their development. This experience had an added bonus: Steve met Nancy, now his wife of 46 years.

In 1965, Steve accepted a position at the University of Colorado to teach "individual differences" in the School of Education. Two years later he initiated the formation of the School Psychology Program per request of the Colorado Department of Education. Until his retirement in 1997, Steve remained the heart and soul of this program.

Steve desired to be a teacher first and foremost, electing not to pursue

publishing, feeling strongly that "my publications were my students." He believed that there was a "mass of (published) material out there and that it was my job to be reading and listening to that and passing it on." As far as Steve was concerned, he taught the most "interesting and interested students" in the School of Education and described them as a unique group whose priority was learning.

I surveyed a sampling of Steve's graduate students who agree with me that we were very fortunate to have him as a teacher and mentor. The education we experienced under Steve prepared us well for our future careers. His intellect, personalized teaching style, support, and most importantly, his passionate emphasis on the uniqueness of individuals and their individual differences, were gifts he shared with all his students.

Steve's passion for his past students is most evident in his comments and tone. He believes that he was the only professor in the School of Education to put the names of all his graduates on his office door. He further believes that the list was there the day he last walked out of his office. The love and respect Steve has for his students is further manifested in his home office. Next to his computer is a complete list of all his students. He states: "They're always with me!" Near the top of this list is the following: "MY GRADUATES: A treasure shared is all the more enriching!"

Retirement in 1997 offered Steve and Nancy the opportunity to spend more time with their son, Stephan, Jr.; daughter-in-law, Debbie; and grandsons, Stephan and Michael who live in Lafayette. Additionally, they have been able to pursue several interests, including reading (Steve estimates that he and Nancy have read more than 4,000 books between them), collecting art pieces, and traveling. Steve also has a passion and talent for wood sculpturing and has donated some pieces to churches, friends, and relatives.

Steve described his Air Force days as a "quiet time in his life" (listening to Russian pilots) and his 32-year teaching career at CU as a "talking time." Retirement has allowed him to return to a "quiet time" again. He commented that he occasionally wrestles with contributing more to his community. I found this to be an interesting comment (but not surprising) for a teacher/mentor who has made such positive differences for so many people. When I mentioned this to him, his response was simply, "They made a difference to me!" ■

Would you like to become a mentor?



Phi Delta Kappa

Are you interested in mentoring students? The Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) Board recently met Patti Ashley, program coordinator of the Boulder Valley School District's Community Access Mentoring (CAM) program. This project offers middle-school students unique mentoring and after-school program options.

Mentors commit to meet with their students once a week during school hours for a full year. Mentors build a positive relationship with the students as well as help research and locate appropriate after-school programs for them. Prospective mentors also receive three hours of training.

Contact Ashley for additional information: 720-203-6844, Patti.Ashley@bvdsd.org, or www.bvdsd.org/mentor.

Do you want to become a member of the local PDK chapter or renew an old membership? Perform this simple process online at <http://www.pdkintl.org/join/index.htm>. For more information on PDK, visit <http://www.pdkintl.org/about/index.htm>. ■

Obama and DiStefano promote STEM

Chancellor Phil DiStefano was at the White House Jan. 6 in a meeting with President Barack Obama to promote science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. Chancellor DiStefano was among only four public research university leaders at the meeting, representing 120 universities committed to STEM initiatives. At the event, the university leaders hand delivered a letter to the president pledging: "Together, our institutions committing to the Science and Mathematics Teacher Imperative (SMTI) will strive to increase the number of new science and mathematics teachers we prepare to more than 10,000 annually by 2015, for an additional 7,500 new teachers over the next five years."

"In recent years, a good number of public research universities have begun to address the issue of science and mathematics education and teacher preparation," said DiStefano. "Working through SMTI will enable our institutions to significantly impact science and mathematics education in our states and across the nation. It is a matter of economic security and global competitiveness."

CU-Boulder is a prominent leader in STEM education, influencing policy and transforming the way STEM classes are taught—in fact, our interactive teaching methods, such as the Learning Assistant model, are being emulated on campuses across the country. The School of Education faculty conduct significant STEM research and actively recruit CU's best math and science students into the challenging career of teaching.

If you would like to support CU students involved in STEM initiatives, go to the following link and insert STEM in the gift comments box:

<http://www.cufund.org/giving-opportunities/fund-description/?id=3541>. ■

Chancellor DiStefano (right center) met with President Obama and committed to increase the number of STEM teachers graduating from CU-Boulder.

AP photo/Charles Dharapak

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