



Reflective Practitioner

INFORMING AND ENGAGING ALUMNI AND FRIENDS | Fall 2008

Campaign underway to renovate building's entrance, attract students



When the School of Education (SOE) opened the current building's doors in 1972, no one imagined the service entrance on the building's south side would become the main entry. And when enrollment increased across the campus, large parking lots were constructed on the south and west sides of the building causing the south entrance to become the de facto "front door" into the School, which causes congestion and confusion for students and visitors alike.

"The new student pavilion will create a safer and more attractive environment for our students." —Dean Linda Edwards

To combat these daily challenges, SOE launched "Opening New Doors: A Campaign for SOE Students," a student-friendly redesign of the School's south entrance. In addition to much-needed lighting, landscaping and a bike rack, the proposed renovations feature a patio of brick "pavers," a wider and more accessible stairwell, large benches, stone pillars and tables with shaded areas. The area will also be updated with technological improvements, including outdoor wireless Internet access.

"The proposed renovations are much greater than cosmetic," says Linda Edwards, School of Education dean. "The new student pavilion will create a safer and more attractive environment for our students and will

help keep the school competitive in a changing market."

Treanor Architects P.A. of Kansas City designed the \$600,000 structure. SOE has already raised \$250,000 through alumni gifts and internal savings. If remaining funds are secured, Edwards anticipates a completion date of August 2009.

The redesign is also intended to attract and retain students for years to come. For a 2007 Noel Levitz Report, "Why Did They Enroll? The Factors Influencing College Choice," more than 35,000 first-year college students were surveyed about the factors influencing their decision to attend an institution. According to the survey, campus appearance ranked among the top factors in the decision to enroll.

Alumni and friends can be forever identified as proud and sustaining supporters of the School by joining in the improvement efforts. For \$250, alumni can purchase a 4x8 legacy brick that will be placed prominently near the new south entrance and can be personalized to include name, class year, major and campus affiliations. For \$100, alumni and friends of SOE can have their names listed on the campaign's Web page that acknowledges their involvement as a donor. A variety of additional naming opportunities are available to accommodate any budget, including the naming of park benches and trees.

To become part of SOE's history, contact SOE's Advancement Office at 816-235-2466.

Grants provide funding for urban initiatives

Students at Winnetonka High School in the North Kansas City School District, have shown not only their teachers, but also fellow classmates that acceptance matters. Students have taken a proactive approach to accepting classmates for who they are, regardless of race or sexual orientation.

So why did school counselor Andrew Schuerman (M.A. '06) sit down with several teachers and students to develop "Project Unity," a program to improve school climate by preparing students to deal with bullying and harassment issues?

"I've been at Winnetonka for eight years," he says, "and this whole time I've been very impressed with our students and their willingness to accept other students from different backgrounds. This program helps to broaden their perception of diversity issues."

The program teaches students about the harmful effects and causes of bullying based on classism, racism, sexism and homophobia, as well as how to intervene when these types of situations occur.

This year, Schuerman's project is one of 10 the School of Education funded, for the second year of the program, with the Joan and Bert Berkley Excellence in Urban Education Grants. The up to \$3,000 grants are awarded to teachers and counselors in the School of Education's nine partner districts and UMKC-sponsored charter schools. Of the \$3,000, up to \$2,000 is provided to fund the winner's proposed program during the next school year. The remaining \$1,000 is for discretionary funds.

This year alone, the School received 71 applications for funding programs that would help Kansas City's urban students excel. Projects have to demonstrate academic rigor with a focus on standards, ability to engage students in college and career planning, a relevance to students' needs and interests, and an ability to be replicated at other urban schools.

"When I learned I'd be receiving one of the grants, I was thrilled," Schuerman says. "This grant will help build and sustain efforts our students have started so far."

Grandview Alternative School teacher Amy Cameron, an avid broadcast journalism fan, also received a grant for her documentary film proposal. Cameron's students will have the opportunity to make documentary films about their community.

"It is relevant to their lives that they learn how to research a story and film it," Cameron says. "We all have a story to tell."

"And the fact that Joan and Bert Berkley's names are attached to this grant is remarkable. They care about giving all children opportunities."

Grant awardees

Suzanne Melena (B.M.E. '80), teacher
Boone Elementary School

Danielle Farr, teacher
University Academy

Amy Cameron, teacher
Grandview Alternative School

Michele Pippens, counselor
Ingels Elementary School

Pam Diecidue (M.A. '93), teacher
William Chrisman High School

Adrienne Miller, teacher
Rosedale Middle School

Paul Kehmeier, teacher
Paseo Academy

Andrew Schuerman (M.A. '06), counselor
Winnetonka High School

Beth Dusin, counselor
Laurel Hills Elementary School

Nancy Nash, teacher
Turner High School

Institute for Urban Education marks another milestone

The UMKC/SOE Institute for Urban Education (IUE) will mark another milestone when its first IUE class graduates in May 2009.

"Four years ago when we started this program, there was really a question of 'Will this program be around in four years?'" says Ed Underwood, executive director of the institute. "The way it's going right now and the support we're receiving, the program looks like it's here to stay."

This fall, IUE also ushered in 20 new students who have made commitments to teach within IUE's partnership districts: Kansas City, Mo., Kansas City, Kan., and Hickman Mills for at least four years after graduation.

IUE received more than 50 applications from not only local students in Kansas City, but also interested candidates around the country.

"Seeing the program's popularity grow has been a dream come true," Underwood says. "Even from day one, we've seen our students' enthusiasm to teach in



Dean Linda Edwards with senior IUE students Destiny Byers and Teonna Lee.

urban schools grow."

Underwood says he hopes to soon have 135 total students enrolled in the program. Directors have also been researching ways to fund student housing for four years on campus, instead of only one. For more information or to support IUE, call 816-235-2466.



Get involved. Stay in touch.

Submit your story, ideas, updates and comments to Nathan Shatto, 5100 Rockhill Road, 300B AC, University of Missouri-Kansas City, Kansas City, Mo. 64110
Phone: 816-235-6260 E-mail: nate@umkc.edu Relay Missouri: 1-800-735-2966 (TT)



Alumnus calls University 'second home'

For close to three decades, UMKC has been a second home to alumnus John Cissetti. Not only does he hold three degrees (B.M.E. '79, M.A. '85 and Ed.S. '85) from the School of Education, but the ties he's formed with the University stretch far beyond his years as a student.

For Cissetti's immediate and extended family, attending and graduating from UMKC has become a family affair. Cissetti met and later married Veronica Orozco (B.M.E. '79) after graduation, and his daughter, Mary, is an entering freshman this fall, who is attending the University on a UMKC Trustees' Scholarship. His mother and brother-in-law also graduated from UMKC.

"In many respects," he says, "UMKC is like our family."

Even when the time came for Cissetti to make a decision about which college to attend after graduating high school, he says nothing compared to what the University offered.

"When it was time for me to choose a college, I was drawn to UMKC," Cissetti says. "Although I'm a KC boy, the University's location and ties to the city made it feel like the place to go. And since I was interested in music education, the School of Education and the Conservatory were a natural fit. The same holds true for continuing my education here. It just felt right."

And remaining close to the place that's felt like home for so many years also felt right. For 29 years, Cissetti has served as band director for grades fifth-12th at Louisburg USD416 in Louisburg, Kan. – his first and only job since graduation – teaching some 350 students per day. As Cissetti marks his 30th anniversary at Louisburg this fall, he's quick to note that he'll never forget that without UMKC, he probably wouldn't be where he is today.

"It was through a UMKC connection that I even found myself here [at Louisburg]," he says. "I'm extremely grateful to UMKC for helping me find my way here."



"When I first started, the bands here were very small," he says. "But next fall we'll have 112 students in the marching band. For a small country school, that's a great number. That's one-fourth of our entire study body."

Over the years, Cissetti's students and colleagues have continually recognized his teachings.

In 2007, he received the Wal-Mart Local Teacher of the Year award along with a \$1,000 check after a student nomination. He was also chosen as Wal-Mart's Kansas District Secondary Teacher of the Year in 1999, and later advanced to the semi-rounds for Teacher of the Year in 2000.

For all that UMKC's provided Cissetti during the last 30 years, giving back to the University came naturally for him. For the last six years, he's served on the School of Education's Alumni Board. While this fall marks Cissetti's final term on the Alumni Board, he says he'll continue to still be involved some at some level with UMKC.

"I'm not going anywhere," he laughs. "My daughter is attending school here now, and how can I forget this connection I've had? I can't. UMKC will always be a part of me."



Jazz time

(Left) Alumni Board member Carol Lanier Solenberger (M.A. '97) enjoys local Kansas City barbecue, while (right) SOE Assistant Dean Ginny Miller and students take time with Kasey Kangaroo at the annual Jazz on the Lawn event in April. The event is sponsored by the SOE Student Government Association with support from the SOE Alumni Association. See the calendar of events in this newsletter for next year's Jazz on the Lawn date and other ways to reconnect to your SOE.

Alumni support essential for continued growth

Inside the School of Education (SOE), we continue our commitment to urban education in the metropolitan community as evidenced by, among other things, welcoming the fourth cohort group to the Institute for Urban Education program. This marks a landmark year for the program as the inaugural class graduates in the spring and our students begin their professional careers in one of three partner school districts next fall. We are also excited about some significant curriculum changes in our Teacher Education undergraduate programs. Beginning this fall, course content will reflect the changing needs of teachers in today's diverse classrooms with an emphasis on our nine partner school districts. In addition, we welcome our first cohort group into the new Ed.D. program with a focus on higher education administration, a program designed to prepare administrative leaders in the practice of higher education in urban settings. I encourage you to stay up-to-date on these programs, as well as our curriculum and instructional leadership, urban leadership and policy studies in education, and counseling and educational psychology programs by visiting www.teachthecity.com.

If you have not visited UMKC recently, I encourage you to do so. The campus is undergoing a physical transformation with several key building projects underway including the completion of the Oak Place Apartments, the construction of a new soccer stadium and renovations to Miller Nichols Library. SOE has undergone its own transformations over the past four years with significant changes throughout the building.

In the months to follow, I hope you will consider being a part of our most ambitious renovation project in more than 30 years, the "Opening New Doors" campaign, a student-centered redesign of our south entrance. The planned courtyard will be funded almost entirely through private sources and will create a safer, more accessible entrance and add needed informal educational space. Our goal to complete the project by August 2009 is ambitious but attainable; although close to \$250,000 of the project's \$600,000 has already been secured, your support remains essential. You can participate through the purchase of a "paver" brick or other naming opportunities. Any gift amount is appreciated. For more information, call 816-235-2466. I invite you back to your SOE, and I look forward to welcoming you into our new doors and the superb work being done beyond them.



Dean Linda Edwards

Faculty news

Chris Brown, Ph.D., Counseling and Educational Psychology (CEP) and School of Education alumna ('93), has been promoted to professor.

Clare Bell joined SOE this fall as assistant professor in mathematics education. At the time of publication, Bell was a Ph.D. candidate at The Ohio State University in the College of Education and Human Ecology completing her dissertation work in the areas of mathematics education, cultural diversity and self-regulated learning. Bell holds an M.A. in elementary education from Ohio State University and a B.M. in violin performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Karen Kindle is welcomed by SOE this fall as assistant professor in reading education. Kindle is completing a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction at the University of Houston and holds an M.E. in curriculum instruction and reading from the University of Houston-Victoria, as well as a B.M. from Baldwin-Wallace College.

For more faculty information, visit www.umkc.edu/education.

Alumni news

As a graduate of the UMKC School of Education, you are already a part of a 15,000 person alumni family residing throughout the United States and the world. We're proud to present accomplishments of the distinguished community of SOE alumni to which you belong. Please keep us updated on your personal and professional triumphs by logging on at www.umkcalumni.com.

Did you know?

The Community Counseling and Assessment Services Center (CCAS) is both a counselor and psychologist training center for master's and doctoral level students, and a counseling agency designed to meet the counseling needs of the greater Kansas City community located in the School of Education in suite 212.

CCAS provides:

- Individual counseling
- Couples and family counseling
- Career development
- Testing and assessment

To learn more about CCAS visit www.umkc.edu/CCAS or call 816-235-2725.

2008-09 calendar of events

Oct. 3-4

Homecoming weekend

Nov. 5

Alumni Board meeting

Nov. 14

SOE Night at the Roos
7:05 p.m. Swinney Recreation Center

SOE and Friends of CCAS Lecture
featuring Harriet Lerner, Ph.D.

Nov. 16-22

American Education Week

Dec. 12

Mid-Year Commencement

Jan. 12

Spring semester classes start

Early March

SOE Speaker Series, more details TBA
on www.umkc.edu/education

March 4

Alumni Board meeting

April 15

Jazz on the Lawn

April 16

Alumni Awards Dinner