

the Challenge

Magazine for The Center for Gifted Studies

THE CENTER ENGAGES INTERNATIONALLY



The 22nd World Conference in Sydney was a premier event in the summer. Julia Roberts began her four-year term as President of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children; and Tracy Inman, Tyler Clark, and Julia made presentations at the conference. Other international activities included keynote speeches by Tracy at the MIB International Conference on Talent Education in Portoroz, Slovenia, and Julia at the Second International Conference on Giftedness in Mexico City.

Additional evidence that members of The Center for Gifted Studies staff have made international connections include hosting international guests, offering a VAMPY language class, traveling, and having books translated. In July, a delegation from Saudi Arabia came to visit, learn, and discuss potential partnerships. The Center traveled with students and interested adults to Italy in the spring and Greece in the fall. Moreover, books written by Julia, Tracy, and Julie Boggess have been translated into Arabic.

Letter from Julia



Dear Friends of The Center for Gifted Studies,

How did The Center for Gifted Studies at WKU become one of the outstanding centers in the country and even beyond? We developed each program as needs were evident. Then, we found it to be so good that we kept offering it. That is true for programs for children and young people, educators, and parents.

A few examples of our programming will help tell the story of The Center. Susan Leib, the Kentucky consultant for gifted education, called to see if WKU would offer Duke TIP's first cooperative program. President Zacharias flew to Durham with me to check out the program, and we returned with the firm opinion that we could and would do that. In the summer of 2018, The Center will offer VAMPY for the 35th summer. Yes, VAMPY has become an important part of the year for many 7th to 10th graders!

Another story involves the WKU Advanced Placement Summer Institute. In 1984, Kentucky began to offer the Commonwealth Diploma and linked this opportunity for high school students to Advanced Placement classes. No one suggested offering professional development for teachers of AP classes, yet it was apparent that professional learning would be key to having the best opportunities for young people in Kentucky taking AP classes. Thirty-five summers later, the WKU AP Summer Institute is one of the largest in the country, bringing teachers from across the United States and from other countries.

We welcome your ideas for programming as well as for adding to the opportunities we currently offer. What is an idea you have that you think would spark interests of children and young people, educators, and/or parents?

All of the activities of The Center are enhanced by your support as Friends of The Center. You share information about The Center with others who may be interested in programs offered. Without you talking about opportunities The Center hosts, some people would never know about them. You provide scholarships to help children who need financial assistance to be involved in programming. You volunteer when needed. You have helped our center become one of the outstanding centers in the country with programming for parents, educators, and children and young people. Thank you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julia Link Roberts".

Julia Link Roberts
Mahurin Professor for Gifted Studies

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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.



PHOTOS BY ALAN SUMMERS



The Center for Gifted Studies has traveled to many countries, yet the fall of 2017 was the first to Greece. The trip in Greece included time in Athens; a visit to a monastery on the top of a mountain; journeys into ancient times at Delphi, Olympia, Mycenae, and Corinth; as well as a cruise to three islands. What was enjoyed most would be in the eyes of each of the twenty-seven travelers, but all would agree that a wonderful guide and bus driver throughout the time in Greece made the stay extra special.

The Acropolis holds an imposing position in Athens, and the fall travelers made their first stop there. They saw the Parthenon and the Temple of Nike Athena and enjoyed a panoramic view of the city with so many white buildings. The Acropolis Museum and the National Archeological Museum offered many treasures of ancient Greece which travelers admired.

The Center Travels to Greece



The long drive to Meteora was worth it to visit a monastery built on the top of a mountain. The group saw other monasteries in the area that were also on mountains where one can hardly imagine the challenges of construction. The views of the monasteries as well as the view from one of them were absolutely spectacular.

Delphi, Olympia, Mycenae, and Corinth provided sights and information that travelers had read about in history books. They saw the Temple of Apollo, famous for its oracles, in Delphi; the sites of the original Olympic games; the Lions Gate and the beehive tomb at Mycenae; and ancient Corinth where the Apostle Paul stayed longer than anywhere else in Greece. These visits provided mental pictures to accompany pages of reading in history books.

The final two days of the excursion included a cruise to Hydra, Poros, and Aegina. No cars are on Hydra; only donkeys deliver goods. Travelers shopped for specialties like olives, pistachio nuts, and ice cream (also enjoyed throughout the trip as well as on the islands).

After a visit to the Temple of Poseidon, the trip concluded with dinner at the Hard Rock Café, complete with a sixteenth birthday celebration for Samantha (Sam) Sutton (Travel to Spain, France, and Greece). The trip was filled with opportunities to learn and lots of fun. The next traveling opportunity with The Center for Gifted Studies will be to London in the spring – March 30 to April 8.

Parenting Gifted Children 101 WINS LEGACY AWARD

Tracy Inman and Jana Kirchner's *Parenting Gifted Children 101: An Introduction to Gifted Kids and Their Needs* (Prufrock Press) has received a prestigious 2017 Legacy Book Award. The book explores the basics of parenting gifted children, truly giving parents the "introductory course" they need to better understand and help their gifted child.

The Legacy Award recognizes outstanding books published in the United States that have long-term potential for positively influencing the lives of gifted children. The Legacy Book Awards are given each year by the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented, the largest state advocacy group of its kind. The parent category looks for a book that increases understanding of the unique needs of gifted and talented children and helps ensure they are met, both at home and in the classroom.

Topics featured in this lively, practical book include myths about gifted children, characteristics of the gifted, the hows and whys of advocacy, social and emotional issues and needs, strate-

gies for partnering with a child's school, and more. *Parenting Gifted Children 101* explores ways for parents to help their child at home and maximize their child'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 children—contains resources for further reading and insights from more than 50 parents and educators of gifted children.

This is Tracy's third legacy award. The first was in the educator category: *Strategies for Differentiating Instruction: Best Practices for the Classroom* (2009) co-authored by Julia Link Roberts. The second was for another parenting book co-edited by Donald Treffinger, Jennifer Jolly, and Joan Smutny: *Parenting Gifted Children: The Authoritative Guide From the National Association for Gifted Children* (2011).

Jana and Tracy's book as well as the two other award-winning books can be found at prufrock.com.



LOOKING FOR A SPECIAL GIFT FOR A SPECIAL YOUNG PERSON?



Consider a gift certificate for one of our programs. Whether you have a third grader excited about science or a ninth grader interested in finding people who share the same passion for writing, we have an opportunity for minds-on, hands-on learning and the chance to build community. Certificates are available for Super Saturdays, SCATS, VAMPY, Camp Innovate, Camp Explore, or travel to London during spring break. Contact The Center at 270.745.6323 or gifted@wku.edu for more information.



WINTER SUPER SA



PHOTOS BY JESSE KNIFLEY





TURDAYS



The excitement
of learning
on a Saturday
morning



the filling of a vessel.” –ATTRIBUTED TO SOCRATES

Jonathan Vaughn was recognized as The Center for Gifted Studies' volunteer of the year during the 2017 Summit Awards ceremony held as part of WKU's homecoming week. For more than 15 years, Jonathan has worked to educate and support gifted students with The Center. He partnered with VAMPY teacher Ron Skillern as his teaching assistant for Nazi Germany and the Holocaust class in 2001, 2008-2011, 2014, and 2017. In 2012, he served as Head of Summer Residence Experience, and he taught the VAMPY course World Biographies in 2013.

In addition, Jonathan has pitched in to help The Center in whatever way he can, whether by hauling (literally) thousands of books and other teacher materials for the Advanced Placement Summer Institute or assisting with the Nazi Germany and the Holocaust Mural Project. Ron says, "Jonathan, from the time he was a young boy, was taught by his family the importance of contributing and giving back to one's community. If something worthwhile needs to be done, Jonathan is there to assist!"

A social studies teacher at Bowling Green High School since 2013, Jonathan has said that his time at VAMPY is "three of the most enjoyable and educational weeks I've ever experienced." Jonathan clearly gets a lot out of his work for The Center; the Summit Award celebrates how much he gives right back to us.



VOLUNTEER JONATHAN VAUGHN RECEIVES 2017 SUMMIT AWARD

ALUMNI UPDATE

IAN DRIVER (VAMPY 1996-99) finished a PhD at Columbia University in 2013 in cell and molecular biology. His thesis was on the mechanisms by which adult stem cell identity is patterned and maintained in fruit flies. He then started a Postdoctoral Fellowship at UCSF in the Anatomy Department studying lung regeneration and repair. While there, he launched a number of single-cell sequencing projects and became a specialist in bioinformatics. In 2017, he joined Amgen as a scientist in the Genome Analysis Unit. As a computational biologist, he works on lots of different projects from cancer to Alzheimer's. His main hobby is still running (for anyone who came to the track with Hank Zimmerman and him), but he's moved to doing mostly ultra marathons.

AMANDA EARNEST-REITMANN (SCATS 1996-97) married Jonathan Reitmann in May of 2017. She received a Bachelor's Degree in art (graphic design) with a music minor from Morehead State University in 2005. In 2014, she earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in graphic design from Savannah College of Art and Design. Her thesis, based on medical sharps waste, explored how a cross-colaboration effort would reduce the impact of improper disposal. Amanda is currently employed as a web developer/designer for Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. Before that, Amanda worked for the University of Cincinnati Foundation from 2013 to 2015, and Auburn University College of Education from 2006 to 2012. She has been in the field of higher education marketing and branding, specifically print and web design, for more than ten years.

JOSEPH GALLOWAY (SCATS 2005) completed a mechanical engineering degree at the University of Kentucky in December of 2016. He is a design engineer with Hitachi Automotive in Berea, KY. He left for Japan late 2017 where he is working on a hybrid motor and enjoying the rich countryside (and sushi). His girlfriend will be joining him in early 2018, and his family plans to visit as well.

I am thankful for the opportunities I was given in life, and part of that thankfulness goes towards The Center for Gifted Studies at WKU!

MEG MCNEILL (VAMPY 1998-2001) lives in the Catskill Mountains in upstate New York with her new husband. She opened her own wine and spirits shop, Upstream, after 10 years in Brooklyn working in food and beverage and pursuing her sommelier certification. She is still in touch with a number of her friends from her four years at VAMPY, where she made some of her favorite memories from her young adulthood.



VAMPY Murals Shared with the Community

Ron Skillern has been teaching the Nazi Germany and the Holocaust course at VAMPY for the past 26 years. Each year murals depicting powerful messages about the Holocaust have been created by students in the class. In September, the collection of murals was exhibited at the Jewish Community Center in Louisville, KY, for school groups to visit during the day.

An event was organized to allow community members to view the murals. Several students from the most recent VAMPY class attended the event to talk to attendees about the experience. One of the students, Hayden Teeter (VAMPY 2015-17), travelled from Brentwood, TN. He noted, "I think that creating the



murals makes what happened 70 years ago more meaningful. It is not just looking at a black-and-white film. You are more in touch with what happened." Before this exhibit, Hayden had not seen all of the murals together. He said he "was excited to see the past years of hard work that people put in. It really came together well."

You are invited to view KET's documentary on the murals.

FEBRUARY 19

**Kentucky Center for the Arts
Louisville, KY
6:45pm EST**

MARCH 2

**National Corvette Museum
Bowling Green, KY
5:30pm CST**

The project of developing the murals into an exhibition has been funded by The Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence. The murals were exhibited in Danville in 2017 and will be exhibited in Bowling Green in 2018. Additionally, this project allows for a video about the murals to be made by Kentucky Educational Television, which will premier in Louisville on February 19 and Bowling Green on March 2. The project is a partnership of The Center for Gifted Studies at WKU, The Kentucky Center for Performing Arts, and KET.

GATTON¹⁰

The Gatton Academy's 10-year Anniversary Celebration

The Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. The celebration — dubbed Gatton¹⁰ — took the form of ten events over the course of a three-day weekend August 19-21, with the total solar eclipse on the final day.

The celebration was initially imagined two-and-a-half years earlier when the organizers realized that the Great American Eclipse — which passed through southern Kentucky on August 21, 2017 — would coincide almost to the day with the ten-year anniversary of The Gatton Academy's August 23, 2007 dedication.

The idea blossomed into ten thematic events to involve Gatton Academy alumni, current students, parents and families (past and present), WKU faculty and staff, and friends of the program.

Since many alumni would be traveling from across the country to be in the eclipse path, the weekend was identified as an ideal time to host the festivities. In total, some 200 alumni came back to

reconnect and visit their old stomping grounds in Florence Schneider Hall and at Western Kentucky University.

At the Welcome Reception, Gatton Academy Executive Director Julia

Among other weekend events were alumni classes with some favorite Gatton Academy professors, a talk from The Gatton Academy's first director Tim Gott, class reunion dinners for each of the ten

graduated classes, a group service project, and, of course, an Alumni Prom.

The weekend culminated on the clear-skied Monday, August 21, with The Gatton Academy's Solar Eclipse Festival. The museum and grounds of the South Union Shaker Village were chosen as the festival's home. This site, fifteen minutes from the WKU campus, put attendees much closer to the eclipse's centerline than Bowling Green, making for a longer total eclipse. At South Union Shaker Village, the total

solar eclipse lasted two minutes and four seconds.

The eclipse was the first total solar eclipse in the continental USA in 38 years, the first in Kentucky for 99 years, and the first-ever total solar eclipse at South Union Shaker Village since records started 210 years ago.



Current Gatton Academy students Ivy Irihamye ('19) and Megan Whittle ('19) arrive at the Solar Eclipse Festival.

Roberts reflected upon the first ten years' milestones, as well as the ten years of advocacy that preceded the school's 2007 opening. She also recognized key individuals who helped launch the school. Included were members of the inaugural 2008 graduating class, whom Julia called "risk-takers who applied on faith."



Alumni Duncan Wood ('13) and Aaron Tagliaboschi ('13) reunited their band GAMMA (Gatton Academy Miscellaneous Musicians Association) to play at the Solar Eclipse Festival.



Gatton Academy alumni Keaton Smith ('12) and Nick Zolman ('12) record a memory for the Audio Archives. The Audio Archives will be housed in the permanent digital collections of the WKU Libraries.

GATTON¹⁰ / TEN EVENTS

1. Alumni class with Walker Rutledge
2. Alumni CPS Theatre Class with Uta Ziegler and Claus Ernst
3. Tim Talk (with The Gatton Academy's first director, Tim Gott)
4. Welcome Reception (speakers included Mr. Carol Martin "Bill" Gatton, Lt. Gov. Jenean Hampton, WKU President Timothy C. Caboni, Gatton Academy Executive Director Julia Roberts, and Gatton Academy Director Lynette Breedlove)
5. Class Reunion Dinners
6. Gatton Gives Back (a service project at Lost River Cave)
7. Nostalgia Hour (a chance for alumni to visit their former rooms and residential spaces)
8. Audio Archives (stories recorded from alumni for preservation)
9. Alumni Prom
10. Solar Eclipse Festival



Festival-goers sought shade in the Cinema Barn where short films about total solar eclipses played.



1:25 PM



1:26 PM



1:27 PM



1:28 PM



1:29 PM



1:30 PM

A timelapse camera captured the eclipse at The Gatton Academy's Solar Eclipse Festival at the South Union Shaker Village over a five-minute period.

For current Gatton Academy students, the eclipse coincided with what would have been their first day of class. WKU postponed the start of classes until 4 pm that day so that all students could enjoy viewing the eclipse.

Festival ambiance was created by live music from bands Mt. Victor Revue and The Gatton Academy Miscellaneous Musicians Association (GAMMA), featuring alumni musicians Duncan Wood ('13) and Aaron Tagliaboschi ('13). There were also educational activities and talks about the eclipse, a Cinema Barn with eclipse-featured short films, food trucks, and lawn games.

Though totality did not start until 1:27 pm, the festival grounds were mostly full by 11 am. Total attendance at the festival topped 850 people. Alumni and current students mingled and met on the festival's relaxed lawns where some passed the time listening to music under shade trees, while others played games or frequented the food trucks.

Summer daylight quickly evaporated as the moon's shadow passed directly over the festival. The crowd cheered as totality started and ended. The temperature at the local Kentucky Mesonet station nearest the festival fell 13 degrees during the



Gatton Academy alumni and current student family members also attended the Solar Eclipse Festival.

eclipse, and a confused afternoon cicada song emerged from the old trees at South Union Shaker Village during totality.

Immediately after the eclipse, first-year Gatton Academy student Sasha Sairajeev ('19) was interviewed. "Even though this happened a few minutes ago, I am still emotionally affected," she said. "The entire experience was surreal. That moment when we saw the corona come back—that beauty of the ring—it's just a breathtaking experience. I can't imagine ever forgetting this."



DERICK STRODE

Gatton Academy alumni who have traveled on study abroad to Harlaxton, England, reconnected with Professor Walker Rutledge (WKU English) for one of the weekend's alumni courses. Librarian Jonathan Jeffrey is photographed showing the alumni original artifacts in the Robert Penn Warren Center in the Kentucky Library.

Finding Creative Students

Considered the most productive inventor of all time, Thomas Edison holds more than 1,000 patents. Marie Curie pioneered research in radioactivity, earning two Nobel Prizes in two sciences. Leonardo da Vinci was a gifted architect, astronomer, engineer, inventor, painter, and sculptor. His notebooks from the 1400s detail flying machines and robots. Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple, changed the way people used computers, from the Apple II to the iPhone of today. These creative geniuses changed the world for all of us.

Creative people come from every background, culture, race, and age; and they are sitting in our school classrooms today. It is essential that we find students with creative potential and nurture their special talents. In addition to portfolios of creativity, the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) can be used to identify these creative learners. The TTCT requires special training in order to score the measure accurately.

On September 26 and 27, 34 dedicated teachers from around Kentucky met at the Embassy Suites in Lexington to learn how to administer, score, and interpret the TTCT Figural, at a professional learning experience sponsored by The Center for Gifted Studies. Dr. Sarah Sumners, Interim Director of the Torrance Center for Creativity and Talent Development at the University of Georgia, facilitated their learning.



The test uses picture-based exercises to assess five mental characteristics and thirteen creative strengths. The activities are designed to tap different aspects of creative functioning, such as fluency, originality, elaboration, synthesis, visualization, humor, and richness of imagery. The teachers participated in two full days of training and then took home four tests to score independently to send to the Torrance Center. This follow-up practice occurs until the teachers reach mastery for all the components and are deemed reliable scorers.

Thanks to these dedicated teachers, more creative students sitting in Kentucky classrooms will be identified and their creative abilities will be nurtured. We can look forward to their innovations and inventions which we will enjoy in the future.

Working with teachers from across the state of Kentucky who are so dedicated to the field of teaching and to gifted education was inspiring. Their hard work is a valuable continuation of the legacy that Dr. Torrance began a half-century ago, and I am honored for the opportunity to work with them.

– SARAH SUMNERS

I came away with a much greater understanding that divergent thinking is vital to problem solving and is the basis of creativity (understanding what is, and then imagining the possibilities of what could be). This unique ability is one that will be crucial to the workforce of the future, given rapidly evolving technology, changing global economy, and health and environmental challenges. We must ensure that we intentionally nurture these skills in students.

– TRACY ADAMS, Russell County Gifted Coordinator

“Being gifted means children have talents to be developed.”

“Differentiation for gifted students doesn’t mean giving them more work when they are early finishers.”

Project RAP: Discovering and Developing Young Talent

“Students can be gifted even though they may have behavior issues and difficulty attending.”

“We need to cast a wider net to find students with high potential.”

“We have felt so much pressure to get our low kids up; it is good to be encouraged to challenge our students who can learn more.”



These quotes are from Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) teachers who have been participating in Project RAP (Reaching Academic Potential) for the past two years. India Gilvens (Shacklette Elementary) and Lindsay Boyce Dotterweich (Gilmore Lane Elementary), as well as Gifted/Talented Lead Teachers Tiffani Morrison (Watson Lane Elementary), Kate Rueve (Zachary Taylor Elementary), and Morgan Terry (King Elementary) shared their thoughts on finding and serving high-potential primary students during a professional development session for teachers joining the project.

Project RAP is one of 11 Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Grants awarded nationwide. The WKU Center for Gifted Studies, the Kentucky Department of Education, the University of Louisville, and JCPS are partners in this grant, which focuses on finding and serving students from underrepresented populations in grades K-3 (these learners are minorities, do not speak English as their first language, have a disability as well as high potential, and/or are from low economic backgrounds). One teacher from each school has been designated as the Gifted/Talented Lead Teacher, taken coursework at the University of Louisville, and received an endorsement in gifted education during the last two years.

These professionals provide leadership in their buildings in finding primary students with high potential using nontraditional measures, such as response lessons and the Gifted Behavior Rating Scale developed through a previous Javits Grant, Project Spark at the University of Connecticut. Teachers also use infor-

mation gained from achievement testing, a nonverbal aptitude test, teacher observation, and student work samples to support decisions about which students should be clustered together for advanced learning opportunities.

Educators teaching these clusters of students utilize strategies they have learned through their university classes and Project RAP professional development to raise the level of learning for their students. These teachers are creating classroom cultures that support differentiation and building lessons using the Bloom Taxonomy. They are utilizing choice boards, RAFT assignments, tiered learning centers, Jacob's Ladders for language arts, and emphasizing problem solving in

mathematics. Center staff Mary Evans and Tracy Inman have provided the professional learning for the lead and cluster group teachers.

Gilmore Lane's lead teacher Lindsay, who is also a 1st grade teacher, described the benefit of cluster grouping by giving this example: "I have a child who would probably go through school, get straight A's, probably never get any individualized attention because he is well behaved, he does what the teacher says, he does everything right, but you can tell that he's bored. So, thankfully, this boredom is not coming out in behavior problems, but it may down the road. And so, I think he has really benefited from cluster grouping because it has given him teachers who embrace his giftedness and want to push

him, so that he is learning something new every day, and he isn't mastering everything because he already knew it. I think with teachers that didn't know anything about cluster grouping or gifted students, we just have the tendency to focus on the low-performing students, and it would go unnoticed that he is bored and not really learning anything new."

Dissemination of project outcomes is the focus of the third year of this grant. Project RAP teachers will be presenting their process for finding underrepresented primary students with high potential on February 26 at the Kentucky Association for Gifted Education Conference. Project RAP teachers will also share strategies for serving these students in cluster groups on February 27.



SAM OLDENBURG

Advanced Placement or Dual Credit: Which Course Should You Take?

Many gifted high school students looking for an academic challenge or hoping to jump start their college education enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) and dual credit courses. Although both of these acceleration options allow students to work toward their high school graduation while also potentially earning credit toward a college degree, they are not identical opportunities. Students need to understand the benefits and limitations of these options in order to make the choice that is best for them.

The first step is knowing the basic differences between AP and dual credit courses. The chart below breaks down the key points.



The next step is considering what the students' goals are in taking a college-level course. For many students, the primary consideration is saving time and money on their college degree. In this scenario,

both AP and dual credit courses can help, but only if the student has a clear post-graduation plan. Whether or not students earn credit and what kind of credit is earned depends ultimately on where they go to college and their choice of major.

For dual credit, students who attend the college through which they take the course will keep their earned credits. However, credits earned through a public college will not necessarily be recognized at a private college or a public college in another state.

Moreover, there may be less expensive options to earning that same college credit. For example, Kentucky students might take as dual credit the WKU course Math

	ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES	DUAL CREDIT COURSES
Sponsoring Organization	College Board	Individual two- or four-year colleges and universities
Affiliation	No affiliation with a particular college or university; National acceptance of scores varies	Affiliated with a specific two- or four-year college or university; Credit may or may not transfer to other colleges and universities
Location	Taught at the student's high school or, if not offered at the school, then online through an approved provider	Taught at the student's high school, on a college campus, or online
Teachers	Specialized AP training is not required in all states but is encouraged and available	Approved by affiliated college; requirements vary (often 12 graduate hours in area of subject)
Course content	Expected to prepare students to take a national AP test	Expected to be the same as the college's course
Cost to students	No cost to take the course, but there is a test-taking fee that may be covered by the state	Students pay college tuition but usually at a highly discounted rate
Credits	Depending on the college where the student matriculates, a score of 3, 4, or 5 (scale is 1-5) on the AP test can translate into credit and/or the satisfying of a higher-level course prerequisite	If they pass the course, students earn credit at the affiliated college. If the student matriculates at a different college, the credit may or may not transfer
Effect of grade earned on academic standing in college	Does not affect the student's college GPA or academic standing	Grade is applied to the student's college GPA and will affect the student's academic status at that college



116: College Algebra in order to fulfill the university's quantitative reasoning general education requirement. However, Bruce Kessler, head of the Math Department at WKU, points out a math ACT score of 26 or higher gives the student that same credit, without additional cost: "If you end up taking a course you didn't need, then it really hasn't saved you anything."

Cost-effectiveness also depends on the student's major. Bruce notes that if students take AP Calculus AB, WKU "will either give Calculus I credit or, for a high end score, Calculus I and Calculus II credit, so if students are moving toward a major that requires calculus, then AP is some of the cheapest credit that they'll earn."

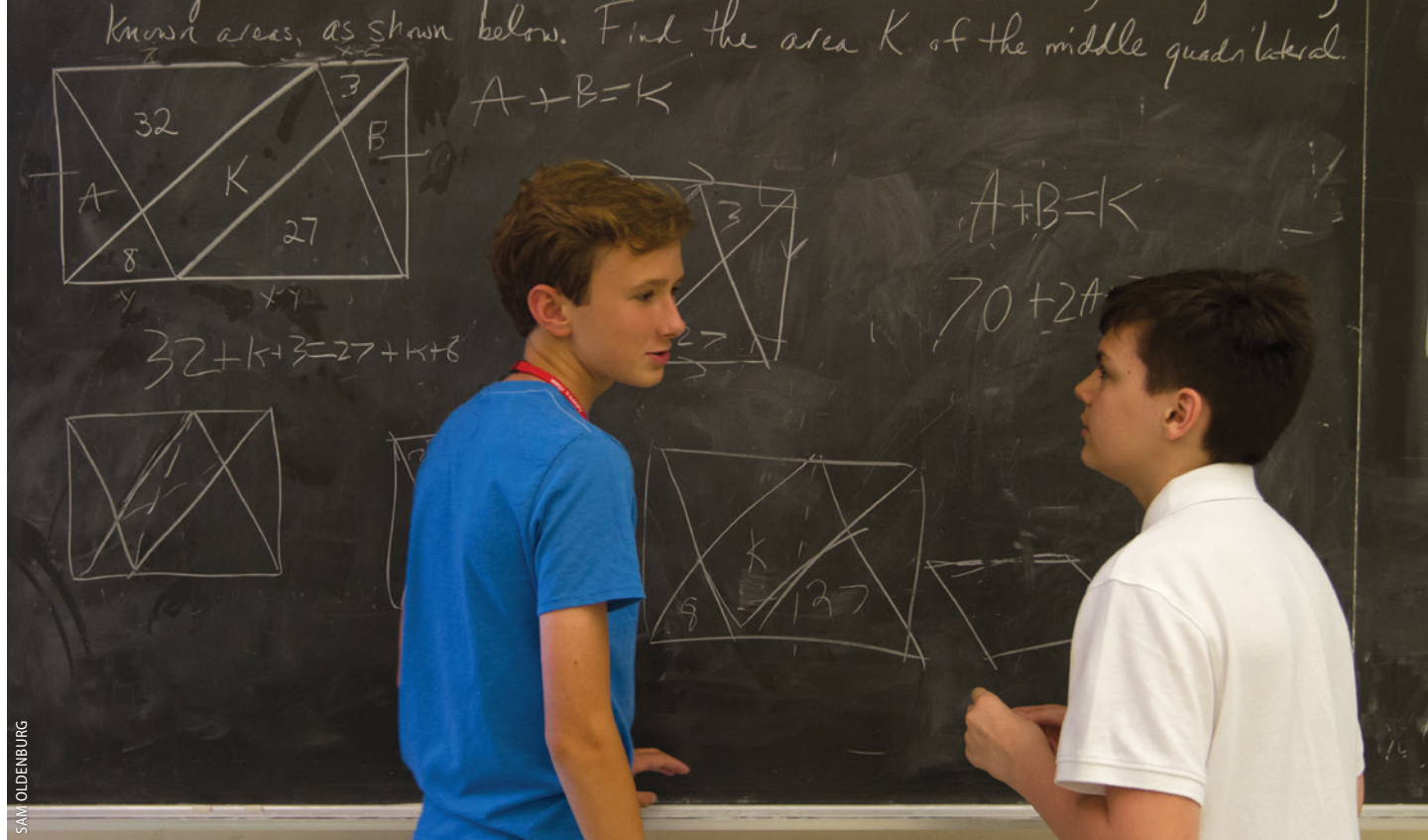
Koji Barnaby (FSS 2005, '10; WSS 2010, '13), a 2017 graduate of Bowling Green High School and now a first-year student at WKU, took seven AP classes and three dual credit courses while in high school. Some of those courses, like dual credit Spanish and AP Biology, Chemistry, and Calculus BC, will help him with his double major in biochemistry and Spanish. The dual credit chemistry class he took in ninth grade, however, will not help because it is designed for non-chemistry majors.

Leah Krisher, a guidance counselor at Warren East High School with eighteen years of experience, advises, "The more competitive the college, the less likely dual credit courses will transfer and the higher a score is needed on the AP test, so students have to do their research on the colleges they're interested in. If they're looking at a more competitive school, then AP is the route" because it is more widely accepted as credit.

However, AP students need to keep in mind that they will need to earn a certain score on the test in order to earn that credit. At most colleges, a score of 3 will be enough to earn credit in a general education course and possibly a class that will help them advance in their major. On the other hand, some of the most competitive colleges in the country may require a 5 for the students to receive credit, and that credit may be worth less than a full college course.

Gifted students hopefully approach education as a chance to challenge themselves and gain the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed wherever they go to college, so, beyond questions of economy and efficiency, another priority to consider when selecting AP or dual credit courses is the quality of the educational experience.

Leah says, "Both AP courses and dual credit courses, if done as prescribed, are extremely beneficial: students are exposed to more rigor, a faster pace, more depth, college content, and a different way to study." She adds that "dual credit is an incredible opportunity for any student meeting college benchmarks," but "AP courses better serve the needs of high-end, very gifted students." Please note that The College Board, which administers the AP program, argues that AP is not designed for gifted students; rather, the tests are designed for any college-bound student.



Professors also see a difference between AP and dual credit courses in what students learn. Rob Hale, head of the English Department at WKU, notes, “When I’ve had students in a class like English 200 [Introduction to Literature], the students who had taken dual credit didn’t seem as prepared. In an AP English class there’s usually going to be more talented writers who are going to be challenged to be successful. If it’s a choice between dual credit and AP, I’d pick AP every time.”

In his experience, Koji found the students in his AP classes tended to be more motivated than those in the dual credit courses because they knew that had to do well on the test at the end rather than simply passing the course in order to earn college credit.

The College Board did a study of high school students who graduated in 2006, comparing those at four-year colleges who took AP with those who took dual credit (it did not look at students who took both). They divided those groups into students who earned a 3 or better on their AP exam, students who earned less than a 3, students who took dual credit from a

four-year college, and students who took dual credit from a two-year college.

Overall, the research showed stronger performances in higher education by students who took AP rather than dual credit. AP students who scored a 3 or higher were significantly stronger on several key markers than students who took dual credit courses at two- or four-year colleges. These markers included staying in college for four years, first-year GPA, and both four-year and six-year graduation rates. Additionally, AP students who earned less than a 3 were still more likely to persist in college for four years and to graduate in six years than were students who took dual credit. The weakest performing group in all categories were those who took dual credit through two-year colleges. (Wyatt, Patterson, & Di Giacomo, 2014).

Rob, whose department does not offer dual credit courses except for two taught on WKU’s campus in Glasgow, sees the oversight of the courses as crucial: “AP English courses are tried and true: even if the instruction were to be less than wonderful, there’s a failsafe because students have to pass this nationally vetted

test in order to get credit for the course. And in my experience, the oversight isn’t as consistent in dual credit English courses as it is for AP classes.” Bruce, on the other hand, is satisfied with the quality of the dual credit classes offered through his department, which has a designated faculty member to oversee the content and quality of the courses.

Ultimately, the quality of the class depends on the quality of the curriculum and the quality of the teacher. As Leah says, “You need a teacher who’s trained and can teach at different levels.” To decide which course is right, students need to get as much information as possible and to consult with those who understand their priorities and plans. Whatever they decide, dual credit and AP courses both can extend the possibilities for gifted students to learn, explore, and achieve.

SOURCES

Wyatt, J., Patterson, B., & Di Giacomo, F. T. (2014). *A comparison of the college outcomes of AP and dual enrollment students*. Retrieved from research.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/publications/2014/7/comparison-college-outcomes-ap-and-dual-enrollment-students-progress.pdf

Friends of The Center may be very familiar with the engaging programs we sponsor each year for students, their educators, and their parents. They may not know, however, that we play important roles in national advocacy organizations. Julia Roberts, Tracy Inman, and The Gatton Academy's Lynette Breedlove all serve on the board of The Association for the Gifted, a division of the Council for Exceptional Children (as past president, web master, and president elect, respectively). In October, we hosted the fall board meeting, bringing in 15 board members from six states.

The board devoted two-and-a-half days envisioning the future of the advocacy organization. The meetings included a marathon 12-hour strategic planning session with Dr. Mary Christopher from Hardin Simmons University in Texas. The new mission statement reads: The Association for the Gifted (TAG), a division of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), embraces and supports the needs of students with gifts and talents, focusing on multi-exceptional and other diverse learners, through advocacy, professional learning, and resources.

Consultant, award-winning author, and board member Mary Cay Ricci described the board: "Our board members include great minds in the field of gifted education. Being together for meetings is an energizing event! Thinking of ways to support educators in meeting the needs of twice-exceptional and traditionally underserved students is often the heart of our spirited discussions. The board is committed to focusing on these often overlooked groups of gifted learners."

A very important outcome of the board meeting was to work with CEC in the accrediting of teacher education programs for gifted education and talent development. The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) is a national accreditation organization, and it also is the body with which Specialized Professional Associations (SPAs) associate to accredit programs in their field. TAG will soon become the SPA for the field of gifted education and talent development in partnership with CEC.

Debbie Daily, assistant professor and gifted and talented program coordinator at the University of Central Arkansas as well as secretary of the board, explained: "Strategic Planning helped our board focus our energies and efforts on our future. Through this focus, we accepted a challenge to support CEC as they assume the role of SPA for gifted education. We will be charged to review and revise our standards and review programs for national recognition."

The CEC-TAG board next meets at the CEC Annual Conference in Tampa, FL, in February.

The Center Has National Reach Through The Association for the Gifted





2017 World Conference Held Down Under

The School of Education at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia hosted the 22nd Biennial World Council for Gifted and Talented Children World Conference in July. The World Conference attracted 730 educators, researchers, psychologists, parents, and others interested in gifted education from more than 35 countries. The conference featured nine preconference workshops, seven keynote presentations, 27 poster presentations, and more than 200 parallel sessions and symposia addressing a range of topics related to gifted education.

At each of the 22 World Conferences, networking has played an important role. Fitriani Lubis, a participant from Indonesia, noted: “At the World Conference, I had opportunities to connect and explore a chance to do joint research in the field of gifted and talented with fellow academics. It was encouraging to see the possibility of working together and contributing for the benefit of gifted and talented students in

the world and specifically in my country Indonesia.”

The Center for Gifted Studies represented WKU well at the World Conference. Tracy Inman presented Parenting Gifted Children 101: An Introduction to Gifted Kids and Their Needs. Additionally, Julia Roberts facilitated a preconference workshop about talent development and participated in a symposium in which she shared information about The Gatton Academy. Tyler Clark serves as Executive Administrator of the WCGTC, and Julia Roberts assumed the office of president at the conclusion of the World Conference.



The World Conference has been held in London, San Francisco, Jerusalem, Montreal, Manila, Hamburg, Salt Lake City, Sydney, The Hague, Toronto, Hong Kong, Seattle, Istanbul, Barcelona, Adelaide, New Orleans, Warwick, Vancouver, Prague, Louisville, and Odense, and will be hosted in Nashville July 24-28, 2019.

HISTORY In January 2011, Julia Roberts, an elected member of the Executive Committee (2009 – 2017), had the opportunity to move the Headquarters to Western Kentucky University, where it continues to be located. This move was made possible by a generous gift from Pete and Dixie Mahurin. Previously, the Headquarters of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children was hosted at Columbia University and moved to University of South Florida, Lamar University, Purdue University, University of Iowa, a consulting firm in California, and University of Winnipeg.

Dr. Julia Link Roberts serves as president of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children.

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Daniel & Allison Bemiss
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Marilee Benson
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Gary & Karen Bickett
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John Paul & Leslie Blair
Bowling Green, KY

Mark & Julie Roberts
(SCATS 1986-87; Counselor;
Instructor) Boggess
Franklin, TN

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Jason & Cynthia Brown
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VAMPY 2005-06; Counselor)
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In Honor of Harry Chalmers
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Tyler Clark (Counselor; Instructor)
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CENTER SPOTLIGHT

MEET ERIKA SOLBERG

Erika Solberg has been making up stories since before she could write. With a little assistance from her mother, Erika and her sister wrote and performed a puppet show when she was just four years old. She has always loved words and the challenge of communicating.

Erika is an avid reader and says that reading is not just something she likes to do, but an essential activity, and she sees writing as a natural extension. She is a member of a literary club and a book group, and fiction is her preferred genre although she enjoys a broad range of reading topics. She is currently writing a young adult novel.

As Special Events Coordinator for The Center for Gifted Studies, Erika is putting her love of writing to good use as she chronicles a history of The Center in honor of its 35th anniversary. The word count is currently at 38,000, which shows



her thoroughness (she has interviewed more than 50 people) and her determination to capture not only the many activities and events of the last three-and-a-half decades, but also the spirit of The Center and what it has meant to so many children, youth, and adults through the years.

Her primary focus at The Center is preparing for IdeaFestival Bowling Green which will be February 15, 2018. She is currently inviting speakers and activity creators and recruiting sponsors. She also writes and edits stories for the summer blog and The Challenge, prepares press releases, and promotes The Center through announcements on WKYU and appearances on WBKO.

Erika earned a Bachelor's in English with theater studies from Yale and a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing from Louisiana State University. Prior to moving to Bowling Green, she was an adjunct professor at Monmouth College in Illinois where she taught English, creative writing, and literature classes.

She and her husband, Rob Hale (Head of WKU English Department), have two children — Barbara Solberg-Hale, a 9th grader at Bowling Green High School, and Eddie Solberg-Hale, a 7th grader at Bowling Green Junior High. Family activities include taking trips, watching superhero TV shows, playing Uno, and eating dinner together.

Erika was drawn to apply for her position at The Center because it involved writing, planning, and the education of gifted students, all of which she is good at and enjoys. "I would have devoured SCATS, VAMPY, and Super Saturdays, but those kinds of services were not available to me as a gifted kid growing up," said Erika. She is excited to come to the office each day and work with others who are focused on providing opportunities for gifted kids.

REMEMBERING CONNOR SHEEHAN



The Center family lost an incredible young man this fall. Connor Sheehan (10 Super Saturdays; VAMPY 2014-17) tragically passed away in early November. Not only was he creative, bright, and insightful, but he was also caring and kind, making people feel valued and important. People loved his humor and sense of play – such as wearing his pink flamingo jacket when he gave his fourth-year speech the night of the VAMPY banquet. Connor was highlighted in this summer's blog where he was interviewed about being a fourth-year fourth-year. He explained, "VAMPY's really the best thing on the planet, and that sounds kind of crazy, but I never experienced anything else like this in my life, and I don't think I will again. It's such an accepting community." That community – including his brother Colin (3 Super Saturdays; SCATS 2010-11; VAMPY 2012-13) and so many others – miss him terribly.

At grief so deep the tongue must wag in vain; the language of our sense and memory lacks the vocabulary of such pain.

– DANTE ALIGHIERI, *INFERNO* XXVIII, 1-6

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CALENDAR

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Winter Super Saturdays

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IdeaFestival Bowling Green

February 15, 2018

Spring Break in England

March 30 – April 8, 2018

**Kentucky Recognition
Ceremony for Duke TIP**

May 23, 2018

National STEM Scholar Program

June 3 – 9, 2018

Camp Explore

June 4 – 8, 2018

SCATS

June 10 – 22, 2018

VAMPY

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Advanced Placement Summer Institute

June 25 – 29, 2018

Camp Innovate

July 9 – 13, 2018