



the challenge

NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR GIFTED STUDIES ❧ WINTER 2002

THE BERTA FAMILY DONATES \$100,000 TO THE CENTER

As we celebrate our 20th year of providing services for young people who are gifted and talented, their educators, and their parents, friends of The Center are ensuring that these services continue. Vince and Kathleen Berta of Bowling Green, KY, recently donated \$100,000 to create the Berta Fund for Excellence. The Bertas explain: "It is often said but easily forgotten that the future is our youth. The Center for Gifted Studies provides the gifted youth the training, education, and environment with which to maximize their talents. By establishing the Berta Fund for Excellence in Gifted Studies, we are doing our small part of investing in the future of our youth, Western Kentucky University, and our community."

The Bertas realize that parents know their children best and readily recognize that the strengths of the gifted and talented child becomes that child's needs. These children may well have other needs such as learning disabilities or suffer from underachievement. The Berta Fund for Excellence will bring in experts for presentations as well as fund seminars to help parents of these exceptional children.

The Berta Fund for Excellence will also support speakers for professional development for educators on topics such as those mentioned. This could provide information and inspiration to these educators who must understand that strengths create needs. Through special seminars, these educators will acquire strategies to accommodate the needs and challenges of these special students.

The children themselves will benefit from this gift. Scholarships will allow students to attend The Center's life-changing programs. Scholarships for special needs students will provide these opportunities for students who might otherwise be overlooked.

Director Julia Roberts responds: "The Berta Fund for Excellence will boost The Center for Gifted Studies by helping address the needs of young people, their parents, and educators. How wonderful it is to have friends who share the vision and who are willing and able to support The Center in such an important way. Thank you, Kathleen and Vince!"





Letter from Julia Roberts

*Dear Friends of The Center
for Gifted Studies,*

This fall has been a time for reflection. Such reflective thinking always highlights for me the tremendous need for leadership in our communities, states, nation, and world. There is a need to develop our best minds to assume leadership roles in all academic fields as well as in education, government, business, and industry. We need to provide the stimulating environment to nurture entrepreneurs, ones who will truly lead our economic development in the twenty-first century economy. We need effective, responsible, and innovative leaders.

Recently I read in a tourism book for Raleigh/Durham that the goal for the North Carolina School for Mathematics and Science is to "allow students who are gifted and talented in mathematics and science to help meet the Commonwealth's ever increasing requirement for scientific and technological leadership." What a marvelous goal! We at The Center for Gifted Studies want to continue to play an important role in developing leaders in science, mathematics, technology, the arts and humanities, and the social sciences.

The statement that "leaders are born" is only half true. Leadership potential becomes reality for many young people when the skills are taught and honed in a variety of settings. We at The Center plan experiences to build the skills and confidence needed to be a leader. Do you

have leadership skills you would like to share with students or educators? Do you have a colleague or friend with expertise in leadership who would present a session? If you or your child participated in programs at The Center, what experiences helped build leadership capacity? Do you know of individuals, businesses, or foundations who would sponsor a week-long leadership academy for students or leadership training to help educators develop leadership potential in students? Let's work together to develop leaders who are effective, responsible, and innovative!

Sincerely,

Julia Roberts

**the
challenge**

Editor/Writer
TRACY INMAN
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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

Becoming an internationally preeminent center is the vision of The Center for Gifted Studies. This vision includes expanding services in five areas: (1) offering educational programs for gifted children and youth, (2) providing professional development opportunities for educators, (3) enhancing communication and advocacy for gifted children, (4) conducting research and developing curriculum to remove the learning ceiling, and (5) building a testing and counseling component for gifted children and their families.

SCATS Turns 20 in 2002

In these times of celebration, we would be remiss not to remind everyone that the Summer Camp for Academically Talented Middle School Students (SCATS) will celebrate its 20th birthday in 2002. Summer Camp or Academic Camp (as it was originally called in its fledgling years) began in 1983 with sixty young people choosing from eight classes. That first year Dr. Roberts envisioned a program that would not only benefit gifted and talented young people, but one that would also provide a practicum for teachers earning their endorsement in gifted and talented education. Once she realized the success and potential of the program that first year, practicum teachers taught some classes that next year to over eighty students. Those numbers have grown to 222 including forty non-residential students in 2001. This year students came from 12 states and chose from 31 classes including Shakespeare, Mask Making, Algebraic Concepts, and Crime Lab 101.



PHOTO BY SHERYL HAGAN-BOOTH

students

These classes met with great approval. Crime Lab 101 premiered this year but is sure to return based on its popularity. This introductory "forensic science" course encouraged children to gain hands-on experience learning forensic science, methods, and technology. Campers examined evidence including samples of fingerprints, fibers, casts of shoe prints, measurements of crime scenes and more. Chris Ginter of Campbellsville, KY, feels that he may have found his career because of this class: "I found criminology and profiling extremely interesting and challenging. I've always had a certain interest but never to the extent that I've found in that class. Before coming to SCATS I was undecided on my future, but now it seems clear." And Geelyn Deering of Calvert City, KY, agrees: "At this time I am leaning toward a career in this field (forensic science). I may not have gotten the exposure to this field until college if it weren't for SCATS." This class was so popular that The Center offered five sections of it.

For most SCATS campers, the experience is eye-opening and life-changing. Read what these young people had to say:

"I feel that when I go to college I will have a better understanding of how to handle making new friends and living with people that I sometimes don't get along with. SCATS gave me a better understanding of what I have to look forward to when I enter college. I believe that when I have a career, I will do better because of the helpful skills I gained from attending SCATS."

Sierra Enlow of Hodgenville, KY

"This summer's experiences have helped me in numerous ways. I had the opportunity to experience what college life is like, to make new friends, and to learn about topics which are otherwise not available in the normal school environment. Additionally, for the first time I was away from home for two weeks. I am convinced that my involvement in SCATS was instrumental in my recently being recruited by the McCallie School in Chattanooga, TN, as a full scholarship candidate."

Garrett Lee of Paducah, KY

"This camp is one of the most important things to me. I believe that it has helped me in many ways, both educationally and socially. It has let me meet people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds. This helps me because I come from a segregated county.... One thing I like about this camp is the option of classes I can take. Regular school doesn't test my mind enough, so going to SCATS is a great privilege."

Andrew Woolen of Aberdeen, KY

And perhaps Rebecca Allen from Ft Mitchell, KY, explained it best: "I can honestly say that if I could be back at SCATS right now, I would jump at the chance." And we bet many SCATS alumni will "jump at the chance" to return to Western to celebrate SCATS 20th birthday.

Saturday, June 22, 2002, is the time for the celebratory birthday dinner. We'll pass on more information to you as we finalize plans. All of you SCATS and Summer Camp alumni need to keep that date open!

Friends Helping Others

"I am writing this letter to thank you for making my stay possible at the three week camp for gifted children which I attended this summer. I apologize for the delay in expressing my gratitude, but I'm not sure I was able to process the whole experience and what it meant to me until recently.

Upon entering high school as a freshman in a very structured learning environment, I realized how much I missed the creative ways in which we were taught at VAMPY. I wish I had even just one Mrs. Lanham who inspired me and made learning fun and positive! The program changed the way I felt about study, even though I worked harder than I ever had.

The other important thing about the program was the friends I made and the experiences we shared living in a college dorm for three weeks. I resisted the idea of being 'bright' before, thinking those kids were 'nerds'!

Imagine my surprise to find out they were much like me and interested in the same things. Some will be my pals for life. My experience there really woke me up and allowed me to think that it was okay to be smart!

I could not have attended at all had it not been for the scholarship fund. My parents did not think it was too much considering what they thought I would get out of it, but they still could not afford to send me. They went to several different places who had money for kids, but didn't have money for these kinds of programs. VAMPY came through for me with enough money that my parents could pay the rest. I can't tell you how much I appreciate that. It turned out to be one of the best things I've done in my life so far.

Since coming home, I've talked to a couple of other kids who said they were invited but couldn't come because their parents couldn't afford it. It's an experience no one should be denied because of money.

Thanks again to anyone who helped make this possible, especially Dr. Roberts, my teachers, Mrs. Lanham, and my counselor."

ALEX STANHOPE
LOUISVILLE, KY

Gracious friends of The Center make these scholarships available each year to deserving young people who are gifted and talented:

- The Lynne Elizabeth Hamlett Memorial Scholarship allows one McCracken County, KY, student to attend SCATS or VAMPY.
- The Stephanie D. Woodward Scholarship provides for one VAMPY camper.
- The Mahurin Scholarship makes it possible for two Grayson County, KY, students to attend either SCATS or VAMPY.
- The Highland Scholarship allows one camper to participate in VAMPY.
- The William Gladstone Begley II Scholarship pays full tuition for a SCATS or VAMPY camper.
- The Doctors Mody Scholarship for VAMPY provides a minority with VAMPY tuition.

These generous donors have made and will continue to make a difference in countless young people's lives. Throughout our twenty-year history of providing services, The Center for Gifted Studies has always provided scholarships, yet there are always more qualified children who need financial help than we can accommodate. If you would be willing to consider offering scholarship support or if you know a business or foundation that might provide scholarships, please contact Dr. Julia Roberts at The Center. Opportunities for providing scholarships can be funded on an annual basis for the cost of the program or an ongoing basis through an endowment. We would be delighted to assist you in this important endeavor.

Just read what some of these recipients have to say about these scholarships and the resulting experiences:

"I want to thank you and the many generous people who donate their hard-earned money to The Center for Gifted Studies and particularly SCATS. Without such funding, many kids like myself would miss out on the chance to expand our learning boundaries of traditional schooling."

Amber Bochynski of Bowling Green, KY

"VAMPY has been one of the greatest gifts in my life. Over the course of the past two years, I have met many interesting people, whom I will never forget, and have learned hundreds of new things about life. I always say that it was at camp that I truly discovered myself. Deep down inside, VAMPY changed me and gave me a more optimistic outlook on life. If it had not been for your generous scholarship that allows kids like me to attend VAMPY, I would have missed out on this opportunity. Thank you once more for your generosity. I appreciated it more than words can express."

Becky Bessinger of Frankfort, KY

"This scholarship made it possible for me to ... participate in SCATS.... I am very grateful for the opportunity to further enhance my education. I had a wonderful experience in the two weeks that I attended SCATS. The classes were very educational, and the teachers were inspiring. I met new friends from difference places with various cultures. I am excited about the future years with this program. Without the scholarship I received, I would never have had this unforgettable experience."

Sharis Haslett of Greenville, KY

KAGE Donates \$2,500 to Friends Scholarship

In their September Board meeting, the Kentucky Association for Gifted Education (KAGE) board members voted to donate \$2500 to The Friends Scholarship. Each year the KAGE Foundation awards deserving young men and women scholarships to attend SCATS and VAMPY (in fact in 2001 they gave almost \$10,000.) KAGE has always supported Kentucky's young people who are gifted and talented. This recent gift, however, will go towards endowing a scholarship (i.e., the interest from the donations provides a perpetual scholarship thus ensuring that scholarship assistance for the life of The Center.) This will be in addition to their one-time scholarships. Of course, we at The Center are both thrilled and honored.

KAGE's Executive Director Lynette Baldwin expresses these sentiments: "The Kentucky Association for Gifted Education wishes to congratulate The Center for Gifted Studies at Western Kentucky University for twenty years of exemplary service to Kentucky's gifted children and youth and say a heartfelt, 'Thank you!' to Dr. Julia Roberts and The Center for Gifted Studies for the support The Center has given to the Kentucky Association for Gifted Education through out the years. We hope that it will be a long, fruitful affiliation."

KAGE has been housed here in The Center since 1990. Since The Center is committed to excellence in education for the gifted and talented, providing room, equipment, and materials for KAGE is a welcomed service. It is indeed a beautiful pairing.

Astronaut Terry Wilcutt Visits VAMPY

Boy, did they come! They came from South Carolina, Texas, and Michigan plus twelve other states. They came from Mexico and the Philippines. And they came from – space? Well, almost. One hundred and ninety-seven young people traveled from parts all over the United States and beyond to participate in our eighteenth year of the Summer Program for Verbally and Mathematically Precocious Youth (VAMPY). And one Western Kentucky University alumnus visited the program by way of space (well, he actually drove up from Houston but had been in space just last year). Astronaut Terry Wilcutt showed "home movies" as he described his adventures aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavor in 2000. The VAMPY kids loved it!

One of the most remarkable aspects of the presentation was Terry's emphasis on working hard and taking chances. His background explains some of the chances he took: "Wilcutt became an astronaut in 1991. Prior to his NASA career, Wilcutt taught high school math before entering the United States Marine Corps. He attended the Naval Fighter Weapons School (Topgun) and the United States Naval Test Pilot School. Wilcutt also earned a Bachelor of Arts in math from Western Kentucky University" (<http://spaceflight.nasa.gov>). When the campers asked how he became an astronaut who eventually led an expedition, he remarked that he simply took the chance of filling out an application – and the rest is history. He encouraged these young people to apply themselves in math and science, work hard in their

studies – and then become whatever they dream of becoming.

This mathematics major certainly fulfilled his dreams: "Terry Wilcutt visited the Russian Space Station Mir two times: once as a commander and once as a pilot. Wilcutt led the crew of STS-89, aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavour, on the eighth Shuttle-Mir docking mission of the International Space Station's Phase 1 Program. This was the fifth and last exchange of U.S. astronauts on Mir... Wilcutt also served as pilot on the Space Shuttle Atlantis for STS-79, the fourth mission to fly to Mir. Additionally, Wilcutt was Director of Operations in Star City, Russia, where he was responsible for the coordination and implementation of Phase 1 mission operation activities between Russia and NASA." He called upon all of these experiences to talk to our campers.

The question/answer session that followed his video of the latest journey to Mir enlightened and entertained. He fielded questions that ranged from physics (what happens to a compass in space?) to the practical (how do you take a shower?). His warm, personable

approach made the VAMPY campers see that astronauts are real people, too, and that they can accomplish anything if they dedicate themselves to it.

At The Center we endeavor to provide opportunities for these young people to apply themselves, work hard, and dream. Just this year we offered several new classes to challenge campers: Field Ecology, Ancient Civilizations, and Medieval Literature. These, plus the other nine classes offered, encourage in-depth study in a discipline and lay the groundwork for discovery of self and subject. By including accomplished, talented adults such as Terry Wilcutt, we strive to encourage these young people to accomplish their dreams.

Visit The Center for Gifted Studies' web site at www.wku.edu/gifted. Please let us know what you want to see that you aren't seeing. After all, the site is to serve your needs.

What a 20th!

This year marks the 20th year that we have offered services to gifted and talented young people, their educators, and their parents, so The Center decided to celebrate. And celebrate we did! Over 500 people came to Western Kentucky University's South Lawn on July 7th to take part in the festivities.

These festivities included children's games complete with Duck Pond, Ring the Chicken's Neck, and Face Painting. Children produced Spin Art masterpieces and won prizes for the efforts. Challenge Games, the brainstorm of volunteer extraordinaire Keith Stokes, encouraged children (and children at heart!) to play games and earn challenge stickers. Games included such fun as sack races, hoola hoops, and velcro target throws. Once ten stickers were earned, these winners were awarded t-shirts from past programs of The Center. VAMPY campers sported Super Saturdays, SCATS, and VAMPY shirts from the 1980s and 1990s those next two weeks! Volunteers, organized by enthusiastic volunteer Joe Napier, manned the booths and doled out prizes.

"The Center for Gifted Studies saved our children's lives. It gave them great friends and great challenges. It's been a great source of information for our family."

**DARLENE EISENSTEIN
GLASGOW, KY**

"Kids maintain the relationships from VAMPY. It changed the scope of the way they think. As they approach education at a higher level, they look for broader aspects."

**WARREN EISENSTEIN
GLASGOW, KY**

"I think its important for kids to know that it's okay to be different. Kids are accepted here for being gifted. The Center is important, too, for parents to have a resource to talk to so that you know your child is normal – that other families go through the same thing."

**ANITA SHEARER
FRANKLIN, TN**

"The impact of The Center is unbelievable – the lives that have been touched by their experiences here at The Center stretch to all corners of the U.S. and all over the world."

**MARY EVANS
BOWLING GREEN, KY**

For those who desired a more restful game, bingo was an alternative. Prizes ranged from Western memorabilia (thanks, College Heights Bookstore!) to toys. People snacked on sno-cones, popcorn, and cotton candy. But those brave souls participating in the watermelon and cake eating contests saved room for those events. Inflatables were provided for everyone's enjoyment. People could scurry through obstacle courses or try their hand at jousting. We tried to provide something for everyone.

From artists' selling their wares to a continuously running slide show, The Center provided a variety of activities. Entertainment included Broadway the Clown (also known as tireless volunteer Nick Wilkins), musicians Kelsey Tamayo and Jon Crosby, and the game show Who Wants To Be a Patriot? hosted by counselor Corey Alderdice.

Highlights of the afternoon included an Old Fashioned Picnic and auction. Auction items ranged from antique furniture and original art to a Chattanooga trip and tickets to the Kentucky Horse Show. The combined silent and live auction (plus individual donations) raised almost \$7,500 for The Friends of The Center Scholarship Fund. Add to that KAGE's \$2,500 and that makes \$10,000 that will help deserving young people experience The Center's programs.

Celebration attendee Woody Plaut has had children in Super Saturdays, SCATS, and VAMPY. He traveled from Magnolia, KY, to celebrate with The Center. He described his son's experience in Super Saturdays: "My son took a class in Super Saturdays in Electrical Engineering, and he has not stopped doing things with electricity at home. He won the district science fair. He wires up cars with my switches – and he's nine years old!" Through our programs and services, he believes that "The Center is the leader in this state."

Likewise parent celebrator Mary Jo Bauer from Madisonville, KY, commented about The Center: "Drs. Julia and Dick Roberts have done a fantastic job motivating young people to do well in school and compete with other students who have excelled in different areas. I think it's important because many times students lose interest because there's not enough challenge for them." Her children traveled several times with The Center in addition to attending VAMPY.

Laughter, fun, food, and games described the afternoon. We were delighted to celebrate 20 years with so many friends. And we look forward to the next 20!

A SPECIAL THANKS

The Celebration would not have been nearly as much fun without the help of these key volunteers: Keith Stokes, Joe Napier, and Nick Wilkins. Thanks so much!



Thank You to Our 20th Celebration Supporters!

Without the help of the following people and businesses, our celebration would not have been possible. On behalf of the gifted young people, past, present, and future, who benefit from our programs, we say, "Thank You!"

In Bowling Green, KY

Aramark
Bandy Appraisal
B&J Gallery
Barnes & Noble Booksellers
Barren River Imaginative
Museum of Science
Bowling Green Parks
& Recreation
Brickyard Cafe
Bob Brigle
Georgianne Capito
Center for Health
Corvette Museum
Mary and Sam Evans
Jim and Doris Ford
440 Main Restaurant
General Motors Corvette
Assembly Plant
Gerald's Printing Services
Gold's Gym
Great Toffee Escape
Greenwood Mall

Lynn Ann Griffin
Horse Cave Theatre
House of Fitness
Jackson's Orchard
and Nursery
Kroger's on Scottsville Road
Harper Lee
Dixie and Pete Mahurin
Mancino's Grinders & Pizzas
Marble Slab Creamery
Chris Marcus
Senator Mitch McConnell
(Bowling Green office)
McGown TV
Shannon McWilliams
John Moore
Joe Napier
Merle Norman Cosmetics
Laurin Notheisen
Parent-Teacher Store
Pen & Paper, Inc.
Tom Poole
Erin Potzick

Public Theatre of Kentucky
Andee Rudloff
Shutterbug Photographers
Cindy Shott
Sharla Siemens
Southern Foods
Ryan Spence
Linda Stephens
Keith Stokes
To Bee/ Betty Brennenstuhl
WKU University Bookstore
M. Susan Harnett Webb
Werner-Lowe Fine Arts
Nick Wilkins
In Bronston, KY
Mary Thompson
In Franklin, KY
Ron Kirby Auction & Realty
Dr. Will Johnson and
Dr. Connie St. Clair
James Pearson

In Glasgow
Drs. Bharati and Bharat Mody
Sam Dickinson
Hilliard Lyons
In Gravel Switch, KY
Ryan Lanham
In Horse Cave, KY
Horse Cave Theatre
In Louisville, KY
Lee Dugatkin
Leah Jean Friedman
Hawley-Cooke Booksellers
Katherine Markham
Mary Lou Steever
In Owensboro, KY
Charles and Mary Lamar
In Paducah, KY
Lynette Baldwin
Sheila and Den Johnston

In Versailles, KY
DCR.net/Drew Curtis
In Knoxville, TN
Dr. and Mrs. John
Michael Guedron
Wendy Ferrin Wakefield
In Nashville, TN
John Cundiff
In Columbus, IN
Mary Ann Teater Pardieck
and Duncan Teater
In Florence, AL
Rachel Rodgers
In Storrs, CT
Sally Reis and Joe Renzulli
Atlanta, GA
Lori Spear

KET Offers A Myriad of Services for the Gifted and Talented, Their Educators, and Parents

Kentucky Educational Television (KET) has provided quality programming since it first "signed on the air in September 1968 as Kentucky's statewide public broadcasting network. Today, KET is the largest PBS member network in America" (www.ket.org). And much of this programming (plus other innovative opportunities offered) address the needs, interests, and abilities of the gifted and talented. Educators and parents of the gifted may also find KET a rich resource.

Executive Director and CEO Virginia Gaines Fox has been instrumental in developing these programs and initiatives. This seventh-generation Kentuckian was the first public broadcasting representative selected by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers for the congressionally created Independent Television Service Board as well as the creator of the first National ITV Satellite Schedule (serving more than 23 million students annually), and the creator of SERC, the first public broadcaster/Department of Education interstate consortium for distance learning. She has devoted her career to educating all people.

When questioned about KET's offerings for gifted and talented children, Virginia Fox explained in detail:

"The first service that comes to mind is KET Distance Learning available nationwide. Last year, KET launched an AP Physics course, offered via highly interactive CD-ROMs. Two of the students enrolled in the pilot group took the AP Physics exam in the spring; one scored a 4 and the other a 5. A third student enrolled in last year's class scored an 800 on the SAT II physics test. KET also offers an arts and humanities class, multi-year classes in German and Latin, and a regular physics class. These distance learning classes give

students throughout the country the opportunity to study subjects that may not be offered in their home schools.

KET's regional education consultants provide video production workshops and support for gifted and talented students throughout the state, as well as consultations and workshops for teachers to help them plan and implement video production in their programs. Students are also encouraged to participate in KET's School Video Project, which gives them an opportunity to submit videos for inclusion in an annual program of student productions aired via satellite to Kentucky public schools.

KET also offers internships to talented young people, both at the high school and college levels, and college-level telecourses for students enrolled in participating Kentucky colleges and universities.

KET Professional Development has produced a number of professional development television programs helpful to teachers of gifted and talented students. They include a series on AP U.S. History, English, Biology, and Calculus (produced in collaboration with Julia Roberts and The Center for Gifted Studies); a program on a year-long cinema history and criticism class for gifted and talented high school students and one on a year-long gifted and talented humanities class; and numerous programs addressing the infusion of the arts into the curriculum at all grade levels. To learn more about these programs, teachers can visit the KET Professional Development web site, www.ket.org/profdev.

The KET web site, www.ket.org, is a rich resource for teachers and students—both in Kentucky and in other states—with numerous sites related to PBS programming, KET productions, and instructional series that provide information as well as lesson plans, teacher guides, and student materials. KET e-news, an online newsletter for Kentucky teachers, was launched in February. It offers teachers cus-

tomized announcements about upcoming programs and opportunities available through KET, many of which provide interesting and challenging educational experiences for gifted students.

Last spring, KET initiated 'What If All Kentucky Reads the Same Book?', a statewide campaign encouraging all Kentuckians to read *The Bean Trees*, the May selection for bookclub@ket, KET's monthly book discussion program. Schools and teachers were an integral part of this campaign, which culminated with a televised conversation with Barbara Kingsolver. Coincidentally, although this campaign targeted all students and teachers, not just those in gifted and talented programs, the class that won a trip to Lexington to participate in the program was Ann Padilla's senior AP English class from Bowling Green High School.

National PBS programming on KET and KET2 (and on other public television stations throughout the country) offers a wide range of programs that will inspire and inform gifted students and their parents and teachers. These include award-winning series such as *Nova*, *The American Experience*, *Great Performances*, *National Geographic*, and the new biographical series *American Masters*. KET also airs many nationally produced documentaries and specials such as the recent series on evolution or the Ken Burns' series on jazz that provide exciting learning opportunities for gifted students. Even the youngest children can enjoy truly educational programming such as *Reading Rainbow* and *Between the Lions*.

In recent months, KET has produced two documentaries that highlight the achievements of gifted and talented Kentucky students: one on the opportunities for young musicians to study with nationally-known conductors and teachers at the annual Kentucky Music Education Association conference and another on the Governor's School for the Arts. Not only do these programs showcase the achievements of current student participants, they also provide information about these opportunities to younger students and their parents.

Locally-produced programming in the arts and public affairs also provides educational opportunities for gifted and talented young people. One recent example is *Coal Black Voices*, a documentary on the Affrilachian poets, a group of African-American writers with Kentucky ties. Other programs available from KET—such as *Passage to Freedom: Kentucky's Underground Railroad*, a documentary on the fugitive slave movement in Kentucky, or *Signature*, KET's award-winning series on Southern writers—provide ways to expand curriculum to meet the needs of gifted and talented students. Many of these KET productions are available for national distribution."

If you happen to not be from Kentucky, you still may be able to benefit from KET's expansive offerings – some (such as KET Distance Learning) are available nationwide. In addition, parts of seven other states receive KET broadcasting ensuring these same offerings. Don't neglect to contact your own state's public television station to investigate their opportunities. Whether you are a young person who is gifted and talented, the parent or educator of such a child, or an advocate for gifted children, KET offers something for you.

HER EXPERIENCE AT SCATS HELPED HER UNDERSTAND THE POTENTIAL REWARDS OF BELONGING TO A PEER GROUP THAT'S MORE INTERESTED IN JANE AUSTEN AND SHAKESPEARE THAN CALVIN KLEIN AND TOMMY HILFIGER.

Barbara Kingsolver
Mother of Camille
Tucson, AZ

"Congratulations to The Center for twenty years of impact on the lives of gifted young people. As both a mother and a writer, I feel I have a particular investment in the fruits of your program's contributions to the next generation.

I appreciate your invitation to participate in the celebration, but alas, I won't be able to make it. In the fall we'll be back here in Tucson, and with the kids in school I'm unable to make trips back east or any of the other places I'm constantly invited to go, since that sort of travel conflicts directly with my two occupations: being a good Mom and being a writer. If we were in Kentucky on July 7 that would be easier, but our summer is getting complicated with a long trip to England in the works. Also Camille has just learned she's been accepted into a high school for academically gifted students, which requires a special orientation class this July, so VAMPY won't be possible for her this year (or, obviously, for me). She's thrilled about the high school, but heartbroken to miss VAMPY – she had her heart set on the field ecology class. She has vowed to be there next year, and I've promised her we'll organize our summer around it.

She was touched to hear that Amelia requested her as a roommate. Camille still communicates with many friends from SCATS, and it's clear that her experience last summer had a profound impact; for the first time in her adolescence she didn't feel weird for being 'the smart kid,' and this motivated her to apply to University High School despite its daunting reputation (lots of homework) and the fact none of her current school friends will be there. Her experience at SCATS helped her understand the potential rewards of belonging to a peer group that's more interested in Jane Austen and Shakespeare than Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger. For this and so much more, I thank you; the consequences for Camille will last a lifetime.

I wish you a successful summer in 2001 and, in particular, a joyful celebration of your first twenty years. Although I can't be there in person, I'll be with you in spirit."

BARBARA KINGSOLVER
MOTHER OF CAMILLE
TUCSON, AZ

"Raising Our Sights" Through Advanced Placement and Vertical Team

Just this past October, the National Commission on the High School Senior Year published its full report listing recommendations to address those issues posed in the preliminary report, *The Lost Opportunity of the Senior Year*. Chaired by Governor Paul Patton, the Commission held hearings across the nation (including one here at Western) seeking strategies that would indeed make that senior year a fruitful, challenging one. This final report, *Raising Our Sights: No High School Senior Left Behind* (2001), calls for the "Triple A Program to improve alignment, raise achievement, and provide more (and more rigorous) alternatives" (p. 4). The Commission feels that this program would "help prepare students for these higher levels of education and greater challenges of the future" (p. 5). And we couldn't agree more.

One main recommendation is to "greatly expand the opportunity for high school students to experience the challenges of college level work and increase the number of



PHOTO BY SHERYL HAGAN-BOOTH

teachers

'middle college' options for older students in the last two years of high school.... Providing more opportunities for Advanced Placement programs...will help more students meet higher standards" (p. 32). By training 264 Advanced Placement teachers from 17 states and 2 countries in 2001, The Center plays a positive role in accomplishing that goal. For eighteen years, we have teamed with The College Board to provide stimulating, resource-rich training for teachers.

The Commission also urged "the nation to establish a more unified system of education, stretching from preschool to post secondary education, in which students at each level will know exactly what must be done to advance to the next level" (p. 5). That's the main premise behind our Vertical Team Training, also done in conjunction with The College Board. This past summer we trained 31 participants from 2 states to vertically align the curriculum. The focus on main concepts in Mathematics and English to bridge the gap between middle and high school curriculum ensures that teachers build upon previously mastered concepts – not a re-teaching of the same material. In order to compete in a global economy, we must make sure that our students make continuous progress in a rigorous curriculum.

The Center is committed to excellence; we have raised our sights and do everything we can do to help others raise theirs. Our Advanced Placement and Vertical Team Training serve as superior strategies in the Triple A Program.

The Center Sponsors Winebrenner Workshop

We are thrilled to offer a workshop by Susan Winebrenner entitled Workshop on Meeting the Needs of Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom this coming summer. Ms. Winebrenner is a full-time consultant who works with school districts to help them translate current educational research into classroom practice. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Education and her Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Wisconsin. In 1986, she founded Education Consulting Service to provide practical inservice workshops for educators. Susan has presented both nationally and internationally and has published three books: *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom*, *Teaching Kids with Learning Difficulties in the Regular Classroom*, and *Super Sentences*.

Her June 11, 2002, workshop here at Western will focus on strategies for teachers based on this latest edition. Free Spirit Publishing comments: "With 150,000 copies in print, the original TEACHING GIFTED KIDS is a perennial best-seller. Teachers everywhere call it 'the orange bible' and turn to it daily to make sure their gifted students are getting the learning opportunities they need and deserve. This new edition is even better." This workshop is sure to fill quickly; please contact The Center for more information.

The Service Aspect of The Center

Many of our readers are familiar with the many programs we offer to young people who are gifted and talented and their educators. But few realize the many services we offer to further our mission and vision. Below is a sampling:

Public Speaking

It has been our experience that once people understand the needs and characteristics of gifted children, few fail to support them. Therefore, we have traveled to many counties to talk to civic organizations such as the Rotary Club in Henderson, KY, and Cadiz, KY, and the Kiwanis Club in Glasgow, KY. Julia Roberts addressed a group at Hawley-Cooke Bestsellers in Louisville. We love to develop advocacy for gifted children. Let us know if you can help us in this endeavor through a contact in an organization or through hosting an event.

Professional Development for Educators and Administrators

Aside from the Advanced Placement and Vertical Team Training, we provide professional development all over the state of Kentucky and beyond. Individual districts have contacted us to present topics that cover a wide range: Differentiation in the Classroom, Identification of Gifted Children, The Gifted Student Services Plan, Thematic Approach to Curriculum, Social-Emotional Needs of Gifted Children, and Gifted Education are just some of the presentations we've done. We willingly custom-design inservices to meet the needs of the teachers.

We also host nationally-known speakers such as Susan Winebrenner, Sylvia Rimm, and Barbara Clark so that educators may learn from leading experts. Other opportunities for learning include the Junior Great Books Workshops that we host periodically. We eagerly provide rich opportunities for professional growth.

MORE CELEBRATING PLANNED

To continue celebrating The Center's 20th year of providing services and to rejoice in the strides made in gifted education during this time, The Center is hosting a very special awards dinner in the spring. Our Board of Advisors and staff are currently planning the festivities. We'll pass the details on to you as soon as they're complete. And we think you're going to love it!

Educating Pre-Service Teachers

Several times each semester, we visit college classes of future educators to educate them about gifted children. From identification to Kentucky law, these presentations and question/answer sessions introduce these college students to giftedness and teaching gifted children. These students are also encouraged to utilize our resources.

Videos

The Center has produced a video collection available for purchase as a set or individually. The series *Bringing Out the Best* includes five videos:

1. *Excellence in the Classroom – Getting Rid of the Ceiling;*
2. *Incorporating Broad-Based Thematic Units Into the Curriculum;*
3. *Incorporating Critical Thinking Skills into the Curriculum;*
4. *Incorporating Creative Thinking Skills into the Curriculum;* and
5. *Recognizing and Nurturing Advanced Ability in Young Children.*

All videos are \$35.00 each or \$150 for the set plus shipping and handling. One additional video also offered is *To Be Myself: Gifted Students* in which fifteen gifted adolescents from VAMPY respond to a series of questions. Cost here is \$25.00. We have also been instrumental in writing, producing, and editing two videos in conjunction with the Kentucky Department of Education and the Kentucky Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education: *Nurturing Giftedness in Kentucky* and *Delivering Services for Gifted Students in Kentucky Schools*. Both of these were sent to every school district in Kentucky with a letter from Commissioner Gene Wilhoit and have been instrumental in training Kentucky's teachers.

Advice and Counsel

Many times a day a phone call comes in or an email message is received from a concerned parent or questioning educator on the other end. We do our best to provide (or find) the answers to their questions whether it concerns the latest research on grade acceleration and curriculum compacting ideas or the best resources for parents of precocious children and a reputable psychologist to conduct cognitive testing.

Resources

We have three bookcases overflowing with resources for parents of gifted children, educators, administrators, and counselors. Curriculum units from kindergarten through grade twelve await checking out from interested educators. Parent guidebooks and sources that deal with every aspect of giftedness (from underachievement to creativity) are available.

From purchasing books for parents' use to speaking before groups of people, The Center is committed to our vision: providing professional development opportunities for educators and enhancing communication and developing advocacy for gifted children.

New Facilitator Named for the Academy

As planning continues with the \$500,000 designated by the Kentucky Legislature for The Kentucky Academy for Mathematics and Science, Renee Watkins of Bowling Green, KY, has been named the Facilitator for The Academy. This native of Leitchfield, KY, explains her duties: "Currently I am establishing communication with similar academies in the United States in order to gather specific information and ideas for a successful school. A brochure and presentations are underway in order to disseminate information and enlist support for the need for The Kentucky Academy. One of the most important things I can do right now is to make sure that Kentuckians know what The Kentucky Academy is and what it is about." One of her projects is getting the web site up and running: www.wku.edu/academy. With Renee's work, knowledge of and support for The Academy should spread throughout the Commonwealth.

She works in close conjunction with Dr. Julia Roberts who proposed The Academy (along with Dr. Charles McGruder). Renee's responsibilities also include assisting The Center for Gifted Studies with its mission and vision. Whenever she assumes some of these duties, it frees Dr. Roberts so that she may devote more time to The Academy.

Renee has a strong background in mathematics having been a high school math teacher for ten years. At Greenwood High School in Bowling Green, KY, she served as Math Portfolio Cluster Leader, Goals 2000 Grant Facilitator, and Mathematics Curricu-



lum Coordinator. A recipient of the Campbellsville College Excellence in Teaching award, Renee received both her Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics and her Master's of Arts in Education with a mathematics major from Western Kentucky University and is currently pursuing her endorsement in gifted education. This award-winning honors graduate certainly understands the need for The Academy in Kentucky.

As the mother of three young children, Renee realizes that The Academy is critical for the future of the Commonwealth: "Kentucky needs bright, innovative individuals with strong backgrounds in math, science, and technology in order to reach its fullest potential in The New Economy. The only way Kentucky can reach its fullest potential is to provide opportunities for children to reach theirs. Highly gifted mathematics and science students in Kentucky need a more challenging alternative to their

junior and senior years in high school especially when they have already exhausted all their school has to offer. Kentucky needs exceptional mathematics and science students in order to graduate students who can be our future scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and entrepreneurs. The Kentucky Academy for Mathematics and Science is what is needed both by Kentucky and its exceptional mathematics and science students."

Aside from her role as Facilitator, Renee has several links to The Center. Her eight-year-old daughter, Amelia, attended Super Saturdays last year and loved the experience. The crayon resist art project she did in Adventures in Art is framed and hanging in her room. As a parent, Renee believes, "Super Saturdays gives kids a chance to explore areas of interest in a way that they may not have a chance to do at their schools, and they have a chance to spend time with other kids of similar interests. As a parent, it is important to provide opportunities for your children to have fun and to learn; Super Saturdays is such an opportunity." She hopes to have six-year-old Abby attend this year (four-year-old Adam must wait one more year!). In addition to the Super Saturdays' connection, Renee has also taught at SCATS to fulfill her practicum requirement for her endorsement in gifted education. She thoroughly enjoyed showing real-world applications of math concepts: "I love finding and developing ideas, lessons, and projects that help students enjoy learning about mathematics." Given these experiences, she feels that "The Center for Gifted Studies is all about challenging students so that they can enjoy learning."

Everyone needs challenge – especially those people who show great promise such as the young people who would attend The Academy. With Renee's experience, dedication, enthusiasm, and talent, The Kentucky Academy for Mathematics and Science will become a reality.

The Kentucky Academy for Mathematics and Science: "Raising Our Sights" in Kentucky

—by Renee Watkins

The final report by The National Commission on the Senior Year, *Raising Our Sights* outlines "the need to raise our sights to prepare more students for college and an increasingly complex world of work, to enroll more students in rigorous academic programs, to provide greater economic returns, and to ensure that our democracy continues to flourish." In fact, a recommendation by The National Commission on the Senior Year in its final report is to "greatly expand the opportunity for high school students to experience the challenges of college-level work and increase the number of 'middle college' options for older students in the last two years of high school." The Kentucky Academy for Mathematics and Science is this challenging opportunity for our exceptional mathematics and science students.

The need is indeed great. In fact, the U.S. Commission on National Security for the 21st Century completed a report in February of 2001 entitled *Road Map for National Security: Imperative for Change*. The commission emphatically argued: "The harsh fact is that the U.S. need for the highest human capital in science, mathematics, and engineering is not being met. ...the inadequacies of our systems of research and education pose a greater threat to U.S. national security over the next quarter century than any potential conventional war that we might imagine." Another statement in the report seems rather prophetic after September 11: "Second only to a weapon of mass destruction detonating in an American city, we can think of nothing more dangerous than a failure to manage properly science, technology, and education for the common good over the next quarter century.... The capacity of America's educational system to create a 21st century workforce second to none in the world is a national security issue of the first order. As things stand, this country is forfeiting that capacity." With the advent of the Academy, our Commonwealth will do its best not to forfeit that capacity.

The Kentucky Academy is a prerequisite for Kentucky's economic future: a future dependent on a scientifically and mathematically oriented workforce. Imagine the edge we give Kentucky's economy by providing Kentucky's future mathematicians, scientists and engineers with an opportunity to earn 60 college credit hours and a high school diploma simultaneously. Rather than putting in "seat time" at a school which can no longer meet their needs, 200 Kentucky juniors and seniors will have an opportunity to complete a challenging curriculum, rich in mathematics and science, on the campus of Western Kentucky University. Imagine the opportunities we provide for these students to develop the creativity, curiosity, reasoning ability and self-discipline in the context of advanced educational opportunities which will prepare them for leadership roles in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Planning monies designated by the Kentucky Legislature in the 2000-2002 budget for The Kentucky Academy are currently being used for architectural and engineering design work needed to renovate Florence Schneider Hall on WKU's campus into the home-away-from home for academy students. With adequate resources, the renovation of



PHOTO BY SHERYL HAGAN-BOOTH

Schneider Hall can be carried out during 2002-2004 and the first class of juniors can be admitted for 2004-2005. Kentucky juniors and seniors in high school who have exceptional interest and ability in mathematics and science need opportunities to learn at the highest levels possible. Kentucky needs students graduating who are ready to meet the demands of Kentucky's New Economy.

According to *Challenges for the New Century* (2000), "a recent analysis of how well the states are positioned in their adaptation to the New Economy ranked Kentucky 39th." It also says, "The state received its lowest ranking on the indices of workforce education (49th), [and] the number of scientists and engineers in the population (47th)." A major emphasis of *Kentucky's Science and Technology Strategy* (1999) is to "ensure that Kentucky education systems prepare highly skilled, knowledgeable graduates with the necessary mathematics and science capabilities for successfully maneuvering in the 21st Century knowledge economy." The Kentucky Academy for Mathematics and Science is a solution.

Judith C. Owens-Lalude, a supporter of The Kentucky Academy, says, "Mathematics and science academies are not a new concept. Many states have them. I know – I've met some of their students at the national academic competitions. Our students lose to them. Why? The equation is simple. Kentucky has the brains = X. Kentucky has the institution = Y. X + Y = WIN. What is Kentucky waiting for?" She is right. There are similar opportunities offered to young people in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Texas. In existence for over 20 years, not one of these academies has been unsuccessful. The Kentucky Academy for Mathematics and Science could create a stimulating and academically challenging environment in which Kentucky students could flourish, too. The establishment of The Kentucky Academy is a win-win situation: Kentucky students win a head start on a challenging education and optimum career opportunities; Kentucky wins knowledgeable graduates with the capabilities for catapulting Kentucky into the 21st century.

Alumni Update

Seth Riney (VAMPY 1987, 1988, and 1989) graduated from Yale University in 1997 with a BS in Astronomy and Physics. He spent his undergraduate summers as a fly fishing guide in the Greater Yellowstone area. After working for the Aerospace company TRW Space and Electronics Group in California, he moved to Cambridge, MA, where he served as Chief Technology Officer for a Harvard internet software setup. Currently, he is the CEO of a small email infrastructure software and services company called EMUMail (www.emumail.com). He also earned his pilot's license last December.

Ellen Hock (SCATS 1988 and 1989) owns ProLingua, a business that teaches workplace English as a Second Language classes. Ellen earned the Carlucci Leadership Award and was named Student Employee of the Year at Skidmore College in New York. She graduated Magna Cum Laude with Honors with a dual BS degree in Social Work and English. She spent a year at QuFu University on China before returning to Tennessee as an entrepreneur.

Christopher Grizzard (SCATS 1995; Counselor 2001) currently attends Vanderbilt University where he is a Music Performance major in the Blair School of Music. He is a recipient of the Blair Dean's Honor Scholarship, and he works as stage manager for the Blair School of Music.

Justin Lusk (VAMPY 1996) currently attends the St. Louis College of Pharmacy where he earned their Academic Scholarship. He also earned 4th place in the National Beta Club Scholarship. When not working to complete the six-year Pharmacy program, he works as a Pharmacy Intern at Walgreens.

Eliza Kendrick (VAMPY 1992, 1993, 1994, and 1995; Travel to Russia 1996) graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill in 2001 with honors in Russian and received a prize for being the Outstanding Russian graduate. She completed her Honors Thesis in poetry. She began a joint JD and LLM in international and comparative law at Duke University Law School this past summer.

Leslie Kendrick Baldwin (London 1992) graduated with highest honors from UNC-Chapel Hill in 1998 and was named Rhodes Scholar also in 1998. After earning a Master's in Renaissance Literature at Oxford, she began her work on a PhD. This past summer she taught Shakespeare to American students and conducted tours to Stratford-on-Avon. She has now returned to the U.S. and lives in Manhattan with her husband, George Baldwin.

Lauren Edwards (SCATS 1989 and 1990) became a United States Marine Corp commissioned officer in 1998 which took her to Australia and Japan. She is currently a

"When someone says that an experience has changed their lives, it always seems a little trite to me. I guess that's why I hesitate to use such a phrase to describe the many summers I spent at the camps offered by The Center for Gifted Studies, because I feel that my time there was much more meaningful than such a cliché phrase can embody.... I remember feeling very nervous before my first year at camp. I didn't know what to expect from such a place where kids voluntarily chose to go to classes in the summer. Isn't the summer supposed to be a time when you get away from school? Isn't it the break that you need in order to face the coming nine months? But little did I know that I was about to find a place where I would be so excited to be a student. I have always loved to learn, but school was never all that fun because of things that would go on outside of the classroom. VAMPY taught me so much about myself as a student and as a person. My classes were so amazingly interesting that spending six to seven hours a day studying one subject was very easy. The time passed quickly. My teachers were dynamic individuals whose purpose was to enrich our understanding. They wanted to see us do well in class. They wanted you to love what you learned, and it showed. But it is outside of class where most of my learning at camp happened. I guess you could say that I grew up there. In my life I have never been in an environment where I felt so happy and at home. My friends, my counselors, my teachers, and the directors all helped to make my three weeks at VAMPY every summer one of the best experiences in my life. My friends in college love to laugh when I talk about this academic camp that I faithfully went to every summer because it seems so counterintuitive that such an experience may actually be fun. But once they get to know me, they all agree that my face lights up every time that I talk about VAMPY. The memories of my summers just bring so much joy to my life even now."

KATIE JOHNSON
(FORMERLY OF NASHVILLE, TN)
PLACITAS, NM

Combat Engineer Officer in charge of the Engineer Operations Company, Marine Wing Support Squadron-371 in Yuma, AZ. She traveled to Yuma with her "brand new baby" – a 2001 Dodge Ram 1500 4x4 extended cab!

Katie Johnson (VAMPY 1994, 1995, 1996, and 1997; Teaching Assistant; Counselor) spent this past summer studying art history in Siena, Italy, through CET Academic Programs. She commented: "I found myself surrounded by some of the world's most beautiful and breathtaking art, language, and cuisine for seven weeks." Currently, she is a third year student at the University of Virginia pursuing a double major in Economics and Government.

Danny Robertson (SCATS 1994) is currently a junior at Northwestern University where he is double majoring in Mathematics and Economics. This past summer he worked

in downtown Chicago as an Actuarial Analyst for Watson Wyatt Worldwide, a benefits consulting firm. During the school year, Danny works as a Research Assistant for a market research firm and is an Account Executive for the Student Finance Board on campus that oversees approximately \$900,000. In his free time, he rollerblades along Lake Michigan, attends theatre and musicals, and falls in love with Chicago.

Edmund Sauer (SCATS 1990) is currently a first year at the University of Virginia School of Law. After graduating high school as valedictorian, Edmund attended Centre where he was named Truman Scholar and Fulbright Scholar. His Fulbright consisted of a year's studies at Queens University in Ontario, Canada, where he earned a Master's in Politics with a 4.0 GPA. In addition to his collegiate studies, he played first seed on Centre's tennis team and spent part of his junior year as a Congressional Intern in Washington. All three of his siblings attended SCATS as well. (See the three following updates.)

Elizabeth Sauer (SCATS 1995) graduated with honors from Bardstown High School. She attends Western Kentucky University where she earned President's List recognition for

her academic achievement. This Phi Mu sorority sister is a junior studying Interior Design.

Twin sister **Margaret Sauer** (SCATS 1994) also graduated with honors from Bardstown High School. This junior is a Business major at Hanover College in Indiana. She made the Dean's List for her academic accomplishments and has joined Kappa Alpha Theta Fraternity.

Katie Moore (SCATS 2001) attends middle school but takes two classes at the high school. In reference to her experience at SCATS, this straight A student has already asked her parents repeatedly, "May I go again, please?"

Elizabeth Cooke (VAMPY 1994) graduated Cum Laude this past May from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, with majors in History and Environmental Science. She won the Case History Award for study in American history and also the Environmental Science Departmental Award. When not in class, she worked for two years at a small local health food store, ordering health books for the inventory and assisting customers plus she volunteered for three years at an overnight homeless shelter in Minneapolis. She was just deemed a Fulbright Scholar and recently left to study in Madagascar.

Director Julia Roberts Awarded the David W. Belin Advocacy Award

Dr. Roberts' lifetime devotion to advocacy for gifted children has been nationally recognized by the National Association for Gifted Children's (NAGC) David W. Belin Advocacy Award. NAGC explains that the award is "in honor of the late David W. Belin, who served on the NAGC Board of Directors and the NAGC National Advisory Board" (www.nagc.org). This is the first year that NAGC has ever presented this award. It's intended to honor "an individual or group that has successfully advocated at the state or federal level to incorporate gifted education, in a significant and meaningful way, into state or federal education policy." This describes Julia Roberts to perfection.

Dr. Frances A. Karnes, director of Frances A. Karnes Center for Gifted Studies, thought so when she nominated Julia: "Julia Roberts is a sterling role model for all involved in gifted education. She is a dedicated professional leader who gives unselfishly of her knowledge, time, and



energy for the betterment of gifted children and youth, their teachers and parents, and other concerned professionals and citizens. Her spirit of advocacy is an inspiration to all."

The nomination called for letters of recommendation plus other evidence of advocacy. NAGC President Sally Reis called Julia's nomination for the award a "perfect match" in her letter of recommendation. She continued: "Julia Roberts is one of

the most dedicated and hardworking individuals in the area of gifted education in the country. She works tirelessly to advocate for the needs of gifted and talented students in a quiet, humble way that has been enormously effective in the past. She is an expert on areas related to the needs of academically talented students and is an outstanding storehouse of knowledge in the area of legislation." Many realize her contributions to the field gifted education.

"What an honor it was to be nominated for the first David W. Belin Advocacy Award," explained Julia Roberts. "I was overwhelmed to learn that I was the one selected to receive the award. I want to thank the family of David Belin for making this award possible and for their ongoing support of services for gifted children. The five hundred dollars will undoubtedly go to the WKU Foundation for The Center for Gifted Studies." The Center is certainly proud of its director!

VAMPY Parent Presents “Math Class Goes to Hollywood” to Campers

One highlight of VAMPY 2001 was John Hornsby’s presentation to the Movies and American Culture and Math classes. Father of 4th year camper Jack Hornsby, John has devoted thirty years to mathematics education as a teacher and author having taught at both high school and college levels and co-authoring over 40 mathematics textbooks. He developed “Math Class Goes to Hollywood” using some film clips from motion pictures and television to illustrate several topics in precalculus mathematics. He drew from such films as *The Wizard of Oz* (the Pythagorean Theorem), *In the Navy* (Arithmetic Algorithms), *Cast Away* (Formula for the Area of a Circle), *Little Big League* (Problems Involving Rate of Work), *Die Hard With a Vengeance* (Mathematics-based Puzzle), and a TV special involving the illusionist David Copperfield (another Mathematics-based Puzzle). In fact, he’s already presented this at teacher workshops in Florida, Louisiana, and Tennessee with future plans for Toronto and Baltimore.



parents

Math Professor Dr. Bruce Kessler certainly appreciated John’s coming: “We were honored to have a distinguished mathematics author like John Hornsby on campus to speak to us. His talk peaked the interests of both my math group and the movies class. Getting students interested in mathematics is the first battle we face as educators - he definitely won the first round with this group.”

Likewise English Professor Ted Hovet found immense value in the presentation: “Jack Hornsby’s visit was valuable for several reasons. First of all, he was able to share expertise in an area that was directly relevant to my course. My ‘Movies and American Culture’ class was pleasantly surprised to find that one could find so many interesting references to math in Hollywood movies. His presentation also fit into the VAMPY spirit of interactive participation. Rather than simply lecturing, he actively involved the audience throughout his presentation by asking questions, calling for volunteers, and having students do intellectual work to figure out the problems he presented. Finally, it was especially valuable because it allowed two classes to come together. Discovering interdisciplinary connections among courses is a delight, and strengthens each individual course involved.”

Parents of gifted and talented young people oftentimes are gifted themselves – as in John’s case. The Center is thrilled to have had John share these talents with VAMPY campers.

Travel to Great Britain: A Family Affair

Lindisfarne. Edinburgh Castle. Melrose Abbey. Royal and Ancient Golf Club. York Minster. Edward I’s Caernarvon Castle and Conwy Castle. Globe Theater. Tower of London. Canterbury. Scone Palace. Stratford-Upon-Avon. Winston Churchill’s home, Chartwell. England. Scotland. Wales. Sightseeing. Shopping. Touring. Learning. Laughing. Playing.

And so goes the excursion to England, Scotland, and Wales sponsored by The Center. Twenty-five people from several states accompanied Director Julia Roberts for two weeks this past June. One interesting component of this trip was the number of families that traveled. Parents and children, mothers and daughters, grandparents and grandchildren – fifteen of the sojourners traveled with family members!

Cody and Margaret Westmoreland from Louisiana joined brother-in-law John Hornsby and their nephew Jack Hornsby (also from Louisiana) on the trip. Both Jack and John had participated in our activities before (Jack attended VAMPY three years, and John traveled to London with us in 1999) and wanted to share this with their family. All felt the experience was enriched because they traveled as a family. Cody explains: “Many memories will stay with my wife and me as we recall experiences in the U.K., but it was even more special as we had a chance to share this time with our

nephew and brother-in-law. We laughed more freely and always knew we could retreat to them if the day was long or tedious."

His wife joked about the closeness: "Traveling with family can be taxing on one's patience and sharing a European room with one's spouse for two weeks will frighten some people, but the entire trip was wonderful." In fact, she mentioned how her historian husband and she made quite a team: "The running joke on our trip was that Cody and I make one complete person if we pool our knowledge. He knew things from the historical aspect, and I complemented that from the literary perspectives. After a while, several of the teens would take their tours with us because they knew we were going to teach them things even if they didn't want to listen." It's that blending of learning and fun that makes these trips priceless.

John's favorite part of the trip (aside from having his family with him) was a spot in Edinburgh: "While England and Wales were beautiful, my favorite part was the time we spent in Scotland. As a child growing up in Louisiana, I recall seeing the Disney movie *Greyfriars Bobby*, and we actually got to see where this little dog lived in Edinburgh." History (the world's and our own) comes alive when seeing the world.

The Center strives to provide learning opportunities to a variety of audiences – families included. Margaret summed it well: "This trip was well-balanced with history, literature, shopping, and good old fashioned mindless sight seeing." We offer another such chance this spring with our Spring Break in London trip scheduled for March 29 - April 7. We encourage you to join us – and bring someone you love!

VAMPY Parent Publishes Critical Guide to College

Jill VonGruben, parent of VAMPY alumnae Tracy and Kristen, has taken her expertise of raising two college/post-college students coupled with her twenty-year history of advocacy for gifted education and written a wonderful guide to the college admissions process: *College Countdown: The Parent's and Student's Survival Kit for the College Admissions Process*. Publisher McGraw-Hill Companies explains: "It's designed to help families organize all the material required by college admissions. To meet the special needs of all students, *College Countdown* includes a unique chapter entitled 'Planning Ahead When You Have Special Concerns.' This highly informative and resourceful chapter includes College Call Checklists for a wide variety of students' special concerns such as general physical disability, medical support, visually impaired, hearing impaired, ADD, LD, and gifted and talented." This is a resource no college-bound child should be without. In fact, the publishers encourage early reading of this source: "Many steps must be taken, forms have to be filled out and submitted, and long range planning needs to occur. The planning actually needs to start as early as eighth grade!" Jill (who is available for speaking engagements) has ensured that *College Countdown* is a practical book taking college admission step-by-easy-step.

Quite a bit of the advice Jill includes in her work stem from personal experience. This founding board member of Parents Advocates for Gifted Education raised two gifted

children and survived their college admissions adventures. She reflects fondly on the strong start both daughters received through The Center: "For each girl, VAMPY became her touchstone of safety, learning and exploration. As a parent, I can honestly say the most valuable lesson they learned was not the knowledge from the classes – though that was significant, but was the safety to explore who they really were and what their capabilities were. And that could happen because VAMPY was safe, caring and really 'got' what gifted kids were all about. VAMPY was a vital portion of their foundation. Each girl embraced that internal knowledge and built on it to become the successful and caring young women they are now." Successful they are. Kristen is a chemist who will soon be starting grad school while Tracy is a gifted visual artist attending Loyola.

The Center houses hundreds of resources for parents such as *College Countdown*. Topics range from perfectionism to child prodigies to survival guides. We welcome you to peruse our stacks and borrow some good reading materials.

Public Relations 456 Class Project: The Center for Gifted Studies

Last spring, Dr. John Barnum's PR 456 class developed public relations campaigns for The Center as the focus of this capstone course for public relations majors. Students formed four different companies that researched and designed strategies to raise awareness of The Center for Gifted Studies. Throughout the semester, we received many questions from these soon-to-be PR professionals. And it was amazing what they did with those answers!

In April Dr. Will Johnson, a member of our Board of Advisors; Eddie Carter, a friend of The Center; Karl Miller, Director of Development for the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences; plus Julia Roberts and Tracy Inman from The Center listened to the creative proposals. Selecting the most persuasive campaign was indeed difficult, for their campaigns were professional and extremely valuable. Not only did these college seniors gain real-world experience, but The Center was given all of the materials and ideas generated. We left that meeting with our minds reeling – and we eagerly put some of those ideas into action.

One main benefit was the procurement of a public relations intern. Nashville native Ryan Spence volunteered his services all last summer (and The 20th Celebration greatly benefitted from his countless hours). He officially became our intern the Fall semester of 2001. We are thrilled to provide guidance and opportunity to develop Ryan's skills. Ryan has been pleased as well: "It has been a great experience working for The Center. I have not only learned a great deal about public relations in the real world, but also about their strides in helping gifted children all over the country."

The Center constantly looks for new ways to share our mission and vision. With Ryan's assistance coupled with ideas generated from Dr. Barnum's class, that job is not only a little easier, but it is also much more enjoyable!

We are thrilled to announce our Business-Education Partnership with Bowling Green, KY, industry Trace Die Cast, Inc. Each year, the Bowling Green Chamber of Commerce matches local industries with schools in the Bowling Green area. Together they plan activities and projects that mutually benefit both parties; it's an exciting program that strengthens the community. Until this year, only elementary, middle, and high schools were involved. The Center's pairing with Trace Die Cast changes that precedent. In a first-ever matching of a business with an organization that benefits school-age children (not a school per say), the Chamber realizes the impact The Center has on so many young people and wishes to expand that. Trace Die Cast is a perfect match.

SCATS alumnus Joe Napier (and tireless volunteer for The Center's 20th Celebration) serves as Quality Manager at Trace. This pairing couples two strong passions of his: the art and science behind his profession and new opportunities and continued challenge for young people who are gifted and talented. Joe describes this pairing: "The management at

The Center Partners with Trace Die Cast, Inc.



WWW.TRACEDIECAST.COM

Trace Die Cast understands the great contributions of The Center for Gifted Studies to the youth of our country. We want to expose this talent to American industry early in their education and provide a positive experience for them to draw upon as they make life decisions about their future. These young people are the future engineers and leaders of corporate America."

Lowell M. Guthrie, a 25-year veteran of Ford Motor Company and a strong friend of Western Kentucky University, founded Trace Die Cast in 1988. Over the past decade, he has watched his vision of a world-class, quality-focused die cast operation

develop. With the average sales growth exceeding 20% a year, Trace's sales are quickly approaching the \$50 million per year level. Through unremitting focus on quality and customer service, Trace has created an operating system that has been certified to the ISO9002/QS9000 standard. This strong growth and success will continue as they develop meaningful relationships with more customers that seek a qualified business partner for their die cast needs. Trace believes that building a business depends on building good customer relationships - by delivering on their promises and always keeping their customers' needs and viewpoints in the foreground.

Exciting things are planned. For example, Joe Napier, project director Brett Guthrie, and engineering director Frank Blackburn will team teach a Super Saturdays class for older children. (Super Saturdays is a five-week enrichment opportunity for elementary-aged children.) This class will introduce to students the process used to bring manufactured products to the marketplace: from engineering and design to testing and validation to manufacturing and finished product. Students will tour various Bowling Green industries in order to provide depth and breadth of understanding. It should be an outstanding class with its real world emphasis of science. In addition to Super Saturdays, they're planning a possible SCATS class. The possibilities are endless!

We look forward to a strong, mutually-beneficial partnership with Trace, and so does Trace: "We are delighted to provide to The Center educational opportunities that expose these talented young people to examples of real-world applications of management, mathematics, engineering, and science."

Advocacy for the Gifted: The Center Hosts Contest

This past spring we sent flyers out all over the United States asking for help in teaching others about the needs of children who are gifted and talented. This flyer described our PSA/Slogan Contest designed to tell the country about gifted kids. And the response was tremendous! We received entries from fifteen states all the way from California to Florida.

The judging is just now taking place, and we feel confident in our panel of experts who will assess the entries. The Center will award \$500, \$300, and \$100 savings bonds to individual winners (and the same amount in cash if the entry was developed by a group) in four divisions: grades 4-6; middle school; high school; and college. And to be honest, that fourth group wasn't part of the original plan. We had requests from college-age people to take part, so of course we were tickled to accommodate them! Hundreds of students developed slogans, radio public service announcements, and television public service announcements.

Winners will be notified at the beginning of January, and I'm sure you'll be seeing (and hearing) the results.

friends of the center

We want to thank these very special people for helping us realize our vision and fulfill our mission. Their monetary gifts make it all possible.

Brenda Adams
Lynette Baldwin
Linda and Robert Bandy
Mary Jo and Richard Bauer
Robert Bell
Judy and Fred Bellemere
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Jennifer and John Burke
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Mary Ellen and Charles Lamar
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Laura Harper and David Lee
Jeffery Ligon
Keh Fei Liu
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Brenda Lowe and David Cotton
Donna and Carl Martray
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Madisonville, KY
Edmonton, KY
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Elizabethtown, KY
Glasgow, KY
Glasgow, KY
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Richmond, KY
Utica, KY
Croton On Hudson, NY
Louisville, KY
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Elizabethtown, KY
Bowling Green, KY
Louisville, KY
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Georgetown, KY
Romeoville, IL
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Bowling Green, KY
Bowling Green, KY
Taylorsville, KY
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Marcus Samale
Madhavi Santapuram
Mary Sue Searle
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Director

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CALENDAR



*January 26, February 2, 9, 16,
and 23, 2002*

Super Saturdays

February 20 - 22, 2002

The Kentucky Association for Gifted
Education's 22nd Annual Conference
www.wku.edu/kage

Spring of 2001 (TBA)

The Center's 20th Year: Celebrating
Gifted Education in Kentucky

March 29 - April 7, 2002

Spring Break in London

June 11, 2002

Workshop on Meeting the Needs of
Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom
(Susan Winebrenner)

June 16 - 28, 2002

The Summer Camp for Academically
Talented Middle School Students

June 22, 2002

SCATS 20th Birthday Party

June 23 - 28, 2002

The Advanced Placement Institute

June 30 - July 20, 2002

The Summer Program for Verbally and
Mathematically Precocious Youth

July 8 - 12, 2002

The English Vertical Team Institute

July 8 - 12, 2002

The Mathematics Vertical Team Institute

July 8 - 12, 2002

The Social Studies Vertical Team Institute

Anything New?

You're important to us! Help us be able to contact you. Please let us know of any changes:

Name _____

Address _____
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