$100,000 grant for Science Education

Two GSEAP professors started a transformative professional development immersion experience for Bridgeport science teachers, thanks to a $100,000 grant from the state Department of Education.

Drs. Aidin Amirshokooki and Mahsa Kazempour developed the summer program of inquiry-based teaching and learning for middle and high school teachers from Bridgeport public and parochial schools.

“This competitive award is a tribute to their expertise and experience in science curriculum and instruction,” said Dean Susan Franzosa. “The improvement of science education is a high priority in the state and it’s wonderful to know that our faculty will be contributing to the effort in the Bridgeport schools.”

The Teaching Quality Partnership (TQP) Program began in July with two weeks of workshops devoted to science pedagogy and projects and research with science faculty. Three more are scheduled during the academic year. In addition to making valuable contacts in their field, each participant receives a stipend and will be eligible for up to three graduate course credits.

“We are very enthusiastic about the opportunities this grant provides,” said Dr. Amirshokoohi. “We expect to deepen teachers’ knowledge of science content standards and effective inquiry-based instruction with the ultimate goal of better educating and preparing students to become scientifically literate, socially responsible, and active citizens.”

“Teachers are the agents of change and as such, are ultimately responsible for enhancing students’ science experiences,” said Dr. Kazempour. “Hence, these workshops take into consideration and address teachers’ beliefs, attitudes, and self-efficacy with regard to science and science teaching in an effort to enhance their instruction and student learning.”
Reflections

Message from the Dean:

Dear Friends and Alumni

The Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions was the first graduate school established at Fairfield University and conferred its first degrees in 1951. An important goal of the School during the last year has been to reach out to over 10,000 GSEAP alumni and create a dynamic network of engagement and support for our programs and students. We hope that each edition of our newsletter Reflections will serve as a way to reconnect as well as share GSEAP news with all of our professional and community constituencies.

As you’ll see in this edition of Reflections, despite the challenges of the economic climate and its affect on higher education, the GSEAP has remained committed to its abiding mission to serve the needs of children, families, and communities. Faculty members and students in our programs have been busy with new initiatives – including grant-funded projects in math education, family counseling, and science education, professional development programs for counselor educators and teachers, community partnerships at public and diocesan schools, and an international study tour for marriage and family therapists. I hope you will enjoy reading about them in this edition of the newsletter.

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students of the GSEAP, thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Susan Douglas Franzosa, Ph.D.
Dean and Professor

GSEAP launches first international study tour

Fifteen graduate students traveled to London to learn about innovative therapy models in GSEAP’s first international study tour. The program was so popular, Dr. Ingeborg Haug, the organizer, said she plans to make it an annual spring break event for students and area professionals.

“My students were thrilled to have an international outlook of marriage and family therapy, to see that new models are being developed in other countries, and that we have much to learn from international colleagues,” said Dr. Haug, of the Marriage and Family Therapy Department (MFT).

The group spent the week at the Marlborough Family Institute, a program that has developed a unique approach to helping multi-problem families. The institute uses both day and outpatient settings and a multi-family approach. “It sets up structures and therapeutic tasks so that ultimately families are helping each other,” said Dr. Haug. “It’s a very interesting approach, and the Institute has begun research to demonstrate its effectiveness.”

“The agency is unlike anything we have in the states,” said Maryann LaBella, a 2009 MFT graduate who now works at Mid-Fairfield Child Guidance. “I have definitely used things I learned there in my work.”

The Fairfield contingent included 14 MFT students and one Counseling candidate and many gave it high marks for broadening their perspectives. “Being a member of this trip is quite possibly one of the best experiences of my life,” Tiffany Harris wrote about the tour. “Not only did I learn about the work done at The Marlborough Family Service, but my eyes were opened to a new world of therapy.”

Dr. Haug said she plans to expand the program next spring, this time focusing on school issues. And, in addition to Fairfield students, the program will be open to school counselors and family therapy professionals throughout Connecticut, some of whom now work in schools. For more information, e-mail mftgrad@fairfield.edu.

GSEAP candidates outside the Institute
First ever separate graduate commencement

For the first time in its history, Fairfield University held a separate afternoon commencement ceremony for graduate students, and GSEAP student Maryann Lobella was among those singled out for her outstanding service (see below).

Speaking at the May 16 graduation ceremony, Mathy Mezey, Ed.D., RN, FAAN, a leader in geriatric care, encouraged the 358 graduates – 169 of them from GSEAP – to live lives fulfilled by volunteering, civic engagement, and community service, both on a local and a global level. “You have been fortunate to experience the nearly 500-year Jesuit vision of not only integrating the intellectual and spiritual, but also of the awareness that academic achievement brings with it a responsibility to serve,” said Dr. Mezey, director of The Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing in the New York University College of Nursing.

Dr. Mezey told graduate students that by being among the only 4.6 percent of Americans who have graduate degrees, they should consider themselves a “scarce national resource.”

“So as a scarce resource, you have earned an IOU, a social obligation to society,” she explained.

Robert T. Morton Jr., a Stratford, Conn. resident, gave the valedictory address, telling his fellow graduates that he’s spent nine years on the Fairfield campus – at Fairfield Prep and then as a student in the Dolan School of Business, where he earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees. “A hallmark of Jesuit education is the sharing of knowledge to enhance learning,” he said. “This is especially apparent in Fairfield’s graduate programs, where those coming back to school with a wealth of professional and real-world experience share a classroom with more recent graduates... this blend of academic and experiential knowledge creates an environment in which every student benefits.”

First graduate Loyola Medal awarded

The St. Ignatius Loyola Medal historically has been awarded by the Alumni Association to a graduating senior who demonstrates high academic standards and substantial community involvement while studying at Fairfield.

With the advent of a separate graduate commencement ceremony, the Alumni Association agreed to sponsor a graduate-level Loyola Medal. “The graduate medal recognizes an exemplar of a professional who is living out the Jesuit ideals,” said Associate Academic Vice President Mary Frances Malone. “It acknowledges one who extends his/her professional expertise in service to others.”

The award selection committee – comprised of representative graduate program faculty, members of the Alumni Association, and Dr. Malone – solicited three nominations from each school that has graduate programs. Maryann LaBella, of GSEAP’s Marriage and Family Therapy program, was selected from among the nominations to receive the graduate medal. MFT faculty nominated LaBella based on her excellent academic achievement and involvement with the program, as well as her extensive community volunteer work leading area youth groups. Citing her enthusiasm, creativity and dedication to serve, MFT faculty described LaBella as embodying the best of Jesuit values.

“The honor and privilege of being the Loyola Medal recipient was the culmination of the incredible experience I had as an MFT student at Fairfield,” said LaBella. “My initial reaction to learning about the award was that achieving it required a good deal of labor and yet my experience had seemed rather effortless. Much of what propelled me through the program was relational in nature, so in a sense I share this honor with my family, friends, supervisors, as well as the clients I treated.”

The graduate Loyola medal is just one of the ways in which the Alumni Association supports graduate students. Three days before graduation, the 2009 GSEAP graduating class was inducted into the Alumni Association at GSEAP’s Annual Graduate Reception.
Faculty achievements

Drs. Marsha Alibrandi, Curriculum & Instruction (C&I), and Elizabeth Langran, Educational Technology (ET), presented two papers, “Learning History With Biography-Based Video & Web Tools: Research Results” and “A Tale Of Three Cities: Implications For GIS In Educational Research,” at the Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education International Conference this spring.

Dr. Aidin Amirshokoohi, Curriculum & Instruction (C&I), presented “Knowledge and Perceptions of Elementary Pre-service Teachers Regarding Science, Technology, and Society (STS) and Environmental Issues” at the annual Association for Science Teacher Education conference in Hartford.

Dr. Stephanie Burrell (C&I) presented “Assessing Diversity Outcomes in the Classroom” at St. Lawrence University in February. She presented “Assessing the Effect of a Diversity Course on College Students’ Readiness for Social Action Engagement” at the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) in New Orleans.

Dr. Anne Campbell (C&I) was invited to serve on the State Department of Education’s 2009 Advisory Panel for Connecticut’s Common Core of Teaching (CCT) World Languages Standards. She gave a workshop, “Using English Language Learners’ Interpretations and Solutions of Mathematics Word Problems for Formative Assessment and Instruction,” at CONNTESOL, a state organization for TESOL teachers. Dr. Campbell was elected to the CONNTESOL board as the teacher education representative.

Dr. Jennifer Goldberg (C&I) is the lead author of “Community and Inquiry: Journey of a Science Teacher,” which was recently published in the journal Cultural Studies of Science Education.

Dr. Mahsa Kazempour (C&I) presented “An Inquiry-Based Professional Development Experience and High School Science Teachers’ Views of Science Teaching” at the annual Association for Science Teacher Education conference in Hartford.

Dr. Wendy Kohli (C&I) represented the Office of Service Learning at the Campus Compact conference “Educating Citizens, Building Communities” at the College of the Holy Cross.

Dr. Elizabeth Langran (ET) delivered a lecture and workshop series and conducted research for a book chapter on digital equity at the Indian Institute of Technology in Guwahati, India. She was a panelist at the Museum Computer Network Annual Conference in a session entitled “Emergent Course Design: University and Museum Partnerships for Student-Generated Content.” Dr. Langran and Dr. Marsha Alibrandi (C&I) presented “Young American Heroes: Using Frederick Douglass’ Biography in Engaging 21st Century Learners” at the Connecticut Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference.

Dr. Tracey Robert, Counselor Education (CE), co-presented at the Sigma Theta Tau International, Inc. CT Annual Collaborative Research Day this spring. Dr. Robert co-authored a paper, “Students’ Perspectives Regarding the Need for Pediatric Palliative and End-of-Life Care Education in Nursing,” that was accepted for publication in Nursing Education Perspectives. This culminates work done under a grant, Evaluating the Outcomes of Nursing Education Duke University School of Nursing Helene Fuld Foundation Trust.

Dr. Emily Smith (C&I) presented “Faculty Mentors: Extending Teacher Education into the Induction Years” at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association in San Diego, Calif. Dr. Smith co-edited an issue, themed “Creating Dialogic Spaces to Support Teachers’ Discussion Practices,” of English Education.” She co-authored an article in the issue, entitled “Developing Pedagogical Content Knowledge for Literature-Based Discussions in a Cross-Institutional Network.”

Dr. Barbara Welles-Nyström (C&I) chaired a session, “Issues in Gender Construction,” at the American Educational Studies Association (AESA) conference in Savannah, Ga.
GSEAP and Dioceses discuss partnerships

Laura Wrinn, the first teacher accepted into the Fairfield University-Diocese of Bridgeport Teacher Certification Partnership program, recently completed her masters degree in Teaching and Foundations of Education, with a concentration in Elementary Education. The partnership program provides both financial and academic support to Diocese of Bridgeport (DOB) teachers interested in pursuing Connecticut state educator certification.

Under the partnership, participants pay only 25 percent of tuition plus fees for graduate study, allowing DOB teachers access they might not otherwise be able to afford. “She was coming back to school after raising a family and putting her sons through college,” said Dr. Wendy Kohli, Wrinn’s advisor. “With support and encouragement from her family, it was now ‘her turn’ to pursue her master’s degree – something she’d had as a goal for a long time, but could not afford.”

Since DOB teachers have varied backgrounds, careful academic advising and individualized plans of study are also important features of the program. Wrinn entered the program with an undergraduate degree in education and 12 years experience as a fifth-grade teacher at All Saints Elementary School in Norwalk. Such real-world experience enhances learning for all. “Laura continues to remain committed to GSEAP through her involvement with the organizing committee to rejuvenate the Phi Delta Kappa chapter here on campus and other efforts,” Dr. Kohli said.

“I feel very fortunate and proud to be a graduate of Fairfield University’s GSEAP,” Wrinn said. “It allowed me to bring my passion for learning and teaching together and continue the tradition of excellence that is Catholic education.”

For more information on the Teacher Certification Partnership program, contact Dr. Faith-Anne Dohm, GSEAP associate dean, at (203) 254-4000, ext. 4250 or fdohm@fairfield.edu.

Diocesan partnership graduates first teacher

The Most Reverend William Lori, Bishop of Bridgeport, met with GSEAP faculty in May to discuss partnerships between the School and the Diocese. It was his fourth annual meeting with Fairfield administrators and faculty, but the first focusing on GSEAP initiatives.

Bishop Lori heard from Laura Wrinn, a graduate of GSEAP’s diocesan partnership (see sidebar below), who explained how her classes made gift baskets for Hospice patients and their families. Drs. Aidin Amirshokooki and Mahsa Kazempour discussed the grant they received (see story page 1) to help bolster science education. Mary Nelson ’08, a sixth grade teacher in Bridgeport, presented her Saturday Science Stars program, which she started at St. Andrew School in Bridgeport. “Scientific literacy is lacking, in particular in urban students,” she said. “This provides hands on experience for kids and gets teachers more comfortable with teaching this way.”

The efforts of GSEAP alumni and faculty have not gone unnoticed, said Dr. Margaret Dames, diocesan superintendent of schools. “The Diocese of Bridgeport hires many of your graduates and they have brought into our schools a lot of the mission that we, as Catholic schools, are all about.”
Alumni achievements

**Chris Campbell, M.A.’75**, has co-launched a website, www.youngamericanheroes.com, targeted to middle school social studies teachers and their students. An accompanying TV show aired on Connecticut Public Television in Fall 2008.


**Kristin Ferrera, M.A.’80**, has accepted the position of youth services director within the Weston Board of Education in Weston, Conn.

**Marilyn Gansel, M.A.’71**, was honored by the Cambridge Who’s Who for Excellence in Health and Fitness.

**Bruce Hubler, M.A.’70**, joined the Fairfield County Community Foundation Board of Directors, unanimously elected to serve a three-year term.

**Laurette Laramie, M.A.’71**, was the recipient of the Mary DeLourdes Kenney Award for outstanding achievements of distinction in the field of education as part of the Saint Joseph College 2008 Distinguished Alumnae Awards.

**Elizabeth Lefebvre, M.A.’05**, was named a financial services representative at Barnum Financial Group in Stamford, Conn.

**Dr. Michael Marotto Jr., M.A.’81**, was named the new assistant principal at Weston High School in Weston, Conn.

**Dr. J. Douglas “Jerry” McKinney, CT ’80**, retired from the FBI in 1978 and spent more than 20 years teaching at various institutions. He received his doctorate in education from Montana State University, Bozeman, and retired in 2001.

**Mary Mediate, M.A.’83**, was named director of guidance K-12 within the Blind Brook School District of New York.

**John Mucci, M.A.’80**, was named director of the Newtown Choral Society for the 2008-09 season. An accomplished composer, Mucci has two Emmy nominations and has served on the board of director for several choral groups in Connecticut and New York City.

**Keith Rafaniello, M.A.’99**, was appointed superintendent of the Region 6 school district in Litchfield, Conn.

**Dr. Lisa Rene Reynolds, M.A.’94**, wrote “Still a Family: A Guide to Good Parenting through Divorce,” which will be included in one of Fairfield University’s newsletters.

---

**Educator-prep recognition**

As part of GSEAP’s recent accreditation by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), each of the School’s educator-preparation programs received national recognition from its specialized professional association.

The following received full recognition:

- Comprehensive Special Education by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- Elementary Education by the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI)
- English Education (grades 7-12) by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
- School Library Media by the American Library Association (ALA)
- Science Education (grades 7-12) by the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA)
- TESOL by the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
- World Language Education (grades 7-12) by the American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

Math Education (grades 7-12) received conditional recognition by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and School Psychology received conditional recognition by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) granted conditional recognition to Social Studies Education (grades 7-12).
Counselor Ed earns CACREP accreditation

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Professions (CACREP) has awarded the professional programs within the Department of Counselor Education an eight-year accreditation with no stipulations. The two Fairfield programs – Community Counseling and School Counseling – were the first of their kind in Connecticut to receive this distinguished accreditation.

“The award of eight-year accreditation is an unusual and noteworthy achievement,” said Dr. Susan Franzosa, dean.

The accreditation process was very detailed, according to Dr. Diana Hulse, department chair. “The two programs at Fairfield were assessed on 244 standards and met them all,” she said. “This achievement is a tribute to the excellence of these programs, our students, and our faculty.”

CACREP’s mission is to promote the professional competence of counseling and related practitioners through the development of preparation standards, encouragement of excellence in program development, and accreditation of professional preparation programs. “We’re looking forward to the expansion of our certificate of advanced study program and to offering more on-campus opportunities for professional development in the near future,” said Dr. Franzosa.

Counselor Ed holds workshops

The Counselor Education Department welcomed area professionals to campus in Spring 2009 for “Connections & Conversations,” a four-part workshop series for human services professionals featuring national experts in the field. It was the first time the department has launched such an ambitious program.

“The workshop topics and presenters were enthusiastically received; the point of the workshops is to provide continuing education for counselors and other helping professionals on topics that are of interest to their practice,” said Dr. Diana Hulse, chair of Counselor Education. “For the future we expect to host three to four workshops every academic year; we want the Connections and Conversations series to be a regular feature.”

Dr. Ed Jacobs facilitate the first workshop, “Impact Therapy: An Active, Creative, Multi-Sensory Approach.” In March, Dr. David Capuzzi of Pennsylvania State University led “The Many Facets of Grief,” offering information on counseling clients adjusting to transition and loss. He touched on the grief cycle, normal and abnormal responses to loss, and the four tasks of mourning – accepting the reality of loss, feeling the pain, readjusting one’s environment, and re-location of the deceased in one’s life.

Next up was Dr. Mary Hermann, of Virginia Commonwealth University, who led an informative April session on legal and ethical issues in counseling. Topics ran the gamut from revisions in the code of ethics to the rights of minor clients, confidentiality, and supervision issues.

The series ended on a high note with “Using the Creative Arts in Counseling,” led by Dr. Sam Gladding, a Wake Forest University professor who once taught at Fairfield. Dr. Gladding told participants people tend to get stuck in their ways and creativity is key to helping them become “unstuck.” Creativity stems from the interaction of culture, people, and experts, said Dr. Gladding, and it simply requires the skill of looking at a situation from many angles and generating choices.

For more information on upcoming workshops, see page 8.
**Integrating spirituality**

For the last two years, Dr. Tracey Robert has asked students in Counselor Education and Marriage and Family Therapy what they’d like to see added to Fairfield’s programming. The answer was often the same: courses on how to integrate spirituality into practice.

This summer, Dr. Robert led the first two sessions of a new six-course, 18-credit program leading to a certificate of completion called Integrating Spirituality in Counseling and Therapy.

“This is about counseling and therapy and integrating spirituality into the practice versus having a specific faith orientation as in pastoral counseling or with a chaplain,” Dr. Robert said. “All of the helping professions have seen an increase in writing and research in this area. The goal is to answer ‘What do I need to know to be comfortable and ethical?’”

The first two sessions, which will be repeated in future years, were an overview of spirituality in counseling and an in-depth look at grief and loss counseling across the lifespan. Future courses will focus on trauma and crisis, spiritual interventions, and spirituality and wellness. The courses will consider various religious and spiritual practices and ways of thinking and they can be taken for credit or for CEUs.

For more information on this new program, contact Dr. Robert at (203) 254-4000, ext. 2421 or trobert@fairfield.edu.