FEATURE STORY

Department of Health and Human Performance

UWRF Outdoor Education students backpacking along the St. Croix River as part of PED 201- Outdoor Education- Summer Concepts and Skills.

UWRF Becomes Educational Partner with Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics

BY PAUL SHIRILLA

July 21, 2011—As a result of collaboration between the St. Croix Institute for Sustainable Community Development (SCISCD) and the Outdoor Education minor program in the Health and Human Performance Department, UWRF has become an Educational Partner of the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics.

As stated in their mission statement, Leave No Trace is “an educational, nonprofit organization dedicated to the responsible enjoyment and active stewardship of the outdoors by all people, worldwide”. Becoming an educational partner of Leave No Trace provides UWRF access to a variety of resources, training, and educational information, while also providing support to a leading organizational advocate for sustainability education around the world.

As one initial benefit of this partnership, UWRF Outdoor Education students enrolled in PED 301- Foundations of Outdoor Leadership, taught by Assistant Professor Paul Shirilla, will become Certified Leave No Trace Trainers by participating in a 2-day training in November.

“The idea for this partnership grew out of my participation in a Sustainability Across the Curriculum Workshop this past spring, which was coordinated by Dr. Kelly Cain from SCISCD. A more intentional focus on sustainability within the Outdoor Education program curriculum is important since I feel strongly that, as future outdoor educators, my students should be knowledgeable about how to teach others to respect the environment. This partnership and training through Leave No Trace will be valuable learning for them as well as an excellent qualification for their professional resume,” says Shirilla.

More information about Leave No Trace can be found at http://lnt.org/. For more information about this partnership, please contact Paul Shirilla at paul.shirilla@uwrf.edu.
Communicative Disorders Student Group Engaged in Numerous Activities

BY SHARYL SAMARGIA

The University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF) chapter of the National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA) engaged in a number of activities during fall semester 2011.

During October, the group donated $100 to the National CHARGE Foundation. This foundation supports children and adults with CHARGE syndrome, which is the leading cause of congenital deaf-blindness.

Also in October, several NSSLHA members attended the Wisconsin Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Association’s student weekend at Marquette University in Milwaukee. Members attended educational sessions and networked with peers from across the state of Wisconsin.

In November, the group volunteered at the Crowning Achievement Pageant in New Richmond, Wisconsin. This pageant is a competition for adults in the greater St. Croix Valley who experience cognitive disabilities. NSSLHA members assisted with the pageant set-up and were leaders in the implementation of an associated fund-raising raffle.

As part of a yearlong initiative to promote childhood language development through literacy, NSSLHA members held a new and used children’s book drive on November 19, 2011. The group collected 398 books that were donated to the children’s program at Turning Point shelter in River Falls. Along with the book donation, the NSSLHA group will be funding a “Secret Santa” event, purchasing one new book for each child at the shelter for Christmas. In February, NSSLHA students, in collaboration with graduate students in the Department of Communicative Disorders, will provide a bimonthly “story-time” at the shelter. Story-time will include reading together and participating in language-enriching activities related to children’s literature.

The 2011-2012 NSSLHA Executive Board include: President Linda Warner, Vice President Catherine Kuzj, Secretary Keri Economy, Treasurer Katrina Miller and Faculty Advisor Sharyl Samargia.

November is School Psychology Awareness Month

Department of Counseling and School Psychology

PREPaRE Crisis Prevention and Intervention Training to be presented at UWRF November 21 and November 22. Any and all UWRF school psychology students, interns, faculty, staff, alums, advisory board members, and cooperating field-based supervisors are invited to attend this training. The training will be facilitated by Melissa Reeves, Ph.D. NCSP, LPC. Melissa is a school psychologist, licensed special education teacher, licensed professional counselor, and former district coordinator of social/emotional/behavioral services. She formally worked for the Cherry Creek School District in Colorado and is currently employed as a Lecturer for Winthrop University. Dr. Reeves is a co-author of the PREPaRE Crisis Prevention and Intervention curriculum, has been Chair or Co-Chair of the PREPaRE Workgroup for the past 8 years, and formerly served on the Executive Council of NASP. She was also a founding member of the Colorado Society of School Psychologists State-Wide Crisis Response Team. In addition to responding to various local crises over the years, she travels both nationally and internationally training professionals in the areas of crisis prevention and intervention, threat and suicide assessment, the impact of trauma and PTSD on academic achievement, and establishing a response to intervention model. She is co-author of three books titled: School Crisis Prevention and Intervention: The PREPaRE model; Identifying, Assessing, and Treating PTSD at School; and Comprehensive Planning for Safe Learning Environments: A school professional’s guide to integrating physical and psychological safety: prevention through recovery.
Department News

Department of Counseling and School Psychology

School Psychology Program Updates:

• Congratulations to Amanda Reinschmidt, M.S.E., school psychology intern. Amanda has a review of the film Straightlaced: How Gender's Got Us All Tied Up, published in the October issue of the NASP Communique (see page 38).

• Congratulations to the following students and faculty members who had poster presentations accepted for the upcoming NASP convention in Philadelphia in 2012. Amanda Weinkauf, M.S.E, Cora Reidenbach M.S.E, Lucas Reidenbach, M.S.E., and Scott Woitaszewski, Ph.D, for their research “An Investigation of Literacy Curriculum Effectiveness in First Grade Students. Congratulations to Kate Hulse, M.S.E., Amanda Reinschmidt, M.S.E., Todd A. Savage, Ph.D. & Scott Woitaszewski, Ph.D, for their research “Parents of Lesbian and Gay Youth: An Exploratory Study”.

• Dr. Stovall will present a workshop at the fall meeting of the Wisconsin School Psychologists Association. The title of his presentation is “Mental Health Support and Ethical Considerations for School Psychologists”, weaving the themes of mental health support services for students with ethical issues.

• Alum Sally Bass was the commencement speaker at the October 9, 2011 graduation for St. Mary’s University, at which she was awarded her Ph.D. in educational leadership. Her dissertation was also selected as the dissertation of the year by St. Mary’s University.

• The Sigma Psi Tau election results are in complete, and the following are the elected officers for 2011-2012.
  - Nicole Hogan, M.S.E. (3rd year) & Courtney Domka (1st year) - Co-Chairs
  - Juliane Larsen, (2nd year) - Treasurer
  - Beth Sowden, (1st year) - Secretary
  - Amanda Weinkauf, M.S.E. (3rd year) - NASP Student Leader

Counseling Program Updates

The Counseling Program is working specifically on curriculum and accreditation by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). This accrediting body provides a minimum standard for training professional counselors, including minimum credit hours to graduate, course content, and program structure. Mark Gillen and Caroline Baker will be attending the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) annual conference in Nashville in late October, at which they will attend a CACREP self-study workshop. Additionally, both Mark and Caroline will each be presenting research and scholarly work twice at the conference. As part of our program refinement, we have increased our required number of credits to graduate from 40 to 45. To enable students to complete the number of credits, we constructed a Summer Institute in which we offered various 1-credit courses to supplement their core coursework. For our first summer, we had a successful enrollment and held classes at the Hudson Center.

Three students stepped up to be the Wisconsin School Counseling Association’s student representatives: Marlee Mollet, Kayla Gaulke, and Melissa Fitzenberger. They arranged to host one of the WSCA student meetings on the UWRF campus in October. The Student Group, led by several counseling students and advised by Caroline Baker, held its first Ice Cream Social event to kick off the academic year and to get more students involved. It was a huge success, with approximately 40 students in attendance. At the social, students gathered data about the needs of the counseling program student body. Further, they are planning greater WSCA, MSCA, and ASCA conference involvement in the coming year. The American School Counseling Association annual conference will be held in Minneapolis next summer. National School Counseling Week is in early February, so the students are exploring options for a celebratory and educational event during that week.
I have been teaching and working with urban and rural youth for well over a decade. Born and raised on the south side of Chicago, my practical approach to education is based on personal experience as well as professional expertise. Growing up, I discovered the strength I needed to escape my own adversities. Poverty, abuse, and low self-esteem, I found, could all be overcome through the power of education.

After working in the Academic Success Center for 6 years, (first as a Multicultural Student Advisor, then as Assistant Director for the Upward Bound Program), I received my Master’s Degree at the University of Minnesota. After studying an interdisciplinary curriculum strongly focused on African American Studies, Gender Studies, and Educational Policy, I had a strong urge to return to the classroom. With my background as a high school English teacher, I had no idea how much I would enjoy teaching college students. It would take teaching two summer sessions of Foundations of Multicultural Education to convince me that I belonged back in the classroom! I learn so much from my students that sometimes, it feels like I’m cheating the system. That’s just how REAL learning is: Reciprocal. I wouldn’t have it any other way!

Teaching Foundations of Multicultural Education

Far too often, a teacher steps into a classroom and is unable to relate to or understand the personal lived experience of their students. The inability to relate to one another only widens the gap between teacher and student and can ultimately become a barrier to teaching and learning. These barriers can often be deconstructed when bridges are built between similarities and differences; when students are able to draw connections between what they are being asked to learn, and the person who is expected to impart this knowledge.

Foundations of Multicultural Education serves as the space for all pre-service teachers to reflect on their own lived experiences. It is the space where we recall, question, and even challenge the many messages we have received about race, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, and ability to consider, (or reconsider), how these messages impact our interaction with students. It is the place where after we reflect, recall, question, and challenge, we are able to ask—then answer—“Now what?”

Student Teaching in South Africa

BY NIKKI ZELENEY

The Overseas Student Teaching Program (COST) program is amazing. It definitely impacted me as a teacher and a person. Going to South Africa was a completely new experience for me. I had never really thought of going to Africa and to be honest, knew very little about it besides what I’ve seen in the Lion King. But that’s probably why fate brought me to South Africa, to open my eyes to a beautiful place with beautiful people.

Out of all the cool things I got to do in SA, my favorite part was honestly working with the students. I was placed in an all girl school and these ladies were just great. They all want to learn! I was so impressed by how polite and responsible they were. The Victoria Girl’s Public High School has a one hundred percent Matric (senior year) pass rate, which is so impressive for a public school there, and the girls are proud of that. The girls there want to be something; and I’m not completely sure, but they probably inspired me a lot more than I did them.

As far as teaching goes, I learned a lot. There were times when I was a fish out of water, dancing to a different beat on the djembe drum (traditional Xhosa moves are hard!). But the students and staff were always supportive and ready to answer and ask questions right along with me. I feel lucky that I got to teach a subject as cool and universally celebrated as music, especially in Africa! Even though they call their rhythms by different names,
Social Work Program Opens classrooms on Military Social Work

BY OGDEN ROGERS

United State Army Colonel Neil O’Connor visited two social work classes this fall as part of the programs’ outreach to veterans. Col. O’Connor, a social work officer with the Army Reserve Medical Corps and a clinical social worker with the Veterans Administration in Madison, Wisconsin gave presentations on stress response following deployment of returning service persons, and careers for social workers in the uniformed and military services. Both presentations were made in regular session social work courses open for the campus community.

“Clinical social workers are increasingly working with warriors and their families, especially in the environment of today’s present conflicts. This is especially true with the new stresses of multiple deployments of the Guard and reservists.” O’Connor, who was deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom with a Combat Stress Control Company, discussed some of the behavioral techniques used in crisis situations in the field, and in the demobilization of personnel back to civilian life.

O’Connor spent many years as a clinical social worker at the Oncology Center of the University of Wisconsin Hospital. He said he found significant parallels between persons struggling with the losses and changes associated with cancer diagnosis and treatment and the stresses associated with combat. “Both often require significant change in personal and family environments. Finding the mechanisms for health coping is key.”

Both presentations were followed by question and answer sessions attended by students and faculty. O’Connor highlighted graduate education requirements for work in the military clinical services.

It was great to work with a subject that at its base is universal.

I definitely experienced some things I wouldn’t be able to while teaching in the States. For example, I have never been without electricity for more than an hour or two in my life. So it was crazy (only for me though) when their power went out for over a day and school and life continued on without it. Teaching there really made me realize my skills as an educator. My enthusiasm and energy carried me through that ‘dark’ day. And I gained confidence as a teacher, especially in classroom management. When you’re leading 100 girls through a 2 hour choir rehearsal while they’re clicking away in Xhosa, you’ve got to be on top of your classroom game.

It was also life changing to travel and get to know the other COST members placed in Grahamstown. They were all amazing people who have great potential and want to change the world! It was really inspiring to teach and do all the cool things we did, like bungee jump and pet baby tigers, with such great people from all over America. My roommate was a girl from Tennessee, so even in our bunks we had some fun cultural sharing. And even though she still likes to make fun of my ‘Minnesotan’ accent, I know I’ve made a friend for life. Well, lots of friends for life. And memories, lots and lots of memories to last forever.

If you would like to contribute to a scholarship fund designed to support the Overseas Student Teaching Program (COST), contributions can be made to the Mary Weiss-Cashman International Education Fund. Contact the University Advancement Office http://www.uwrf.edu/UniversityAdvancement/
Advisor’s Corner

Additional Flexibilities to Add Licenses in Wisconsin

Greetings!

I hope all of you are enjoying a wonderful holiday season! In this issue I would like to touch on some recent changes in regards to specific areas of teacher licensing that may open up some additional opportunities for our education alumni. The following is an excerpt from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction’s web site:

All educators seeking to add a license after August 31, 2004 must take a subject area test to demonstrate content knowledge. There are two paths in which educators may select from when seeking to add a license; both require passing a subject assessment in order to qualify. 1) Take and pass a subject area test approved by the State Superintendent in a related area to the current license, or 2) complete a Wisconsin educator preparation program.

License Based on a Content Test

As of December 2010, Wisconsin educators who hold a valid Professional Educator license in world language (excluding ESL); social studies; science; English language arts; and mathematics/computer science are eligible to add on licensure in a related area based on passing a content test approved by the State Superintendent.

To apply for a license in this pathway, a Professional Educator must:

1) Hold a valid Wisconsin Professional Educator License (License Type: 30, 31, 32, 33, 36, 40, 41, 42, or 43), Master Educator License (License Type: 50, 51, or 52), or Life License (License Type: 08) in the related subject area (see below).

2) Verify your eligibility on the license look-up page, dpi.wi.gov/tepdl/lisearch.html.

3) Choose the test you will take. Register directly with the test vendor to take the test. Follow the charts below.
   World Language Checklist
   Social Studies Checklist
   Science Checklist
   English Language Arts Checklist
   Math and Computer Science Checklist

4) Take the test, and obtain an original score report from the test vendor. Verify minimum passing score. Do not request score reports to be sent directly to the department.

5) Apply for the new license using application form PI-1602-TST. Attach original score report from the test vendor. An applicant may add more than one related area license at a time based on a passing score. Only original score reports reflecting passing scores submitted with the PI-1602-TST application form will be considered. Do not submit an application without an original score report attached.

Mike Martin,
CEPS Senior Academic Advisor

From the Dean

UWRF Alumni and Friends:

As the “relatively new” dean of the CEPS, I am honored and excited to be here. During the past several months, I have been learning about the wonderful programs, faculty, staff, students, and alumni we have. And, even though we have had to deal with base-budget cuts for 2011-12 and one-time budget give-backs for 2011-12 and 2012-13 with their negative impact, faculty and staff continue to be engaged in exciting initiatives that benefit our students and community partners.

Among these initiatives are 1) the new online, bachelor’s degree completion program in health and wellness management being offered in collaboration with UW-La Crosse, UW-Stevens Point, and UW-Superior; 2) a middle-secondary Professional Development School being developed in collaboration with the School District of River Falls; 3) the expansion of the Communicative Disorders master’s program in speech-language pathology in Fall 2012, with expansion of clinical services to be provided at the River Falls Area Hospital; 4) implementation of a revised e-portfolio embedded assessment system for our education programs; and 5) preparation by the School Counseling program to pursue external accreditation from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The Social Work department is busy preparing for re-accreditation of its BSW program in 2012-13.

As you have heard previously through communication from the University, plans for the new Health and Human Performance Building continue to move forward. We received word on December 9 that the University has been awarded $3.7 million for the design phase of the building project, which will begin Spring 2012. UWRF also needs to raise $2 million by July 2013 as our commitment to the HHP project.

In closing, I want to thank Faye Perkins who served for four years as interim dean of the CEPS. She has made my transition to the dean’s position much smoother than it might have been. Clearly Dr. Perkins has demonstrated, and continues to demonstrate, outstanding commitment to the CEPS and UWRF. I feel fortunate to be among students, faculty, staff, and alumni who are so committed to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Best Regards,
Larry Solberg

Larry Solberg

From the Dean
New From the Field Experience Office

SUBMITTED BY WANDA ERWIN

The fall, 2011-2012 academic year is upon us with approximately 130 student teachers placed in various schools throughout the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin. The importance of a successful placement is very important to our program and we are grateful to the many schools, administrators, and cooperating teachers who make this possible. This clinical setting is a very important aspect for a successful placement.

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) increasingly embraces the teaching profession’s emphasis on strong clinical programs. Strong clinical programs include partnerships between universities and K-12 school districts. These partnerships include carefully selected placement schools and matching teacher candidates with trained, experienced mentor teachers in their field. These placements help to ensure candidates have extensive experiences teaching diverse student learners, such as English language learners and students with disabilities. In addition pairing pre service teachers with specially designated collegiate supervising faculty is critical for this quality experience. (AACTE report, 7/21/11).

As students are placed in very distant locations from one another, this current school year students have had the opportunity to share with one another their experiences with a web based program which allows them to communicate with one another on various issues, concerns and problems they may be experiencing. Students have had the opportunity to share their experiences, ask questions, offer suggestions, and give advice to each other. Students were asked what experience during the first weeks of school led them to realize that they were indeed in the “right” profession? Students responded very positively and offered ideas and comments to one another. It was very encouraging to see the positive comments students said about their schools and teachers and how everyone welcomed them. One such response included, “So far I have had one professional development day and one in-service/staff meeting. In both instances the teachers I interacted with have been so gracious and accommodating to me; but the really “ah ha” moment came when they would ask my opinion on a topic and when I shared how I felt, they really listened to what I had to say and told me I had some really good ideas. Not only that, but they want me to help with the planning of some of the curriculum to be covered and ask how to do certain things for Daily 5. These few interactions with the staff have really made me feel comfortable and accepted. I feel a part of the community “

We continue with our student teaching placements and are very proud of the program we have and it would not be successful if it were not for these exceptional relationships with area schools. Thank you.

Nominate a Graduate YOU Know! And, Save the Date.

On May 3, 2012 the CEPS will hold a celebration of outstanding students, cooperating professionals, and alumni. The event is being expanded this year to include alumni and scholarship donors.

We are creating two CEPS outstanding alumni awards and invite nominations from you for these awards. The first is the Outstanding Recent CEPS Alumnus award recognizing one who is within 10 years of graduation from UWRF in Teacher Education, Communicative Disorders, Counseling and School Psychology, Health and Human Performance, or Social Work and who has made outstanding contributions to his/her profession and/or community. The second is the Distinguished CEPS Alumnus award recognizing long-term, sustained commitment and contribution to one’s profession and community. Nominees have made positive and lasting impact through their dedication and bring honor to the UWRF College of Education and Professional Studies.

Please e-mail your nomination including the nominee’s contact information and your nominating statement to larry.c.solberg@uwrf.edu. The Alumni Awards Committee of the CEPS Alumni Advisory Board will obtain from the nominees any additional information that might be needed in making selections.

Thank you!