

# the Challenge

Magazine for The Center for Gifted Studies



SAM OLDENBURG



BRYAN LEMON



SAM OLDENBURG

## HOME SWEET HOME: THE CENTER RETURNS TO SCHNEIDER HALL

Schneider Hall is the home to The Center for Gifted Studies and The Gatton Academy. After 15 months of temporary housing, The Center staff rejoined the staff of The Gatton Academy in August in the newly expanded Schneider Hall. Now equipped to house 80 additional students, Schneider Hall also has additional offices and a common space large enough to hold 200 Gatton Academy students. A special thank you goes to those who made it possible: Carol Martin (Bill) Gatton, Sue and Brown Badgett, Ben Cundiff, the J. Rogers Badgett Sr. Foundation, Mike and Julie Muscarella, Daksha and Prabodh Mehta, Bill and Sue Hamilton, and Lydia Latham. Gratitude also goes to the state legislature for including additional funding in the budget to educate the new students. Come visit us; we would love to show you our new home.

# Letter from Julia



Dear Friends of The Center for Gifted Studies,

Three and a half decades. That is how long The Center for Gifted Studies has been providing services for children, young people, educators, and parents. Significant birthdays often prompt reflecting on what has been accomplished. The Center's 35th year provides such a significant occasion.

Programming by The Center started one program at a time, and each program began in response to a need or an opportunity. For example, the Advanced Placement Institute began 33 summers ago after Kentucky instituted the Commonwealth Diploma that was tied to Advanced Placement classes. Kentucky needed to have quality professional development that would prepare teachers to offer Advanced Placement classes of the highest quality.

Other programs have come about when an opportunity presented itself. One such opportunity came in the form of a phone call. Susan Leib, Gifted Coordinator in the Kentucky Department of Education, called me to ask if WKU would be the site for Duke Talent Identification Program's (TIP) first cooperative program. I answered that I would be interested if my university supported doing so.

Donald Zacharias, then President of WKU, flew to Durham with me to observe TIP's summer program. We came back with the resolve to offer such a program, and that was the beginning of the three-week program that is known as VAMPY. We have recently completed the 33rd summer of VAMPY.

Gifts have made possible other opportunities at The Center. John and Linda Kelly made a gift that later was focused on creating the Victoria Fellows. This group of superintendents participate in professional development to build support for excellence for all children, including those who are gifted and talented.

Scholarships allow young people to participate in various programs, and gifts create the scholarship opportunities. Occasionally scholarship funds are started to honor and remember special people. The Riley Jane Lawrence Scholarship allows a young person to spend three weeks at VAMPY. This summer, a scholarship for VAMPY has been established in memory of Meg Gatten, parent and teacher of gifted children.

Your gifts support programming, and they provide financial assistance to allow children and young people to participate in programs when they would not be able to do so without your help. Friends of The Center are appreciated! Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Julia Link Roberts".

Julia Link Roberts  
Mahurin Professor of Gifted Studies

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**Stars of The Center.**

Go to page 11 to read about an exciting way The Center is celebrating 35 years.



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### 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

An internationally preeminent center, The Center for Gifted Studies envisions 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.





TUCKER ALLEN COVEY

Not all gifted kids look the same.

People often have preconceived notions of what these children should look like and how they should act in school: They're the whiz kids who tackle calculus in sixth grade or ace every test without trying; their destinies lie in medicine, computer engineering, finance, technology, or the — gold standard for genius achievement — rocket science.

But looking at all gifted kids as “rocket scientists in training” is painting with far too broad a brush. There are actually five commonly-recognized areas of giftedness: general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, creativity, visual/performing arts, and leadership. School districts in Kentucky, and many other states, are required by law to identify and provide services for gifted students regardless of the area of giftedness. The 25 classes offered during the Summer Camp for Academically Talented Middle School Students (SCATS) are designed to address the needs of students identified as gifted in any of those five areas.

# SCATS CLASSES CHALLENGE STUDENTS GIFTED IN ALL AREAS

## General Intellectual Ability

These students demonstrate intelligence in many ways. They get excited about new ideas, use a large vocabulary, process information in complex ways, enjoy thinking in abstractions, and display an inquisitive, observant nature. They are often described as precocious and might have an advanced sense of humor.

A class like Technology-Based Research Projects addressed the needs of these gifted learners by requiring a wide

variety of skills and allowing students to bring in their own interests and specialties. Students spent the two weeks in Jessica McLean's class focusing on presentation skills using technology and creating presentations based on an area of personal interest. That freedom created excitement among classmates.

“These students come in, and they're just so ready to learn every day,” Jessica revealed. “They're intrigued by what they're doing and they help each other out. It's

like a community of learners pushing each other to learn more.”

Student choice also led to better projects. Rhiannon Wilson (SCATS 2015-16) of Morgantown researched her favorite band, 5 Seconds of Summer. To complete her project, she had to know how to use a computer; type up notes; properly research; and use iMovie, Prezi, or Google Sites to create her presentation. Rhiannon said she enjoyed the challenge.

“It’s awesome because we usually don’t get to do this in school,” she said. “You’re given a subject, and that’s what you’re supposed to do, like a PowerPoint over the American Revolution. Here you can do an iMovie on your favorite band. It’s a lot of fun.”

Bowling Green’s Zain Hammad (Fall Super Saturdays 2009-14; Winter Super Saturdays 2010-2013,16; Summer Camp 2013; SCATS 2015-16) decided to tackle a more technical subject: the basics of string theory. “For the past couple months, whenever I got bored, I found myself reading about theoretical physics and string theory, which is big in that field right now,” Zain explained. “I thought it’d be interesting to make a project about it.”

Jessica said her class is just one of many at SCATS that challenge learners gifted in the area of general intellectual ability. “No matter what kids are interested in, there’s a class here for them,” she said. “There are classes in specialty areas where kids might be gifted, but there are also classes that allow them to step outside their comfort zone and try something new.”

### Specific Academic Aptitude

These learners have advanced knowledge and have the ability to achieve high academic success in a certain subject area such as math, language arts, social studies, and science. They have excellent memory and recall and pursue their special interest with enthusiasm and vigor. They’re responsible and studious.



Students gifted in this area with a special interest in chemistry had the ability to take the class Chemistry of Everyday during any of the four periods. Taylor Galavotti (SCATS 2016) is from Lexington and wants to be a neurologist. In addition to the chemistry class, she’s taking a problem solving class, a writing boot camp, and a class devoted to Harry Potter.

“When I told my parents I wanted to do this, they said I should make it as much like a college experience as possible,” Taylor recalled. “So I wanted to get a wide variety of classes, and everyday chemistry sounded like what we do in our science classes in school.”

Her favorite activity was making homemade ice cream. Unlike when Taylor did the activity in school, her instructor Amanda Brooks actually explained why the process resulted in the creation of ice cream. It also helped that the ice cream they made was delicious!

When Josh Ciaburri (SCATS 2016) of Louisville surveyed the SCATS class list, chemistry stood out as an option because he couldn’t take it as a seventh grader at his school, and he felt the course would challenge him in ways some other classes couldn’t. His favorite part of the class was taking a tour of Snell Hall, the science building on WKU’s campus. “I got to see all the cool stuff that I’ll get to learn about and do when I’m in college,” he said.

## HISTORY

SCATS, first known simply as the Summer Camp, began in 1983 to see if it could be a viable component of the teacher endorsement for gifted education; it was! The endorsement comprises 12 graduate hours in gifted education, culminating in a practicum wherein teachers implement a curriculum for gifted students they have created according to best practice. That first summer, sixty students attended four of eight classes including a very innovative computer programming class. Karl Miller (SCATS 1983) remembers the culminating thrill of two weeks work: his name in a box on the screen of an Apple II computer. Since then, 5,740 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders have taken challenging, engaging classes for two weeks in the summer. That’s also 34 years of cookouts, dances, paper theatre, and more.

*It’s funny how sometimes you have to drive hours away from your house just to get home, but that’s exactly what going to SCATS was for me. For the first time, I felt comfortable in my own skin. I remember other campers talking about how much their summers with The Center changed them, but I think those summers actually gave me the confidence to be the real me. Those lessons will never be forgotten, and I can’t wait to share those experiences with my own children some day.*

– DR. SARAH MAINES (SCATS 1998-2000; VAMPY 2001-02)

## Creativity

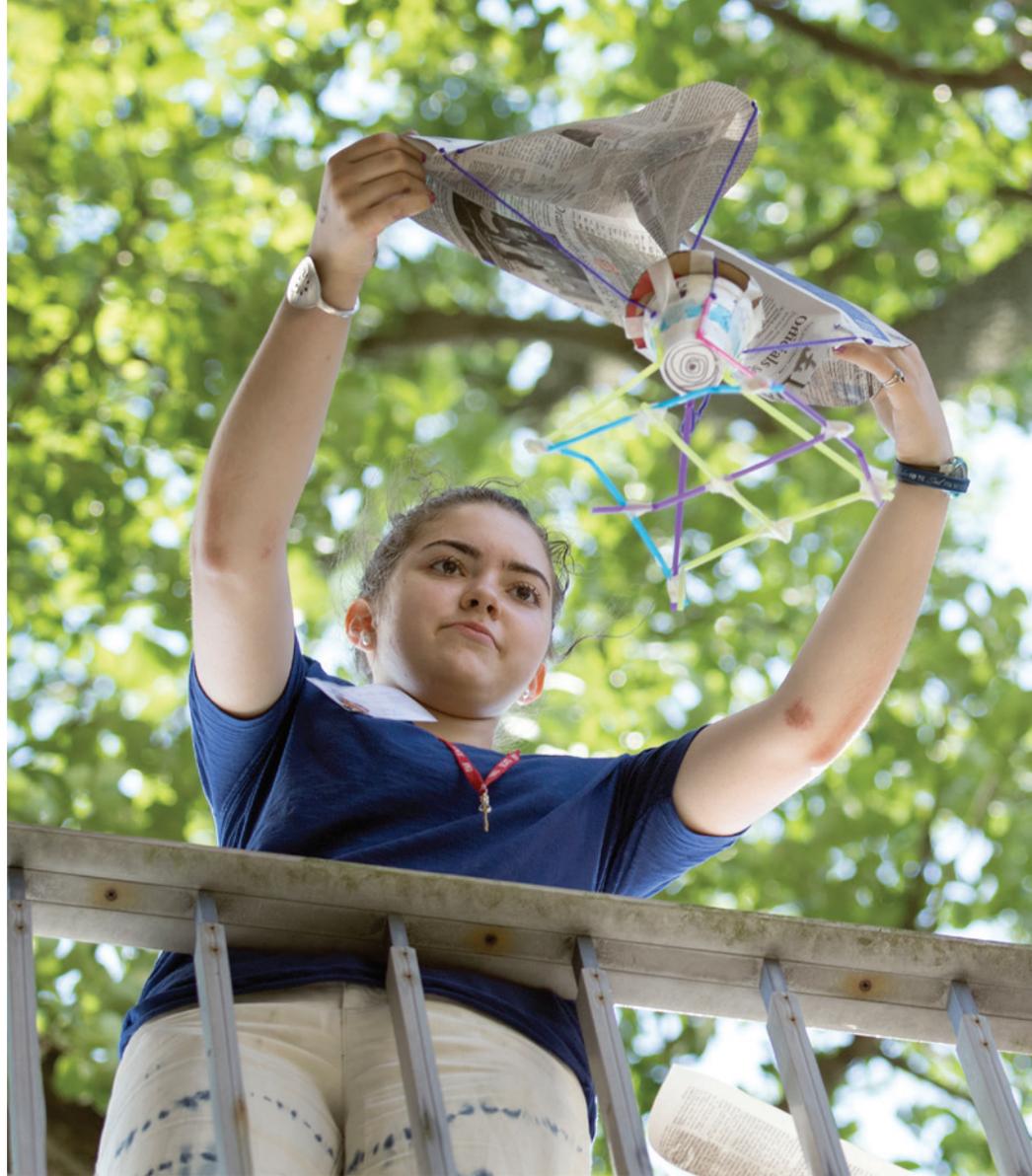
Gifted children in this area do not mind being different from the crowd and will improvise often. Their independent thinking makes them natural inventors and creators. Highly creative kids are good at finding unusual ways to solve problems, which makes them a perfect fit for Lyndsey Duke's class, Creative Problem Solving, and all its "outside-the-box" challenges.

"We solve problems every day, so I want the students to look outside that box at how to solve their problems more creatively," Lyndsey explained. "A lot of people solve problems simply. Employers nowadays are looking for not only simple solutions, but realistic ones in terms of execution and innovative ones that the company can build from."

What approach do you take when tasked with building a structure out of drinking straws that must support two tennis balls and look like a structure that someone would actually want to buy? What steps do you take when designing a balloon-powered car?

These were some of the challenges students tackled in Creative Problem Solving. As first-year camper Sarah Able of Cleveland, Tennessee, put it, "If your solution is normal, you're probably not doing it quite right." Sarah signed up for the class because she wanted to learn how to think differently. Unlike some classrooms, the ones at SCATS are safe places to keep tossing out different solutions.

"You can go over the answer as many times as you want without getting stares," said Quenten Morgan (SCATS 2016) of Berea. "You feel at home here, and you can think about the problem for a while." There were a number of reasons Quenten was drawn to a problem-solving class: "I'm not the best outside-the-box thinker, and I want to improve in that area. My friends and my sister have come to SCATS and taken this class, and they loved it. I knew I had to try it."



PHOTOS BY SAM OLDENBURG

Quenten, Sarah, and their classmates weren't just tackling hypothetical problems in class. They're also looking at how to solve problems in their hometowns. As a member of the technology club and the musical team, Sarah created a website where club members at her school can request a club sponsor or new equipment. Quenten designed fundraisers to pay for new water fountains and hopes Berea College will join his cause.

Make no mistake – these campers are learning life skills at SCATS.

"I asked a student what he's learned and he said, 'I might not use all the skills right now, but, in the future, I'll be able to come up with multiple solu-



tions and create something,” Lyndsey said. “That’s impressive because kids can get stuck on the first solution. Life is not a multiple choice test, and this class has shown how several perspectives can come together to solve a problem.”

### Visual/Performing Arts

This area is for learners who excel at expressing themselves through dance, drama, music, or art. They possess an outstanding spatial awareness and good motor coordination. Their creative expression goes beyond mere copying to original content creation. One advantage of students gifted in this area is that the arts can be a lens to explore other subjects.

“Although valuable in its own respect, music can be used to teach other things,” said Singing 101 teacher Ellie Osborne.

“You explore history through music. Music theory teaches valuable cognitive skills. Music is basically math; it dives into all these different subsets. Music also makes us human. It’s that artistic outlet that helps you grow.”

Some students in Ellie’s class had no prior experience with music. Ellie was excited that her students possessed the confidence to try something they’re not already good at. Other students, like Russellville’s

Evie Ellis (Summer Camp 2013; SCATS 2016), are in choir at school and wanted to improve their skills at SCATS.

“I take choir at school, but it’s an optional class,” Evie said. “Students who aren’t as invested in the class can disrupt the learning environment. SCATS is a more focused experience.”

It should come as no surprise that Evie also had Debate, Writing Boot Camp, and Chemistry of Every Day on her schedule since students gifted in visual/performing arts develop skills that translate to success in other areas. Ellie witnessed this firsthand at her school. “I teach high school usually, and most of my kids are in AP classes and excel in extracurricular activities. Musical aptitude definitely crosses boundaries.”

### Leadership

Students with leadership ability tend to be excellent decision makers who seek out responsibility and set high expectations for themselves and others. They are self-confident, organized, and well-liked by their peers. They can foresee consequences and implications of their decisions. Leaders display concise self-expression and should be adept at public speaking.

Kevan Brown’s Public Speaking class helped students become more comfortable speaking what they feel. “The first step to effective communication is speaking in front of your peers in a safe environment,” Kevan said. “They’ve shared personal stories which is not easy to do.”

Rather than making the class a straightforward “speech and debate” experience, Kevan eased the students into public speaking with games and some theater-based activities. “You take this class to improve your skills and learn the power of good communication,” he explained. “You need it for job interviews and talking with family members. You can accomplish so much more with good communication skills.”

As a member of the Kentucky Youth Assembly and Kentucky United Nations Assembly, C. J. Johnston (SCATS 2016) of Leitchfield knew Public Speaking was a class she had to take at SCATS. “One of my gifted areas is leadership, and I like speaking to other people. Plus, I know leaders need to be able to get their point across without relying on a sheet of paper and being all nervous.”

First-time camper Iman Dashti of Louisville had his eyes opened to the work that goes into an effective speech. Pre-activities helped him break his speech down into five parts so that the final product would be concise and well organized. Given Iman’s dreams, he’ll need to continue working on his public speaking and communication skills well after SCATS is over.

“I never really liked public speaking because I wasn’t good at it,” he shared. “I want to get better at it because one day I hope to be the CEO of the World Bank in Germany. When there are changes to be made in a position like that, you must speak to coworkers and shareholders. If I want that job, then I would have to master public speaking. That’s why I came to this class.”



# SCATS Camper Sees Fundraising Efforts Pay Off

When Sadibou Ceesay of Berea first learned about SCATS, it was from stories told by older classmates at Berea Community Middle School that described a place where classes challenged you, optionals were as fun as they were wacky, and you met friends who became like your family for two glorious weeks. Sadibou knew he had to experience this “Hogwarts for nerds” for himself and set about creating a fundraising plan so he could attend SCATS and his brother, Ismaila, could attend VAMPY.

“I’m not really challenged by my normal school work,” Sadibou revealed. “It’s easy, and I’m not learning that much. SCATS seemed like a place where I could learn more.”

Multiple ideas for fundraising came to the brothers as they brainstormed with their parents. One such avenue was physical labor. Sadibou and Ismaila both worked in their dad’s garden and figured their neighbors could use some help, too. Their mom, Jenny, connected them with potential clients by posting on Facebook that the boys could be hired for an afternoon of yard work or other household chores.

After weeding two gardens and installing a pool net, the boys had some money in their pockets, and Sadibou had an unwanted souvenir: poison ivy. Nevertheless, the duo persisted in their quest to raise money any way they could.

Their next idea came after their aunt got a machine called a Cricut that is used to print vinyl stickers. With Mother’s Day



approaching, Sadibou and Ismaila decided to use the Cricut to create custom gifts with vinyl stickers. They eventually settled on customized vases they would sell at First Friday, a monthly artisan fair held in Berea.

For a theme, they picked “Visions of Virtue” and featured such virtues as honesty, love, courage, and patience on their vases. The event organizer contributed to their goal by donating the table space, and the brothers sold enough vases to make a profit.

Jenny had practical reasons for using the fundraising process as a learning opportunity. “I’m really busy, and that was the conversation I had with them,” she explained. “If they wanted to do this, they had to be the ones to do it. I drove them around and bought the supplies, but they did everything else themselves. I’m proud of the work they did.”

The biggest windfall came as a result of Sadibou’s curiosity and mathematical

proWess. Jenny discovered a contest online called MathMovesU and encouraged both boys to enter. According to the MathMovesU website, the contest challenges middle school applicants to create “multimedia presentations that illustrate the importance of math in the world around them.” The winners would be those projects that showed “creativity, originality, time commitment and the use of math equations to demonstrate an enthusiasm for the subject.” Winners would receive a \$1,000 MathMovesU Middle School Scholarship to be used for a STEM camp or program.

Given the onslaught of winter weather in Berea earlier in the year, Sadibou didn’t have to look far for his inspiration. “At that time, we were having a lot of snow and had to clear the driveway off,” he recalled. “I wondered how much snow we cleared, how long it would take with fewer people, how much energy it took, how much did it weigh — all that stuff. We figured that out through math and measurements and put it in a presentation.”

Before sending it off, Jenny’s colleagues at Berea College looked over the PowerPoint, and Sadibou also had his math teacher review it and offer her suggestions. All the hard work paid off as Sadibou was named one of the 150 scholarship winners.

“It was important for my husband and me that our children understand how their work translates to money and how much of a sacrifice that can be,” Jenny reflected. “My husband and I were the first in our families to go to college, so it’s important for us to focus on the kids’ education. But we also wanted them to have some skin in the game.”

Sadibou knows all the math equations, poison ivy, and vinyl stickers made something very special possible for him. “In my first few days here, I knew all of that work was worth it,” he said. “SCATS is a good experience and so is the fundraising part, to actually work for something you want. It makes me even more proud to be here because I did work to be here.”



TUCKER ALLEN COVEY

# STUDY OF OTHER CULTURES AND RELIGIONS PROVE EYE-OPENING FOR VAMPY STUDENTS

Turn on your television and flip to the nightly news program of your choice. What do you see? Terrorism at home and abroad, refugees searching for a home, veiled racism directed at minority groups, accusations of hatred of bigotry... these are tumultuous times in which we live. It's easy to watch the news or peruse social media and believe that our world is drifting away from common ground and back towards our respective comfort zones where it's easier to make sense of the world around us.

Come to VAMPY and you'll find an entirely different view of the world. Rather than running from other cultures or fearing the unknown, campers in Arabic and Humanities are opening themselves up to the world and finding that enlightenment and empowerment come from keeping an open mind to new experiences.

Louie Guerwane hopes that students in his Arabic class see a culture that is not too different from American life. People in Arabic countries love soccer, enjoy listening to music, and cherish time with their

family and friends. "People in the Arabic culture are just like us," Louie said. "They like to laugh. They like to celebrate life. There are bad people everywhere. We have to learn to celebrate the similarities."

Many of our misconceptions of the Arabic world stem from a misunderstanding of Islam. Not only does Louie show the students that not all Arabic people are Muslims – there are actually millions of Arabic Christians – but he also uses documentaries to educate students on Islam and clear up some common misunderstandings of the religion.

Even for Ekron's Jake Bowen (SCATS 2013-15; VAMPY 2015-16; Travel to France 2015), who is taking Arabic at VAMPY for a second time, the films still made a big impact on his understanding. "Muslims are required by their religion to read the Torah, the Bible, and the Quran," he shared. "Labeling them all as 'infidel killers' or 'jihadists' is wrong. They study other religions and take those beliefs into consideration. They don't hate us, and we shouldn't hate them."

Coming to a better understanding of other world religions is part of the focus



of Humanities, which looks at the afterlife in different cultures and studies the books, art, governments, and religions that arise from our universal quest to know what happens after death. “One of the things we stress in this class is tolerance of other people’s beliefs,” Humanities teacher Tracy Inman said. “The first day of class, we talk about what each student personally believes happens to you after you die because everything will filter through those beliefs.”

Politics and religion might be taboo subjects at the dinner table or at the barbershop, but at VAMPY, the examination of one’s beliefs is considered instrumental to growth. This is the case regardless of whether students come to camp with already established beliefs or no beliefs at all. “I don’t really have any religious beliefs as I never take the time to think about it,” explained Max Breilig (Winter Super Saturdays 2011-12; SCATS 2012-14; VAMPY 2015-16) of Bonnierville. “Pretty much everything in this class has been a huge learning experience for me.”



Martha Popescu (SCATS 2014-15; VAMPY 2016) of Hanson came to VAMPY with religious beliefs of her own and hasn’t seen her confidence in those beliefs rattled at all by learning about other faiths. If anything, it’s only reaffirmed what she believes. “For me, this class has been eye-opening,” she revealed. “Even though I study religions for academic team, I’ve never gone in-depth with them like we do in this class. It’s fascinating to see how cultures believe differently about the afterlife and God. It helps me put my beliefs in place because I know where my

beliefs stand in relation to other religions.”

In order to immerse students in their study of other cultures and religions, both Arabic and Humanities took field trips that encouraged experiential learning. Humanities went to Saint Meinrad Archabbey, a Catholic monastery in southern Indiana, and then visited three religious sites in Nashville: Sri Ganesh Hindu Temple, Islamic Center of Nashville, and West End Synagogue.

“They especially loved the Hindu temple,” Tracy said of the students. “I think it’s because they’ve studied that religion less than the others. They were amazed to discover it’s a monotheistic religion and not polytheistic like is widely believed. In our discussion, one of the students mentioned how all the religions emphasize peace.”

That was a commonality that Martha recognized, as well. “In all the religions that we’ve studied, I’ve come to see that the true essence is centered around peace and love,” she said. “I think people should

focus on these similarities given the times we find ourselves in, with the refugee crisis in the Middle East and Islamophobia that Muslims experience on a daily basis. We must learn to accept each other's religion and realize that love is a similarity shared between all religions. We need to find that love."

Max shared his belief that all religions share another commonality – the question at their core. "I think we're all looking for an answer with religion," he said. "We all want to know what comes after life, and everything else just unfolds from there across the different religions."

VAMPY presents a crucial window into the lives of students as they grow and mature into young adults. If they're ever going to learn the value of keeping an open mind to new cultures and religions, now is that time.

"This is such a formative age," Tracy said. "Every place we visited, they talked about when students hit puberty, they start becoming adults and make up their minds about being confirmed in the Catholic faith or going through with a bat mitzvah. They're all searching right now and trying to figure out their path."

Martha recognized that as well. "We're forming our identities and becoming adults in the real world," she added. "This is a college-level course that exposes us to challenging literature. In the South, it can be hard to broaden your horizons, but when you come to a place like VAMPY where teachers like Dr. Inman are ready to expose you to different cultures, it opens you up to a broader world outside your hometown, where you go to camp, or where you worship."

But this exploration of the larger world isn't just for the personal benefit of the students, as it's only through education that these future leaders in society can make the world a better place. "The more you know, the better you can understand the world," Max said. "Don't be complacent with what you have – always try to learn something new."

## HISTORY

The Summer Program for Verbally and Mathematically

Precocious Youth began in 1984 simply as the Summer Program (to distinguish it from the two-week Summer Camp now known as SCATS). VAMPY was the first cooperative program with Duke's Talent Identification Program's summer opportunities. When Duke realized they needed to expand, they contacted the Kentucky Department of Education who then contacted Julia Roberts. She and then-WKU President Donald Zacharias visited Duke TIP, and the rest is history! That first summer 31 campers had a choice of three classes. In its 34th year this summer, 200 students selected from 14 classes. To date, 5,500 students from across Kentucky, the United States, and the globe have spent three weeks learning about themselves, finding lifelong friends, and exploring subjects of great interest to them.

*VAMPY was a springboard for my academic future and a secure place where I always felt welcome and at home. My thinking was pushed and challenged daily in the classroom, and, in the afternoon, I was greeted at the dorm by smiling faces who truly wanted to know my uniqueness. In that hazy adolescent time of life, VAMPY remained a clear, strong support. The confidence and skills I gained academically and socially propelled me forward throughout my high school and college years. I eagerly await the day when I drop my kids off for their first transformative summer at WKU!*

– DR. KATIE JOHNSON WICK (VAMPY 1994-1997; TA, Counselor; SCATS Instructor)

## Don't Forget to Nominate a Star



Do you know a Center alum who has made positive contributions to a community, organization, or society? Let us know. As part of our 35th anniversary celebration, The Center wants to honor those "Stars of The Center" who embody our mission. The nomination period for this recognition will take place through November 30. Alumni may be nominated by any individual or may nominate themselves. Up to thirty-five "Stars of The Center" will be selected and will be honored at an event in the spring of 2017. Visit [wku.edu/gifted/stars](http://wku.edu/gifted/stars) to make your nomination.

# VAMPY COURSES ENCOURAGE CIVIL, WELL-INFORMED DEBATES

Candidates shouting over one another. Talking points pushing well past the allotted time. Insults hurled at moderators. Expressions of disbelief and satisfied smirks. These are some images we might associate with the word “debate” during an election year. There are knee-jerk reactions from pundits, sound bites taken out of context, and in the style of a heavy-weight boxing match, both candidates declaring themselves the winner.

At VAMPY, debate looks vastly different from the glorified shouting matches seen on television. Students in Competitive Forensics and Presidential Politics are learning the finer points of debate and refining their critical thinking skills.

Teaching assistant Jonathan Sahlman, a rising senior at WKU and a member of the nationally-recognized WKU Forensics Team, handled the debate portion of Competitive Forensics. With the class serving as an introduction to formalized debate, Jonathan implemented the parliamentary debate style that splits campers into teams of two and gives them 20 minutes to prepare for a topic. After starting off with the lighthearted issue of allowing cell phones and computers at VAMPY, students dove into real world issues like military intervention with ISIS, legalization of marijuana, and immigration reform.

Parliamentary debate begins with an opening statement by the affirmative leader (pro-marijuana legalization, for instance), moves to an opening statement by the opposition leader, then allows time



for the second speakers on both sides to speak. The debate concludes with rebuttals from both leaders in which they argue why their side won. In most parliamentary debates, Jonathan explained, a clear winner usually emerges.

“With presidential politics, those debates tend to be more public speaking,” he said. “This is more competitive debate with a structure for how you prepare your arguments and how the arguments are weighed. There tends to be a clear debate winner.”

Before diving into the actual debates, students spent the first couple of classes focused on argumentation theory, including the most common argumentative fallacies. To see these fallacies in action,

the class studied the Twitter feeds of both presidential candidates for 2016 – Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton. No matter where their political beliefs landed, students spotted all kinds of fallacious argumentation.

“It’s something fun to look at, but we’ve also got them thinking now that when a candidate says something, they know what’s fallacious and how it reduces the credibility of their argumentation,” Jonathan said. “These students will now second-guess the validity of everything that candidates say regardless of their political affiliation. That’s something I tried to focus on – both sides have fallacious argumentation everywhere.”

For first-time VAMPY camper Jojo Jeyaraj of Joplin, Missouri, this portion of the class made her realize that she was guilty of using certain fallacies herself. “I overgeneralize a lot,” she said. “With political issues, I feel like that’s easy to do. I’ve realized that there are many sides to any given issue.”

Bowling Green’s Stuart Kernohan (Winter Super Saturdays 2013; VAMPY 2015-16) realized once the debates began that competitive debating looks different from what he’d seen on TV. “There’s more structure than I realized,” he shared. “It’s not just blah, blah, blah, here are my points, you have to listen to me.” Taking the side of an issue he doesn’t personally agree with has also been a challenge. “You have to research and see things not just from your own perspective. It’s a challenge to look at an issue from another person’s shoes.”

Also challenging is the discipline it takes to bite your tongue when an opponent is saying something with which you disagree. In competitive debate, interrupting your opponent is not allowed. “It’s very frustrating, but it’s nice to know they can’t talk over me either,” Jojo said. “This style of debate forces you to appreciate others, which is a good thing.”

If Competitive Forensics represents the more formalized side of debate, Presidential Politics is the free-wheeling flip side that tries to recapture the magic of memorable presidential debates, but with a bigger dose of respect and civility thrown in.

Dennis Jenkins’ course is a whirlwind tour of presidential elections from 1960 up to modern day. Days begin with 10-15 minutes of candidate commercials and students analyzing the strategy of each party for that year. The class then watches a portion of an actual debate, after which time students will fall into roles they selected and prepare to reenact the debate. Students split into three groups for debates: candidates, campaign managers, and poster makers. After the debate, which lasts 20-30 minutes, audience mem-

bers jot down observations about both candidates on a scorecard.

In the scope of presidential history, debate stood out to Dennis as an imperative section of the historical tapestry. He also believed that students could benefit from learning to debate as someone other than themselves. “It’s important for students to stand by what they believe in

when they’re role-playing these candidates, even if they have a difference of opinion from the person they’re portraying,” Dennis said. “They have to articulate why their candidate’s vision is more effective for the country than their opponent’s.”

Even when those beliefs are controversial, students had to stand by them during the debate. Benjamin Carter (Fall and

## VAMPY Murals Travel to Louisville

Murals depicting scenes from the Holocaust were displayed publicly for the second time at the beginning of 2016. Ten of the murals were exhibited at The Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts in Louisville during the month of February.

Students enrolled in the Nazi Germany and the Holocaust class during the Summer Program for Verbally and Mathematically Precocious Youth (VAMPY) have been creating the murals each summer since the mid-1990s under the tutelage of Ron Skillern. The poignant images have become a traveling exhibition, thanks to a grant from the Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence.

The exhibit coincided with performances of *And Then They Came for Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank*, allowing thousands of middle and high school students the opportunity to view the murals while attending special school-day showings of the play.

Countless volunteer hours put in by Ron Skillern, former VAMPY teacher Jonathan Vaughn, and a group of their students at Bowling Green High School made the exhibit’s construction and installation possible. The Center for Gifted Studies is currently looking for additional venues with individuals interested in hosting the traveling exhibit.



Winter Super Saturdays 2009-10; SCATS 2013-15; VAMPY 2106) of Oakland learned that firsthand when he was tasked with playing noted segregation advocate George Wallace for the 1968 debate. "It was a challenge to role-play that character and act like I believed that," Benjamin revealed. "I had to present it in the least controversial terms I could. I framed it as what was best for the majority compared to what was best for the minority."

No matter the topic or candidate, students in Presidential Politics maintain an air of civility and respect during their debates. Students learned pretty quickly

that certain argumentative tactics play well with the audience while others do not. Do you speak in a condescending tone and talk over your opponents? That won't play well with the crowd. But if you can speak with wisdom and think critically on your feet, you'll be a hit.

Both Dennis and Jonathan hope that students in their class leave VAMPY changed by their time spent debating. "I'm hoping they take away a broader perspective of the world around them," Jonathan said. "They've learned that everyone has biases but those biases don't make us bad people. In today's society, we focus more

on 'this person doesn't agree with me, therefore he's a bad person,' which is a fallacy itself. I think they'll walk away with a higher level of respect for that person and more productive ways to debate hot button issues without resorting to personal attacks."

Dennis echoed that sentiment. "In a country that's increasingly at one extreme or the other, we've lost the art of compromise," he added. "It's important for this age group to learn how to debate effectively, stand by their beliefs, and to articulate their beliefs into something the audience understands."

**GINGER DEPP CLINE** (SCATS 1989-91; Counselor) is assistant professor in psychology at the Baylor College of Medicine; she is also a pediatric psychologist at the Texas Children's Hospital. She recently received the Fulbright & Jaworski LLP Faculty Excellence Award which recognizes Baylor College of Medicine Faculty for Exemplary Educational Contributions. Ginger received a BA, MA, and PhD from the University of Kentucky. She served an internship at Texas Children's Hospital prior to being employed by Baylor College of Medicine. She continues to work at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston as an Assistant Professor and is married to Matt Cline. They have two daughters.

**EDWARD (TIP) DEPP** (SCATS 1987-89), a University of Minnesota Law School alumnus, is a partner in the Louisville law firm Dinsmore and Shohl. He specializes in utility law. He and his wife, Candy, live in Louisville and have two children, ages 5 and 3.

**WALT ECTON** (SCATS 2001; VAMPY 2002) attended Emory University, double majoring in Theater Studies (serving as emcee at the Talent Show was one of the first of many performances!) and Political Science. Faculty-selected as Class Orator at Commencement, he was awarded the Robert T. Jones Scholarship for a year of study at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. Walt earned a master's degree in Peace and Conflict Studies there. He then devoted two years to Teach for America in Atlanta. Walt moved to DC where he spent the three years working for the Education Advisory Board, a best-practice research, technology,

and consulting firm that works with colleges to support student success efforts. This fall, he will be pursuing a PhD in Education Policy at Vanderbilt's Peabody College, with a focus on the transition between high school and postsecondary education.

*I want to thank you, both for what you've done for gifted education broadly, but also for the work you and The Center have done for me. The summers I spent at VAMPY and SCATS were so important to my journey, opened my eyes to what smart kids can do out in the world, taught me the importance of challenging myself academically, and was really the first exposure I had to the type of community I've wanted to be a part of ever since. I can't thank you and everyone involved enough.*

**MORGAN GILES** (VAMPY 2001-04), after graduating from Indiana University Bloomington with a degree in Japanese and Linguistics, is now a book reviewer and literary translator, working from Japanese to English. Morgan resides in London, England.

**KERI DEPP HOWARD** (Super Saturdays 1992; Travel to Paris 1999) is mother to two children, ages 6 and almost 2. She is the bookkeeper/payroll clerk for a car dealership in Lexington.

**BEN YEAGER** (VAMPY 2005-08) attends the University of Texas Austin where he is working on his PhD in Modern Chinese History. He taught English in Chongqing, China for a year.

**JOE YEAGER** (VAMPY 1998-2001; VAMPY instructor) is a chemistry lab instructor at Smith College in MA. His wife, Rachel, just completed a PhD in French Literature.





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# MINDS-ON LEARNING: AN INTEGRAL PART OF CAMP EXPLORE EXPERIENCE

Had you walked past the Math workshop on Thursday during Camp Explore, a strange scene would've greeted you: 15 children wearing one glove each, blowing bubbles and bouncing them on the gloved hand as many times as possible before the bubble popped. At first glance, this activity might appear to be silly summer camp fun. Peel back the layers of learning, however, and you'd find a minds-on component to match the hands-on fun.

"That's a great example of hands-on, minds-on learning," instructor Allison Bemiss said. "If you walked into the room, you would think these kids were just



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playing with bubbles. But they did a lot of work the day before with ratios to create their bubble solution, they collected data during the bouncing, and the next day they analyzed the data."

Hands-on, minds-on learning is a hallmark of the programs offered by The Center for Gifted Studies, and Camp Explore is no exception. All five classes – Math, Clowning, Art, Science, and Language Arts – challenged campers to think while they constructed homes of craft sticks and marshmallows, wrote stories, and created works of art.



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Clowning instructor Nick Wilkins used juggling and clown makeup to forge a mind-to-hands connection in his class. “The hands-on element is applying clown makeup,” he said. “The minds-on part is designing the face they want and implementing it with their hands. Same thing with juggling – the minds-on has to come before the hands-on. They have to know the patterns and basic instructions that were presented to them before they can juggle.”

In Art, instructor Andee Rudloff explored concepts like visual language – emojis and icons – and color theory before molding buildings, faces, and pots out of clay. “The students deciphered the nine basic shapes in the Empire State Building, then reconfigured those shapes into a new structure which they had to name and explain the purpose it served,” she said.

Animal habitats and adaptations were the focus in Science taught by Andrea



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Heming, and campers explored stations that modeled the various adaptations. In one station, that meant wearing goggles made from toilet paper rolls, duct tape, and safety glasses that simulated how some animals can only see straight and not side-to-side. Campers at another station used bear paws made of rubber

gloves, duct tape, and spoons to pick up small rocks and beads to get them into a bucket. These stations were both fun and educational.

“They’re taking everything they’ve learned about habitats and adaptations and making their own animal that’s a mash-up of two animals,” Andrea said. “One student put a tiger and an elephant together. Once they had their animals, they had to describe what kind of habitat that animal would live in and construct it using recycled materials and craft supplies.”



# HISTORY

Camps Explore

and Innovate first started as Summer Camp in 2012, an enrichment experience designed for students in grades 1, 2, and 3. In 2013, grade 4 was added. In 2015, the camps split into Camp Explore for first, second, and third graders and Camp Innovate for fourth and fifth graders.

*Creativity is a natural extension of our enthusiasm for invention. Serving as a professional in the arts gives me the only training worthy of the theories and questions our campers ask and share. I love the expanding, flexible curriculum throughout the summer incorporating the arts in every subject. I feel fortunate to be one of the many thinkers challenging our gifted students and encouraging their exploration and discovery. What you think, you become. It is my hope I offer each young thinker experiences through art, providing an exciting platform for risk-taking and problem solving.* – ANDEE RUDLOFF (Instructor Super Saturdays, Summer Camp, Camp Explore, Camp Innovate, SCATS)



Language Arts saw campers reading and writing every day. Instructor Mary Evans noticed an encouraging trend as the week went on and everyone gained valuable experience. “Some of the students who lacked confidence as writers at the beginning of the week, who thought everything had to be perfect, they now go straight to getting their ideas on paper,” she noted.

Summer camp is supposed to be fun, but at Camp Explore, it’s even more important to make sure the campers are learning while enjoying activities. Andrea said she couldn’t imagine trying to teach science without giving students the proper context before starting an activity. “If they’re not learning about

camouflage or the difference between what a herbivore and omnivore eats, they’re not getting that essential vocabulary,” she said. “What we try to do is increase their learning and engage them with activities they’ll remember.”

Part of creating memorable learning experiences is meeting kids where they are in their world. Allison designed all her math activities with that principle in mind.

“I want learning to be authentic to the kids’ real world,” she said. “I think you do that by integrating a lot of different content areas. If you want kids to be creative problem solvers and critical thinkers, you can’t limit creativity to just art. It has to be across all content areas. When you make it applicable and interesting to their world, you have that engagement piece that is so critical to hands-on, minds-on learning”

**“The minds-on part is designing the face they want and implementing it with their hands. Same thing with juggling – the minds-on has to come before the hands-on. They have to know the patterns and basic instructions that were presented to them before they can juggle.” ~NICK WILKINS**

Ask most people to name examples of innovation, and they will probably mention cutting-edge examples of technology and engineering: driverless cars, drones, virtual reality goggles, or the latest smartphone. Students in Camp Innovate, offered for the second year by The Center for Gifted Studies, are learning that innovation can be found in every subject area if students are willing to embrace new ways of learning.

“Gifted kids are smart, and if they’re smart, they may think they’re always right,” explained Jennifer Sheffield, the Science teacher at Camp Innovate. “There’s this fear of being wrong, so gifted kids don’t innovate because if it’s wrong, they think they’re not smart. We have to take that fear away. They’re just experimenting and trying things, and that can look like play. We have to get students past right and wrong.”

What does experimenting as play look like in science? Jennifer’s class challenged campers from day one with a building activity that included popsicle sticks, paper cups, and wooden cubes. The towers campers constructed, Jennifer revealed, ultimately fell before the activity was over. The lesson was meant to teach them about cantilevers and reinforce an important lesson in innovation: fail often, fail early, and fail fast.

Failure is an opportunity for problem solving in Andee Rudloff’s Art class as well. Instead of scrapping their artwork and starting over, campers are expected to turn their mistakes into something beautiful. With an old-school approach to art, Andee expects her students to make plenty of “mistakes” as they utilize various tools of the trade.

“To go back to tangible, old-school methods of art making is such a huge shift for a lot of these students,” Andee noted. “To actually have to blend paint instead of using a phone app like Blendoku and deal with the messiness of it all is fun. It’s fun with art to see not only problem solving but risk taking from these students – to

have them try something and, if it doesn’t work out, figure out how they can make it work.”

Another important component of Camp Innovate is the idea that learning isn’t separated into specific subject areas in the real world. Innovation bleeds from one area to another, and those who can take art and mix it with language arts or those who can utilize science and math skills are the ones who will truly break new ground.

# STUDENTS EXPERIENCE REAL-WORLD INNOVATION AT CAMP INNOVATE



Art bleeds over into Language Arts through the creation of a visual language. By working on gestures and then collaborating with others using a storytelling model, Art students ended the week with their own visual language similar to the ones we see every day: emojis, icons, logos, and universal hand signals.

In Jan Lanham’s Language Arts class, campers are using reading and writing as tools to explore real-world problems. Activities include reading about innovation from other cultures and then studying young people who’ve made a difference in the world. From there, campers select a real-world problem they want to tackle





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and design a plan for solving it through efforts like brochures, letter writing, or a social media campaign.

Too often, Jan elaborated, gifted students grapple with difficult issues without feeling like they can make a difference. “For gifted young people, oftentimes they’re aware of adult issues but feel powerless,” she said. “It weighs on them. As kids, they wonder how they can make a difference. That’s why we’re looking at role models.”

“This project is an attempt to empower students by using the innovation and problem solving piece from an activist standpoint,” Jan described. “We’re integrating reading to build the knowledge base about the issue. They’re doing self-reflection about what innovative qualities they have and setting a goal to develop a new quality.”

“Part of innovation is taking those walls down between subject matters,” Jennifer shared. “When you take a little of this and a little of that is when you get something new.”

Students are enjoying a new approach to Math in the class taught by Allison Bemiss. Like her fellow teachers, Allison is using math as a tool to learn in a variety of ways. On Monday, the class used toys like water guns to collect data. Tuesday saw students looking at math in art through



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**“It’s fun with art to see not only problem solving but risk taking from these students – to have them try something and, if it doesn’t work out, figure out how they can make it work.” ~ANDEE RUDLOFF**



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tessellations. The rest of the week included Fairy Tale STEAM – turning 2-D drawings into 3-D objects to see if they can withstand the Big Bad Wolf – and a Comic Con featuring Star Wars coding and pop culture-inspired tangrams.

“If we see math as an isolated topic, we focus on facts and formulas, right answers and wrong answers,” Allison said. “I’m trying to broaden that idea and see what math looks like in the real world.” She’s also trying to help students realize their own innovative potential. “We want kids to be aware of when they’re doing things that would lead them to be innovators. All innovators ask questions, make observations, formulate a plan, put forth predictions, test, fail, and redesign. We’re working through that with each activity.”

Students might not create the next drone or driverless car by the end of Camp Innovate, but if they can begin to learn from failure and see the real world as a melting pot of different subject areas, they’ll be well on their way to being the next great innovators.



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# DUKE TIP RECOGNITION CEREMONY CELEBRATES AND CHALLENGES KENTUCKY STUDENTS

*Today I want to celebrate you—the you you are becoming, the you you are today, the you you will be tomorrow, and the future you you will be some day.* With those words, Dr. Lynette Breedlove, director of The Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky, welcomed, congratulated, and challenged the more than 350 students at the Duke Talent Identification Program (TIP) Award ceremony. The awards ceremony on May 24 was held in Bowling Green on the WKU campus.



Since 1981, Duke University Talent Identification Program's (Duke TIP) 7th Grade Talent Search has identified students across the United States who have scored at or above the 95th percentile on a grade-level achievement test in 6th grade. As part of the program, these academically talented students are eligible to take above-level college-entrance exams (ACT or SAT) to learn more about their abilities. Last fall 2,614 Kentucky students took the ACT or SAT through Duke TIP. This is out of a total 55,505 test takers in 31 states and U.S. territories. Of these 2,614 students, 1,353 from Kentucky qualified for state recognition.

Duke TIP hosts annual recognition ceremonies to honor the seventh graders who score highest on these ACT or SAT exams. The Center for Gifted Studies has hosted the Kentucky Recognition cer-



emony since 1982. Talent searches such as Duke TIP are instrumental in identifying high-ability students and exposing them to appropriate educational opportunities. The Center for Gifted Studies summer camp VAMPY, (Summer Program for Verbally and Mathematically Precocious Youth) which started in 1984, for example, was the first cooperative summer program with Duke TIP.

Lynette also shared with the students six quotes “to guide you on your path to finding and defining the ‘you’ you want to be; quotes to hang on to when the path isn’t clear or easy.” The quotes came from an eclectic group that ranged from Wil Wheaton to Steve Jobs.



Several leaders in education also spoke to the students and their families. Representing Duke TIP on the podium was Dr. Rick Courtright, Gifted Education Research Specialist. He reflected, “It was a genuine pleasure to participate in the WKU TIP Ceremony for the state of Kentucky this year and to see the number of Kentucky TIPsters who qualified for State Recognition attending the ceremony. Kentucky was among the states with the very highest proportion of test-takers qualifying for this level of recognition. Thanks to Western Kentucky University for hosting this event, a service that has been provided to Kentucky TIPsters and their families almost since the beginning of the Duke TIP Talent Search.”



Other leaders in education who addressed the students and their families included Dr. Julia Roberts, Executive Director of The Center for Gifted Studies, WKU; Mr. David Lawhorn, Kentucky Education Savings Plan Trust (KESPT) administrator; Dr. Sam Evans, Dean of the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences, WKU; and Ms. LeAnn Pickerill, Gifted and Talented Education Consultant for the Kentucky Department of Education. The Duke TIP Kentucky Recognition Ceremony was generously sponsored by KESPT administered by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority.

# AP INSTITUTE OFFERED FOR 33RD SUMMER



Each summer for 33 years, hundreds of educators from around the world have traveled to Western Kentucky University to learn about teaching Advanced Placement classes. In June, The Center for Gifted Studies hosted the 33rd Advanced Placement Summer Institute at WKU.

Approximately 475 participants representing four countries and 22 states around the U.S. attended one of 28 workshops for beginning and experienced teachers. What makes this opportunity so important?

In 2015, more than 2.5 million students representing 19,000 high schools took Advanced Placement exams (College Board, 2016). There are currently 38 AP courses the College Board offers including Studio Art, Calculus, Biology, United States History, Spanish Language, among others. For students to be successful in their learning opportunities and when taking the exams, it is necessary for their

educators to have the proper training regarding the course and exam design. This need highlights the importance of Advanced Placement Summer Institutes.

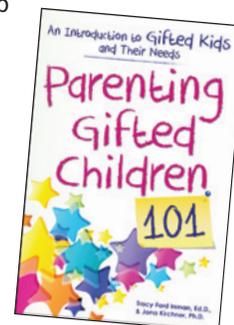
For the first time, a macroeconomics workshop was offered at WKU this summer. This workshop, led by Gary Petmecky, takes a broad view of economic systems. Many institutes choose to combine microeconomics and macroeconomics into the same workshop. Participants were excited to have the opportunity to take a more focused approach in a work-

shop dedicated solely to macroeconomics.

Another workshop, Computer Science Principles, was also offered for the first time. This is a new discipline being offered by the College Board in the 2016-2017 school year. For the pilot summer, institutes had to apply to the College Board to host this workshop, and WKU was chosen as one of 56 institutes around the nation to host the course. Gina McCauley, a teacher at Lawrence County High School in Georgia, led the workshop. Gina notes, "This course broadens the view of

## New Parent Resource Available

Parents and caregivers of children with gifts and talents now have another valuable resource. *Parenting Gifted Children 101*, authored by Tracy Inman and Jana Kirchner, is a practical, easy-to-read book that explores the basics of parenting gifted children, truly giving parents the “introductory course” they need to better understand and help their gifted child. Topics include myths about gifted children, characteristics of the gifted, the hows and whys of advocacy, social and emotional issues and needs, strategies for partnering with your child’s school, and more. This resource explores ways for parents to help their children at home and maximize their children’s educational experience with strategies that are based on research but easy to implement. Each chapter—from parenting twice-exceptional students to navigating the possible challenges that school may hold for your child—contains resources for further reading and insights from more than 50 parents and educators of gifted children. Books are available at [prufrock.com](http://prufrock.com) or Amazon.



computer science beyond only programming. One of the exciting aspects of this course is how it is designed to include the individual student interest.”

Human Geography was the largest workshop this summer. This course has shown increasing interest over the past several years. Last year, 159,609 students took the AP Human Geography exam. This was a 17% increase from 2014, the second largest increase of any AP course behind only Computer Science A (College Board, 2015). The course examines human interaction with the Earth’s surface, which makes it easy for students to apply the content to their daily lives.

The Center for Gifted Studies will continue to offer workshops to prepare educators for teaching Advanced Placement courses at the 34th AP Summer Institute. Dates for the institute are June 26-30, 2017.

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## HISTORY

In March 1985, Kentucky legislation initiated the Commonwealth Diploma Program. This program created a point of distinction for graduating high school

students around the state. One of the criteria for receiving the diploma was that students would have successfully completed four or more courses at the Advanced Placement level. These four AP courses had to cover English, science or mathematics, world language, and one additional course. Julia Roberts, Executive Director of The Center for Gifted Studies, realized that if AP classes would be required for this honor, quality professional development needed to be available for educators of students receiving the diploma. This gave rise to the first Advanced Placement Summer Institute in Kentucky being hosted in the summer of 1984. Though the institute most recently hosted 28 workshops, it began with having only five courses: American History, Biology, Calculus AB, English, and Spanish. The Calculus AB consultant, Benita Albert, has returned as a consultant each of the 33 summers.

*Dr. Julia Link Roberts, her husband, and colleagues founded The Center for Gifted Studies thirty-five years ago at Western Kentucky University. From the very beginning and for many, many years I was invited to come to The Center each summer to help train high school teachers how to teach Advanced Placement United States History. They came from all over the world.*

*Long before I was a teacher, United States History was most often taught with facts and evaluated by how well students could remember when and how events happened. Memorization was front and center. When the College Board created its AP History programs, teaching young people to think in the subject matter became the most important purpose of education! There is no end to energy or creativity when AP students are allowed to think rationally and ask why! – EUGENE M. PICKEL, AP Consultant*



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# THE NSCF SCHOLARS LAUNCH

The initial week for the National Stem Cell Foundation (NSCF) Scholars Program was filled with learning, sharing, and camaraderie. Representing nine states, each of the ten NSCF scholars is an exceptional middle school science teacher. The opening dinner set the tone for the week by encouraging scholars and faculty mem-

bers to get to know one another while working together to solve an intriguing set of “hypothesis cubes.” Each cube had clues on its five visible faces hinting at what was on the sixth, hidden, face.

Each NSCF Scholar noted individual highlights, including the opportunity to learn with Rico Tyler and Kerrie McDaniel, faculty members at WKU. Kerrie facilitated life science while Rico led the physical sciences. Each day focused on a different science theme, exploring the connections between the sciences and other disciplines. For example, the engineering day began with rocket engineering and ended with spider web design.

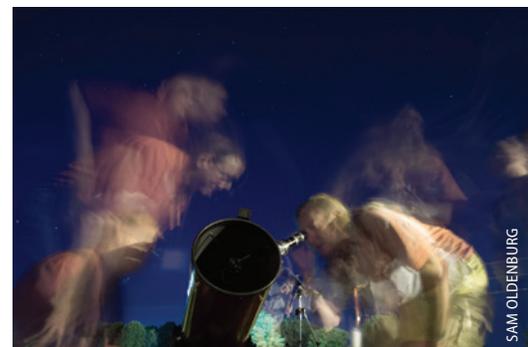
The scholars also enjoyed sharing ideas and opinions with other middle school science teachers. The week culminated with a trip to study the biology, geology, and history of Mammoth Cave.



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# Friends of The Center

## GIFTS GIVEN IN MEMORY OF KAYE WILLIS

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Tyler Clark  
(Counselor; SCATS Instructor)  
Bowling Green, KY

Matthew & Melanie Cook  
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Scott Nass (VAMPY  
1988-91; Counselor)  
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*Alumni Fund*

Graham (SCATS 1996-98;  
VAMPY 1999-2001; Travel)  
& Carolina Oliver  
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Ma'ayan Plaut  
(Super Saturdays 1998-2000;  
SCATS 2000-01; VAMPY 2001-04)  
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Rankin & Dolly Powell  
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Pat Richardson  
Louisville, KY

Dick & Julia Roberts  
Bowling Green, KY  
*In memory of Meg Gatten*

Kathy Strunk  
Nashville, TN

Kristen VonGruben  
(VAMPY 1990-93)  
Fenton, MO  
*Alumni Fund*

Jon Warren  
(Counselor and  
Head Counselor)  
Bowling Green, KY

Jonathan & Brooke  
Wilcoxson  
Shelbyville, KY

Joe & Judy Wismann  
Talent, OR

Charles & Carolyn Hardcastle  
Bowling Green, KY

Sarah Hardy  
Louisville, KY

Norman & Carole Harned  
Bowling Green, KY

June Hudson  
Benton, KY

Rocky & Mary Beth Hudson  
Benton, KY

Basil & Joann Jones  
Bowling Green, KY

Mary Lucas  
Bowling Green, KY

Stacy Roberts Moots  
(SCATS 1983-84; Travel)  
Kirksville, MO

Gordon & Regina Newell  
Bowling Green, KY

Dick & Julia Roberts  
Bowling Green, KY

Eileen Tavares  
Allentown, PA

Dennye & Elizabeth VanArsdale  
Bowling Green, KY

The scholars also had the opportunity to hear from two noted speakers. The scholars were fascinated by Dr. Paula Grisanti's talk on regenerative treatments. Dr. Chris Graney hosted an evening star party giving the scholars the chance to view Jupiter and Saturn as Galileo would have seen them as part of his talk on Galileo and his disputes with fellow scientists.

Now the Scholars are looking forward to gathering for the National Science Teachers Association Conference in Los Angeles in April. They will participate in the conference and share the projects they have undertaken in their classrooms.

A second cohort of NSCF Scholars will be selected for 2017. The application will be available online soon.

## HISTORY

*A gift from the National Stem Cell Foundation established a partnership with The Center for Gifted Studies at WKU and The Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science. The inaugural class of NSCF Scholars is the current cohort.*

*"What would happen if you started with a hand-picked selection of the finest ingredients—10 really creative middle school science teachers of all ages and stripes from all parts of the country, many of whom are master teachers (or should be)—brought them together at WKU in the kitchen of expert teachers of master teachers, turned up the heat to release the creative juices, smothered with Southern hospitality, and brought to boil? Then spread them thin across the map, leveraged the power of modern technology to keep at a gentle simmer, and let the flavors mingle and deepen. What would happen after a year?"*

*As a teacher inside this experiment, the intensity of the creative experience is like nothing else I have ever experienced. To walk into a room and just feel deep down inside that one is in one's tribe. To just be immediately at ease, 'getting' each other, and trusting and honoring each one. And to be pushed to strip away all the limitations one subconsciously imposes on oneself to ask "What do you really want to do?" That's truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience. — SANTOSH ZACHARIAH*

# A Lasting Tribute of Love: The Riley Jane Lawrence Memorial Scholarship



In 2008, VAMPY alumna Sarah Markham Lawrence (1988-90) and her husband, David, lost their only child, four-year-old Riley Jane Lawrence. VAMPY friend Melissa Middleton Biliter (1988-90) wanted to honor Riley Jane's life by creating a scholarship in her memory. The Riley Jane Lawrence Memorial Scholarship goes to a student who is gifted and talented and eligible for VAMPY but cannot afford to attend without assistance. This summer, for the first time, a Riley Jane Lawrence scholarship recipient attended VAMPY.

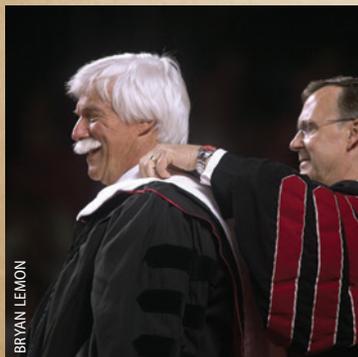
All contributions made to this fund not only honor the memory of a special little girl, but they also support the education and enrichment of a gifted young person in need.

Friends,

Our family is honored at the support and interest The Riley Jane Lawrence Memorial Scholarship has received. We are so pleased that the first honoree was able to attend VAMPY this summer, and we look forward to many more years of deserving recipients.

In the eight years since we lost our daughter Riley, we have comforted ourselves by performing acts of charity and goodwill in her name. This service has taken many forms and has been of great help to us in our grief and recovery process. The Riley Jane Lawrence Memorial Scholarship will be a legacy that will continue honoring Riley's memory in perpetuity. We are grateful to the Biliter family for helping us establish this remembrance and to our many family and friends who are helping us build it. We wish you all the best in life, and thank you for your generosity. Please feel free to visit: [rileyjanelawrence.memory-of.com](http://rileyjanelawrence.memory-of.com)

Dr. Sarah Markham Lawrence  
David H. Lawrence  
Henry and Sam Lawrence



## Two People Important to Gifted Education Receive Honorary Doctorates at WKU

In WKU's May graduation ceremony, Dr. C. June Maker and Mr. John Kelly were acknowledged for their contributions with honorary doctorates. June, a WKU graduate, started her career as an elementary teacher in Caneyville, KY, and is now a professor of Special Education in the Disability and Psychoeducational Studies Department at the University of Arizona. She has made remarkable contributions to the field of gifted education including her 1976 work *Providing Programs for Gifted Handicapped* which was groundbreaking in the fields of special and gifted education, and the concept of twice-exceptional children continues to develop today. John is best known as a founding member of the WKU Kelly Autism Program. However, The Center appreciates John and his family most for their gift for the Victoria Fellows, a group of proactive educational leaders devoted to improving gifted education in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Additionally, John's daughter, Victoria, has been a devoted volunteer for The Center for 10 years. The Center congratulates these two very special people!

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1906 College Heights Blvd. #71031  
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1031

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SAM OLDENBURG

## Contact The Center

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SAM OLDENBURG

# CALENDAR

- Fall Super Saturdays**  
October 29, November 5, 12, & 19, 2016
- Twice-Exceptional Student Seminar**  
November 11, 2016
- Leadership Institute XIX**  
December 7-8, 2016
- Winter Super Saturdays**  
January 28, February 4, 11, & 18, 2017
- IdeaFestival Bowling Green**  
March 15, 2017
- Spring Break in Italy**  
March 31 – April 9, 2017
- National STEM Cell Foundation Scholars**  
June 4-10, 2017
- Camp Explore**  
June 5-9, 2017
- SCATS**  
June 11-23, 2017
- VAMPY**  
June 25 – July 15, 2017
- Advanced Placement Summer Institute**  
June 26-30, 2017
- Camp Innovate**  
July 10-14, 2017