

the challenge

Magazine for The Center for Gifted Studies

“GROW UP GREAT” INITIATIVE AT THE CENTER FOR GIFTED STUDIES



Helping children get a strong start is the goal of the PNC “Grow Up Great” initiative. On January 15, 2014, PNC Bank and The Center for Gifted Studies at Western Kentucky University held a press conference to announce a grant of \$150,000 from PNC Bank to support a project that will encourage higher-level thinking among young children. Mr. Chuck Denny, Regional President of Kentucky and Tennessee Market,

PNC Bank, said, “Getting out ahead of the curve like what this initiative is doing will help us get out ahead in Kentucky.” He continued, “Since the inception of Grow Up Great, approximately 1.5 million at-risk preschool children have been served through grants and innovative programs emphasizing math, science, the arts and financial education for young children.”

Six videos will be developed that will provide practical strategies for parents and educators to help their children develop critical thinking skills. Mrs. Allison Bemiss is in charge of the video development, and the WKU Educational Television Services will produce the videos. They will be distributed widely and at no charge.

The James Graham Brown Foundation funded Innovate Kentucky for \$500,000 with the opportunity to match that amount. The PNC grant helps complete that match. Innovate Kentucky, a partnership of The Center, the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky, the WKU Honors College and the WKU Innovation Center, seeks to inspire students of all ages to get involved with science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Up to now, Innovate Kentucky’s programming has been aimed at students in elementary school and beyond. The new initiative has identified an opportunity to reach children at an earlier age through the Grow Up Great program. President Gary Ransdell remarked, “If you are going to grow up great, those seeds are planted early.”

Dr. Julia Roberts said, “Getting a good start is the key to doing well in school. The importance is highlighted by the name of PNC Bank’s project title – Grow Up Great.”

Letter from Julia



Dear Friends of The Center for Gifted Studies,

I can't think of a better way to start a new year than to thank each of you for the various ways you support The Center for Gifted Studies. Without you, The Center could not continue with the energy and creativity that it does.

Thank you for telling others about opportunities offered through The Center. Even after more than 30 years, there are so many people who will never hear about our programming unless you share the news.

Thank you for the gifts you have given to The Center. The annual development campaign warms my heart as gifts arrive from former participants in SCATS, VAMPY, the Advanced Placement Institute, and travel experiences as well as from their parents. Gifts also are designated from friends who haven't participated in programs offered by The Center but who recognize the importance of supporting our mission and helping us reach for our vision. Please remember that The Center for Gifted Studies is a self-supporting unit.

I am appreciative of the art given to make Florence Schneider Hall beautiful. Recently, Ray Buckberry gave us an original Ivan Wilson watercolor, Gus Swanson shared a woodcut print by William Moseley, and Brenda Jackson made a gift of her original painting of Venice. All pieces of art are hanging in Schneider Hall, home of The Center for Gifted Studies and the Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky.

Thank you for the connections you help us make with others who can support The Center for Gifted Studies. Members of the Advisory Board of The Center help us do this on an ongoing basis. Thank you for gifts that have helped us make the \$500,000 match for the grant from the James Graham Brown Foundation, and we are within \$50,000 of completing the match. Thank you, PNC, for the gift and the opportunity to be a part of the PNC Grow Up Great program.

Of course, there are so many other ways that you support and promote The Center for Gifted Studies. Thank you so much!

Sincerely,

Julia Link Roberts

MAHURIN PROFESSOR OF GIFTED STUDIES

THE MISSION FOR THE CENTER

We are committed to encouraging excellence by providing educational opportunities and resources to three populations: gifted and talented students, educators working with gifted students, and parents of gifted students.

THE VISION FOR THE CENTER

Becoming an internationally preeminent center is the vision of The Center for Gifted Studies. This vision includes expanding services in five areas:

(1) offering educational programs for gifted children and youth, (2) providing professional development opportunities for educators, (3) enhancing communication and advocacy for gifted children, (4) conducting research and developing curriculum to remove the learning ceiling, and (5) building a testing and counseling component for gifted children and their families.

the
challenge

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COLLABORATION UNLOCKS POSSIBILITY AT FALL SUPER SATURDAYS

Roam the halls of seven buildings on WKU's campus during the first four Saturdays of November and you'll witness several things – intricate science experiments, exciting leadership exercises, beautiful works of art, inspired investigative reporting, and, no matter which classroom you enter, the smiling faces of students who are eager to learn. What makes each of these experiences possible is collaboration, the invisible thread woven through the Fall Super Saturdays classes offered to first through eighth graders.

Of the 37 possible classes at WKU and the Kentucky Science Center, seven of them wouldn't have been possible without help from the art education program at WKU. Since 2001, Dr. Miwon Choe has made art education and elementary education preservice teachers the instructors in her Super Saturdays art classes. The prospect of teaching a class two months after starting the program is daunting for students without teaching experience and challenging for those with experience given the meticulous instructional plans that are required for the fall classes.

"This is really the highlight for our program and one of the most effective

tests of a teacher's commitment and disposition," Miwon said. "During that first semester students realize it's not just about them, but about the students they're teaching."

Classes like Make Your Own Fairy Tale Creature: Performance Edition and Art of the Painted Violin II aren't just learning opportunities for the art education students. By the end of Fall Super Saturdays – when all seven classes come

together for an art exhibit in the Cube Gallery of the Fine Arts Center – those classes have morphed into amazing experiences that leave the instructors with no doubt they belong in the classroom.

One Super Saturdays teacher developed her class for the capstone experience in the Honors College at WKU. Sarah Fox, who taught Dare to Care: Learn to Be an Effective Leader, a class focused on developing leadership skills in fifth, sixth, and seventh graders. When given the opportunity to design a project based around her interests and future goals, Sarah chose to explore



methods of teaching that encouraged gifted students to see themselves as potential change-agents and empowered them with skills to succeed in that capacity. Sarah said Dr. Leslie Baylis at the Honors College and Dr. Tracy Inman at The Center for Gifted Studies were instrumental in helping her shape this rewarding experience.

“What I enjoyed most was watching my students independently discover that they each had unique qualities to offer in terms of leadership,” Sarah said. “They really grasped the idea that effective leadership is situational, creative, and often ambiguous, and that each of them was capable of effecting positive change.”

The students in three science classes taught by SKyTeach faculty were also on a journey of discovery. They marveled at miniature tornadoes in Storm Chasers, analyzed clues in order to find Big Red in Whodunnit? Using Forensics, and extracted DNA from a strawberry in What Makes You... You? Catherine Poteet, a SKyTeach master teacher, helped organize classes with her students that reflected the program’s mission to “promote science and math education through inquiry-based lessons.”

Catherine said her instructors were amazed at the level of learning among gifted children who were only in first through fourth grade. Seeing the unbridled joy and enthusiasm for math and science among the students raised a tough question for the instructors.

“They begin to wonder what happens to most of these kids by the time they’re sophomores or juniors in high school where they’ve lost that joy, interest, and inquisitiveness,” Catherine explained. “I want to instill in my future educators that we have these gifted kids out there, and they’re not just going to be okay. They start off excited, but, if they’re not challenged continually, it’s gone.”



Creating a newspaper that included feature stories and coverage of Super Saturdays was a challenge that required collaboration between two classes – In Focus: Exploring Photography and Stop the Presses: Calling All Reporters. Jeanie Adams-Smith, an associate professor of photojournalism at WKU, provided the keen-eyed photographers while Ali Raymer supplied the budding investigative journalists for a team-up in the third week that saw classes in Gary Ransdell Hall receiving media coverage.

“What I wanted to teach my kids was that photography is an experience,” Jeanie explained. “To be able to collaborate with Ali’s class and go into an environment that maybe made my students a little nervous or was something very new for them, that was one level of experience. I think they came away from the class with an exposure to the different ways they can use photography and visual communications in their lives.”

Ali, who took Jeanie’s classes as an undergraduate at WKU, described the collaboration as a great learning experience for both classes: “I knew that our classes would provide a real-world challenge for our students if we collaborated together. This experience was invaluable to our students since the older students in the photography class were able to lead my younger students and provide them with confidence. It was such a proud moment to watch students who had picked up on the skills so quickly and practically put them to use.”

That’s what makes Super Saturdays such a unique experience for students. Through engaging collaborations between WKU and the instructors, students get to expand their learning horizons and develop new sets of skills. They are challenged in ways that make it difficult for that love of learning to ever fade away.



FALL BREAK IN GERMANY

THE BEST FALL BREAK EVER

BY DEANNA M. JENKINS



Every once in a while, I just feel like I need to go out and see something different. Lucky enough, my best friend, Andrea Heming, also has the same love of travel. Sometime over the summer of 2013, we decided that we would start looking for an opportunity to travel together. We didn't know that such an opportunity would show up so soon.

One of the perks of working on a college campus is that there are always interesting things going on and opportunities if you are willing to take a chance. In late August 2013, Dr. Julia shared The Center's

Fall Break in Germany trip with the campus community. I'm so glad she sent that email.

I'm going to be honest. I originally shared that email with Andrea as a joke. I never thought that she would want to go. My email to her went something like, "Hey, check this out! We talked about getting of the country...want to do it?" Imagine my surprise when she was on board immediately. Over the next couple of days, we went back and forth, and then we decided that we were going. Just the idea of something so exciting made us giddy.

Before this trip, even though we've known each other since elementary school, the farthest from home that Andrea and I had been together was Atlanta, GA. This was going to be quite the trip. We officially signed on in the first week of September. Daily emails and texts about what to pack and what to expect soon followed.

When October 4th finally came around, the word excited can't even fully convey my mood. I won't speak for Andrea, but I know we felt pretty close to the same. We are best friends after all. Upon arriving at the airport in Nashville, TN,



we met our fellow travelers. I didn't know then that I would come to appreciate and enjoy everyone who made up our group. We all came from different backgrounds and most from different areas of the Commonwealth. We may have been different, but our love of travel and willingness to experience new things bound us together.

We hit the ground running upon arriving in Munich. After meeting Olga Krebs, the best tour guide ever (your argument is invalid, she wins), we got on the tour bus and headed out of the city. It was a chilly, rainy day, but that didn't stop us. The next few days were filled with the beautiful walled cities of Nordlingen, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, and Dinkelsbühl. I loved seeing the medieval walls lined with shiny, modern cars. I think I could live in Salzburg. Nuremberg was lovely, and Munich was practically teeming with people. Dachau will stay with me forever.

We had a surprise when we woke in Berchtesgaden; it had snowed overnight! One of the singular scariest moments of my life was when our tour bus went up a mountain in the snow to Obersalzberg. Looking back, it probably wasn't a mountain, but trust me that it sure felt like one. The window seat wasn't doing me any favors. Obviously, we made it and were not, as Dick Roberts quipped, "A headline."

One character we heard a lot about on this trip was King Ludwig II. We visited his three castles: Neuschwanstein Castle, Linderhof Palace, and Herrenchiemsee. I think it is safe to say that we were all impressed by the ornate, sumptuous details of each palace. Neuschwanstein Castle has been on my list of places to see my whole life. I can remember seeing pictures of it when I was little. I don't know that I ever really expected to see it in person! Herrenchiemsee was probably my favorite. It was as homey as an unfinished castle in the middle of a lake can be.

When Sunday rolled around, I really didn't want to leave. Now, I can hardly believe that I was able to take such an amazing journey with such amazing people. After being with them pretty much exclusively, it felt so weird not to get up in the morning and get on the tour bus. Or to answer roll call! I'm happy to report that Andrea and I still love each other even after spending 10-straight days together. In fact, I learned how to appreciate my friend on a whole new level and made several new friends—and that's the best souvenir a girl could find.

Deanna Jenkins (SS97-99; Travel Germany 2013) first knew of The Center through her childhood experiences at Super Saturdays. She still remembers building a castle! Deanna is communication specialist for Development and Alumni Relations at WKU.

Andrea Heming (Instructor for Super Saturdays, Summer Camp, and SCATS; Endorsed Teacher; Travel Germany 2013) has taught kindergarten, fourth grade, and fifth grade at Bristow Elementary in the Warren County Public Schools. She and Deanna have been friends since childhood.

ALUMNI UPDATE

MAGGIE CLOUSE (SS 2001-02; SCATS 2002; VAMPY 2003-05) finished her Masters in Science degree in biomedical engineering and is working on a PhD in Experimental Medicine at the University of Tübingen, Germany. She is researching retinal implants.

MEREDITH CLOUSE (SS2001-05; SCATS 2004; VAMPY 2005-06) is a biomedical engineer having graduated from Rose-Hulman in May 2013. She currently does research at Kosair Children's Hospital in Louisville in addition to working at the University of Louisville medical school.

ALLISON ELLIOTT-SHANNON (VAMPY 1993-1995; London 1996; Counselor) recently married Brent Shannon, an assistant professor of English at Eastern Kentucky University. Allison is a senior public relations specialist and science writer for the University of Kentucky. They live in Lexington.

HOLLIE LOHMAN (SCATS 2003-04; VAMPY 2005-06) graduated from Illinois Institute of Technology in December 2012 with a BS in Civil Engineering emphasizing Transportation. Upon graduation, she accepted a Railroad Engineering position with HDR Engineering, Inc. in Omaha, NE. Since then, she has pursued a new endeavor with HDR in Council Bluffs, IA, where she is working on a comprehensive interstate redesign to improve mobility and safety.

SARAH MARKHAM LAWRENCE (VAMPY 1988-1990) and husband, David, are parents to Henderson, Samuel, and Riley Jane who passed away in 2008. Having earned a PharmD degree at Sullivan University in 2011, Sarah now serves as Strategic Consultant Pharmacist and Utilization Manager at PharMerica Corporation, owner of Lawrence Pharmacy Services and Sarah Lawrence Consulting, and pharmacist at Target. She also is the National Partnership Director of The Student Doctor Network as well as a community-based faculty member for the University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy. Sarah and David created the Riley Jane Lawrence Fund in memory of their daughter. This fund sends deserving young people to VAMPY.

IDEAFESTIVAL BOWLING GREEN

ALL ABOUT IDEAS



Creativity and innovation will be on display February 28 at the Downing Student Union Auditorium as Innovate Kentucky hosts the inaugural IdeaFestival Bowling Green. The one-day festival features nine of Kentucky's brightest innovators plus keynote speaker Bill Capodagli, who will present *Dreams and Dreamers: How to Innovate Like Walt Disney and the Pixarians*.

"From the beginning Innovate Kentucky has wanted to host a speaker series on WKU's campus," said Josh Raymer, Executive Administrator of Innovate Kentucky. "When we found out IdeaFestival was looking to expand across Kentucky, we saw a chance to merge two goals into an exciting new event that showcases Kentucky's innovation."

IdeaFestival is held annually in Louisville and is described as "a celebration for the intellectually curious." National thought-leaders from a wide range of disciplines speak to sold-out crowds during the three-day event. IdeaFestival branched out in 2013 with IF Lexington, a two-day event that led to the creation of IdeaFestival Bowling Green.

Kris Kimel, president of the Kentucky Science and Technology Corporation and the founder of IdeaFestival, said the theme of IFBG is relevant now more than it has ever been. "IF Bowling Green is delving even deeper into the IdeaFestival mantra of Stay Curious though its twin themes of creativity and innovation, elements that are the new currency for success regardless of 'what you do,'" he explained.

Creativity and innovation can be found in the behind-the-scenes magic at Pixar, which is the focus of the keynote presentation. *Dreams and Dreamers* is described as "a tour of the most innovative, creative organization in the world."



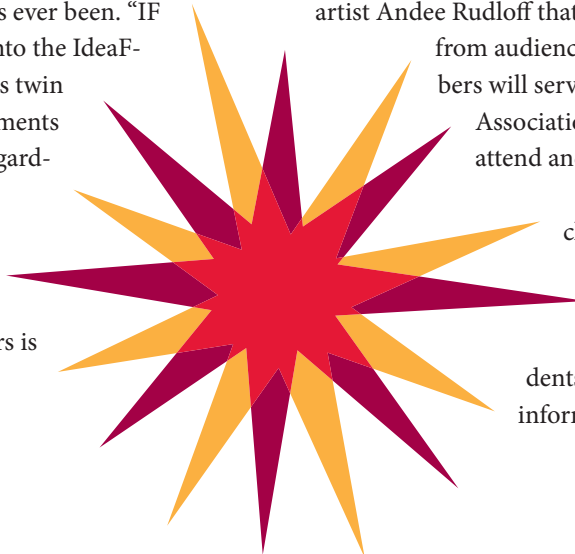
You'll learn how to look at the world through a child's eyes, how to believe in your team, how to jump in and try something different, how to create your own corporate playground, and more."

The nine session speakers are all superb examples of the innovation that is happening in Kentucky. Hitcents, Spalding, Kentucky Bourbon Trail, Alltech, SKyPAC, and Kentucky Space will address topics from product innovation to satellite design to economic collaboration. Dana Bowers, founder of iPay Technologies, will explore her entrepreneurial journey and urge the dreamers in the crowd to start their own businesses. Chris Young and Andrew Swanson are the director and executive producer, respectively, of a Kickstarter-funded TV pilot called *Alone Down There* and will explain how a TV show gets made in 2014. Kim Huston, author of *Small Town Sexy*, will touch on the movement back toward smaller towns like Bardstown, KY, which was named the "Most Beautiful Small Town in America" by USA Today and Rand McNally.

The festival will have several interactive features, including question and answer panels at the end of each session where participants can tweet or text questions and a stage design created by artist Andee Rudloff that will evolve throughout the day with help from audience members. WKU Forensics team members will serve as emcees for IFBG and the Alumni Association will invite innovative WKU alumni to attend and be recognized.

"Ideas galore!" Julia Roberts exclaimed. "Don't miss IdeaFestival Bowling Green. In fact, we hope it is a new tradition for you."

Festival passes are \$10 for students and \$20 for non-students. For more information visit www.ideafestivalbg.com.





The Center Participates in NASA Gifted Webinar

BY DENISE ZIGLER

The first NASA gifted webinar was held on January 9, 2014. The webinar included Dr. Julia Link Roberts, Mahurin Professor of Gifted Education at Western Kentucky University (WKU); Dr. Rick Courtright, Gifted Education Research Specialist, Duke University Talent Identification Program; and Denise Zigler, gifted educator, and Tennessee NASA Solar System Ambassador Master Teacher; under the technological expertise of Dr. Rusanne Low, IGES/ NASA Earth Science Education and Public Outreach (E/PO) Forum; and Mr. Zack Ryle, WKU; and hosted by Mr. Tom Nolan, Critical Instrument Operations Engineer, NASA-JPL. Participants included NASA science E/PO personnel who are NASA Centers, universities, and other educational organizations located across the country. Speakers presented from The Center for Gifted Studies at Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY.

The webinar focused on main areas of gifted education, "The Gifted and Talented: Who They Are, What They Need, Why They Don't Have It, and What We Can Do about It." Jonathan Plucker, lead author of *Mind the Other Gap: The Growing Excellence Gap in K-12 Education* (2010) wrote,

"A small percentage of students scoring at the highest level on achievement tests suggest that children with advanced academic potential are being under-served."

The webinar opened with Dr. Roberts' presentation on the gifted child, patterns, potential and predictions. Her opening presentation was followed shortly thereafter by Mrs. Zigler's presentation on the school, programs, procedures, and provisions. Dr. Courtright completed the webinar presentation when he presented on the society, problems, policies and possibilities. Presenters discussed talent development and promising practices with NASA participants. Questions were posted to presenters throughout the webinar. Presenters answered questions, and a positive flow of ideas and brainstorming discussion followed. With multiple strategies now being considered, presenters will return in February for an extension of the NASA gifted webinar and question-answer session.

Presenters received a second invitation to present to an additional group of NASA participants concerning gifted education.

SPOTLIGHT: **JOSH RAYMER**

When the Innovate Kentucky initiative began in 2012, Josh Raymer was selected to be the first Executive Administrator. Josh was familiar with The Center's work before his hiring, as he attended the Super Saturdays program while in elementary school. Josh grew up in Bowling Green and graduated from Greenwood High School in 2006 before pursuing his news/editorial journalism undergraduate coursework at WKU. Josh completed his undergraduate degree in 2010 and is currently pursuing a Master's degree at WKU in Recreation and Sport Administration with a Focus in Media and Branding.

What does your job entail as Executive Administrator of Innovate Kentucky?

Innovate Kentucky is an initiative that seeks to increase awareness of and enthusiasm for the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) disciplines in Kentucky. The initiative is funded by a \$500,000 challenge grant from the James Graham Brown Foundation, the first of its kind to be awarded to a public university. Innovate Kentucky is a partnership between The Center for Gifted Studies, the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science, the Honors College at WKU, and the Innovation Center. My primary responsibility is the upkeep of our website, innovateky.com. One main facet of the website is our podcasts, which we call the Innovation Update. During the interviews, which



are published about every other week, we try to either conduct previews of STEM events or spotlight young innovators and entrepreneurs. Other roles include helping facilitate the VAMPY classes (including Sustainability, Problems You Have Never Solved Before, and STEAM Labs) and planning a future speaker series.

What do you have planned for a speaker series?

IdeaFestival Bowling Green (IFBG) is an idea I had after a conversation with Kent Lewis, the main contact for the IdeaFestival Lexington event. After months of planning, I am thrilled to announce IFBG will be held February 28 at the Downing Student Union Auditorium. This event will appeal to people who are excited by big ideas, and it is my hope they will walk away from IFB feeling inspired to chase their dreams. (Please see the article on the IdeaFestival on page X).

Recently The Center received a PNC "Grow Up Great" grant. What will your role with this project be?

PNC's "Grow Up Great" focuses on early childhood development. This program supports projects that develop infants to kindergarten age children. Innovate Kentucky and The Center for Gifted Studies put in a proposal for a \$150,000 grant to produce six videos to help parents and educators with learning strategies for children. Allison Bemiss spearheads this project, and the finished videos will be made available to parents and educators. This is really a great chance to get the love of learning started at a young age. If you can do that, then this program will feed in beautifully to both The Cent

You helped facilitate three VAMPY classes?

Innovate Kentucky sponsored two VAMPY classes in 2012, Rube Goldberging and Sustainability. Those changed a little bit in 2013 (Rube Goldberg became STEAM Labs), and we added one class: Problems You Have Never Solved Before. All three covered different topics, but all focused on innovation and STEM through problem solving. It was fun to watch students' minds at work. My favorite task in Problems You Have Never Solved, for instance, was how do you mail a single Pringle chip from WKU to South Warren High School and back to WKU without it breaking. We love the mix of classes, and they really represent what Innovate Kentucky is all about.

In your spare time, what do you do?

I am married to Ali Raymer who is a sophomore English teacher at Franklin-Simpson High School. She is a volleyball coach there, and I am a former dodgeball coach and captain, so it's fun to compare days when you have different problems that arise as the leader of a team. We met each other at WKU and specifically while

working at the Talisman. Later in our time at WKU, I worked as the Assistant Writing Editor and Ali was my boss! We married in October of 2011. I also have two dogs named Bruce and Clark. Besides my wife and my dogs, I love WKU dodgeball and Indianapolis Colts football. I love Sundays because they are all about the five F's; faith, football, friends, family, and food. It's just a great time to hang out with friends and family.

You play dodgeball?

I always loved dodgeball growing up. Any day the teacher rolled out the dodgeballs, I knew it was going to be a good day. I started liking it right before my freshman year of college because of a church tournament. When I started WKU's dodgeball club, I found that I enjoyed building the

team and watching the players grow along with playing the game. As I went along in my dodgeball career, it became less and less about the game and more and more about the times spent off the court with the team. I loved forming those bonds off the court that lead to a close-knit team on the court.

You are writing a book, too?

Yes I am! My passion has always been about writing. My book is titled *The Devil's Halo*. The book came about from a Creative Writing class with Professor Sandra Day my sophomore year of college. I had to write a single manuscript, and, by the end of the class, I had written 65 pages of a novel. The book is urban fantasy, which means it is fantasy (dealing with war between Heaven and Hell), but

it is set in a real life location, New Jersey, as opposed to somewhere like Middle Earth or in space. I reread the manuscript several years later and thought it was terrible, but I knew the concept was good. So I have written about a page a day to work on the overall book. I have an editor and a designer who have been very helpful as I near the completion of the book. Many of the characters in the book come from real life experiences I have had, such as the protagonist's brother, who is almost exclusively like my brother. I hope the book will be done by Summer 2014.

We are all very thankful for Josh's work and experiences as he plays a vital role in any success of The Center for Gifted Studies and Innovate Kentucky.

Special Issue of GIFTED CHILD TODAY on Special Schools

The summer 2014 issue of *Gifted Child Today* focused on special schools, and Julia Roberts was guest editor for this special issue. The cover photo featured three students attending the Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky – Elizabeth Gatten (VAMPY 2008-2011), Charvinia (Kesi) Neblett, and Gabe Smith (FSS 2005; SCATS 2008; VAMPY 2009-11; Travel to London, Paris, and Italy; Counselor).

This issue included articles on various types of special schools. Julia was also author of one of the articles, *The Gatton Academy: A Case Study of a State Residential High School with a Focus on Mathematics and Science*. This article provides an overview of the Gatton Academy, including a description of the school and its first six-year history.



Other articles in this special issue on special schools included *Special Schools and Differentiated Curriculum: The Issues* by Sandra Kaplan; *Designing Self-Contained Middle Schools for the Gifted: A Journey in Program Development* by Jenny Klimis and Joyce VanTassel-Baska; *Implementing Differentiation: A School's Journey* by Christine Webser, Linda Johnson, and Shane Trip; and *University of Washington Transition School: College*

preparation and Teaching for Transformation by Maren Halvorsen, Nancy B. Hertzog, and Sarah A. Childers.

Julia is a member of the Advisory Board for *Gifted Child Today*. Dr. Susan Johnsen, professor at Baylor University, is the editor of the journal.

The directions were simple. “Reach into the bag and pull out a chip. In each bag will be nine chips – three blue, three red, and three white. After each person draws, you must reassess the possibility of pulling each color the next time,” explained Mariam MacGregor, who led Leadership Institute XVII.

Daniel Zoeller of Trinity High School in Louisville, KY, chuckled as he reached into a blue colored bag full of fake casino chips. Moments before he reached in the bag, two other educators and attendees of the Institute pulled blue chips, so he remarked his chances of pulling a blue chip were slim, with three red chips and two more white chips still present. “So I guess my chances of pulling red would be one-half ($\frac{3}{6}$), white would be one-third ($\frac{2}{6}$), and red would be one-sixth ($\frac{1}{6}$).” Daniel slowly pulled his hand out of the bag and to his surprise he pulled...blue!

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLASSROOM ABOUND WITH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE XVII

This is just one of the leadership activities that took place during the 2013 installment of the Leadership Institute, which The Center for Gifted Studies hosted December 5. Mariam MacGregor, leadership expert and award-winning author of several books including Build-

ing Everyday Leadership: Promoting Attitudes and Actions for Respect and Success and Teambuilding with Teens: Activities for Leadership, led the Institute. Mariam shared how to develop leadership skills in young people by embedding those skills in Common Core State Standards and other standards. For example, Daniel and the other participants were examining the state standards for statistics and probability associated with grades four and five while developing leadership skills of communication, problem solving, and teamwork to figure out the correct percentages and fractions. In the extended version of the game, the teacher can choose to put more chips in the game for greater collaboration between students.

“In general for Common Core Standards, one of the greatest hurdles is creating lessons that integrate the main subject matter (whether it is art, physical education, history, science, technology, English, math, or career competencies) in ways



Pat Richardson Honored as The Center's Volunteer of the Year

Patricia "Pat" Richardson was honored with the 2013 Summit Award as an outstanding volunteer for The Center for Gifted Studies. As a wonderful volunteer, Pat also was selected to receive the Distinguished Service Medal for WKU. She has been a long-term supporter of The Center. Pat's nephew, Alex Stanhope, came to VAMPY in 2001.

When the 20th Biennial World Conference was held in Louisville last August, Pat volunteered to staff the Louisville convention bureau table throughout the conference. Her ready smile and helpful information added to the friendly atmosphere for the conference. She volunteered all four days of the World Conference.

A lifelong resident of Louisville, Pat is a retired educator who continues to be involved in education, the WKU Alumni Association, and many other activities. Her schedule is full from day to day.



Pat's comment was: "I have been a huge fan of The Center for Gifted Studies since it began at WKU, and it was a total surprise and an overwhelming honor to be recognized as the Volunteer of the Year."

Julia Roberts said, "Pat Richardson is the volunteer that every group would like to have. She is willing, energetic, and devoted to her volunteer responsibilities. Thank you, Pat."

that support or meet the Common Core, while giving educators the opportunity to be creative, engage students' curiosity, and not minimize the importance of making sure that celebrating a love of learning is still a priority," states Mariam.

Caldwell County Schools Gifted and Talented Resource Teacher Anna Lea Claxton was one of the educators in attendance: "Everyone loves professional development, especially when it is applicable to both the classroom and Common Core Standards. I am continually looking for lesson ideas that will meet the needs of the gifted students and Common Core Standards, and the Leadership Institute did just that! I came away with many ideas, including a book with even more useful activities and ideas that can be used and adapted for not only leadership students

of all grades but also other areas of gifted education as well."

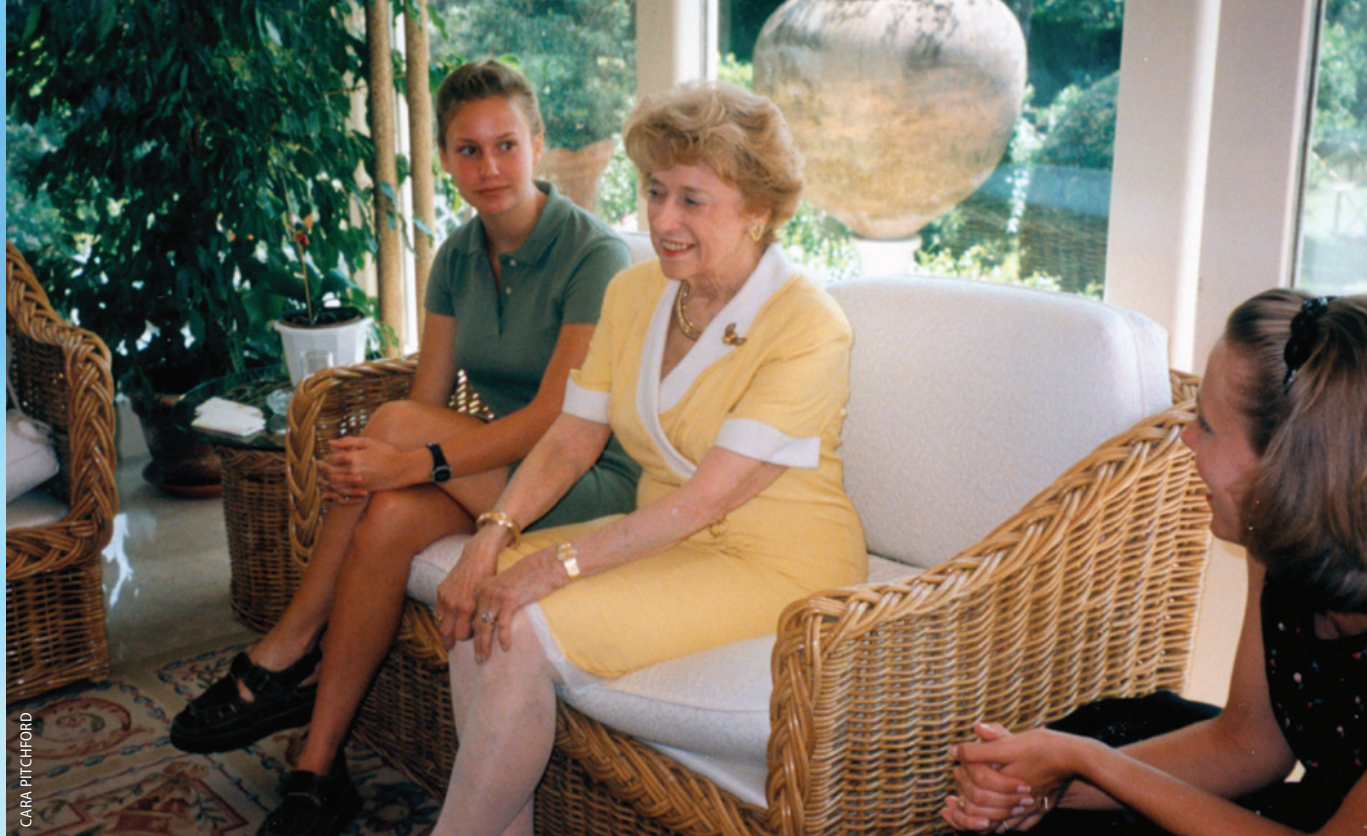
"Leadership must be developed as skills in athletics or any other talent area," states Mahurin Professor of Gifted Education Julia Roberts. "This Institute allowed educators opportunities for involvement in leadership experiences that integrate leadership skills with the standards that are important in Kentucky schools."

"This is by far one of the best trainings I have ever attended that provided specific lessons to teach gifted students," said Gifted and Talented Coordinator and Curriculum Coordinator at Jody Richards Elementary School Katie Decker. "I would have to say that my favorite part of the institute was actually participating in the leadership activities Mrs. MacGregor published in her book, Building Everyday

Leadership in All Kids." Each participant of the Institute was provided one of Mariam's newest books along with online content and handouts to take back with them to their classrooms.

"It was wonderful to have actual activities I didn't have to 'create' and be able to take it back to my building and implement the very next day," Katie continued. "I loved that the lessons and the activities we did kept me engaged, so I feel certain that it will also engage our leadership and gifted students."

The next seminar available to educators and administrators is 2014 Berta Excellence in Education Workshop featuring Dr. Sylvia Rimm on March 6 and 7, 2014. For more information on this seminar, visit www.wku.edu/gifted/bertha_seminar.php



CARA PITCHFORD

Remembering a Special Visit with an Exceptional Lady

News reported in 2013 that Linda Boggs had died, reminding one group of travelers with The Center for Gifted Studies of a wonderful visit with Ambassador Boggs as our gracious hostess.

The Center for Gifted Studies traveled to Italy in 1999. Prior to making the trip, Betty Jo Harris, parent of Ned Wright (VAMPY 1997; Travel to London, Britain, and Italy), called to ask if we would like to go to the U.S. Embassy to the Vatican on our trip. Of course, the answer was yes, so a visit was arranged. The U.S. Ambassador at the time was Mrs. Linda Boggs, former Congresswoman from Louisiana.

"Linda Boggs was a gentle, gracious lady who spoke with each of us as guests in her residence," said Cara Pitchford, a traveler

from Scottsville, KY. "Regardless of our age, from the youngest student to the oldest visitor, we all felt the touch of her hospitality. Mrs. Boggs defines representing a country well. She was quite an ambassador." Robert (member of The Center's Advisory Board) and Cara Pitchford (former Coordinator of Technology and Public Relation at The Center) and their daughter Laura Lee Fleming Wren (SCATS 1995-97; Travel to Paris and Italy) were on this trip.

Julie Roberts Boggess (SCATS 1986-87; SCATS, Super Saturdays, and Summer Camp Teacher; Travel to Italy) remembers the day: "One minute we were walking through a quaint Italian neighborhood, then we looked up and saw guards with machine guns outside one of the buildings. We were graciously welcomed in to the American

Embassy and told that our hostess was a bit delayed. Apparently the Pope had fallen in the shower that morning. Ambassador Boggs was checking in with the Vatican to make sure all was well. When she arrived she oozed southern charm and was delightful to talk with. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime moment."

Julia Roberts recalls that as the group entered the embassy she commented about the art of Clementine Hunter, an artist from Natchitoches, LA. Mrs. Boggs had art from Louisiana that had been loaned by the state arts heritage group, and the Louisiana art was decorating the embassy in a way in keeping with the wonderful hospitality members of The Center's traveling group enjoyed there.

TAG BOARD MEETING AND TAG FALL INSTITUTE HELD AT WKU

The Association for the Gifted (TAG) held its fall board meeting at Western Kentucky University September 6-7, 2014, and TAG board members presented sessions at the TAG Fall Institute. Julia Roberts is the president of TAG, and Tracy Inman is the webmaster. TAG is a division of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the leading voice for special and gifted education with a membership base of 35,000. CEC-TAG establishes professional standards for teacher preparation for the field, develops initiatives to improve gifted education practice, and ensures that the needs of children and youth with exceptionalities are met in educational legislation.

The TAG Institute opened with Dr. Krystal Goree, Baylor University, making the keynote entitled What Administrators Need to Know about Diversity Among Gifted Children. Dr. Fred Bonner, Rutgers University, presented the keynote at lunch. His title was African-American Males in P-16 Contexts.

The TAG Institute included strands focusing on diversity among children who are gifted and talented, students who are twice exceptional, curriculum, and social-emotional issues. Participants had the opportunity to learn about gifted education from some of the country's leading experts.

The TAG board will meet in Bowling Green again in the fall of 2014. Check out The Center's website for the date for the 2014 TAG Institute.





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GIFTS OF ART

Gustaf Swanson
Owensboro, KY

CONGRATULATIONS, MARY EVANS!

This fall, Dr. Mary Evans, principal of Cumberland Trace Elementary School in Bowling Green, KY, was recognized as one of the top elementary and middle school principals in the nation. In October, the National Association of Elementary School Principals named Mary a 2013 National Distinguished Principal. Mary was one of 61 principals given this honor.

"This was a complete surprise ... a real surprise," Mary said. "I am really honored. I would not be where I am without the support of the staff, parents and community. It's not about me."

Mary has long been recognized throughout Kentucky as a leader in public education. In 1996 she became principal at Cumberland Trace Elementary, and has served in that capacity for 17 years. Mary has made a distinct impact on those who attend Cumberland Trace Elementary School, but her impact is not limited to the walls of her school. A tireless advocate for gifted education, Mary received the Service and Advocacy Award from the Kentucky Association for Gifted Education (KAGE) in 2008. She has chaired the Governor's Advisory Council for Gifted

and Talented and is a former president of KAGE.

Mary has been instrumental to the success of The Center for Gifted Studies as well. Before her position as principal at Cumberland Trace Elementary School, Mary worked in The Center for Gifted Studies as Program Coordinator. Mary provided the leadership for our early Super Saturdays. She also was instrumental in implementing the Javits grant that focused on the primary program.

"Mary is such an outstanding leader at the school, district, state, and national level," explained Julia Roberts. "I appreciate her advocacy for children, including those who are gifted and talented. Congratulations, Mary, on a wonderful honor."

Friends at The Center for Gifted Studies are elated for Mary on the news of this high honor and is grateful to her service both to the local school system and to The Center for Gifted Studies.



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CALENDAR

February 1, 8, 15, & 22, 2014

Winter Super Saturdays

February 28, 2014

IdeaFestival Bowling Green

March 6–7, 2014

Berta Education in Excellence Seminar

March 28 – April 6, 2014

Spring Trip to Italy

May 23, 2014

Kentucky Recognition Ceremony for Duke TIP

June 8–20, 2014

SCATS

June 22 – July 12, 2014

VAMPY

June 23–27, 2014

Advanced Placement Summer Institute

July 14–18, 2014

The Summer Camp