An American in Norway: Lessons of a Roving Scholar

BY GEOFFREY SCHEURMAN

Music was his life; it was not his livelihood. ... He sang from his heart and he sang from his soul. He did not know how well he sang; it just made him whole.

Harry Chapin, “Mr. Tanner”

Harry Chapin used music to tell poignant stories. Before and since his death in 1981, at the age of 39, I developed an affinity for the folk rock artist. This bond recently intensified while teaching overseas, where my identification with one of Chapin’s characters was once again illuminated while playing a song for Norwegian high school students. The character is Mr. Tanner, a dry cleaner with a gifted voice from Dayton, Ohio who is pressured by friends to leave his job and try music out full time. He decides to “take the fling” and performs at Carnegie Hall, but the critics are brutal after the debut and Tanner returns to dry cleaning faced with the reality of his own limitations and misplaced ambition. Music, he learns, is his life, not his livelihood, and he never sings again, excepting very late at night, when the shop is dark and closed. There he sings softly to himself while sorting through the clothes.

I’ll never be a rock star or a folk hero like the late Harry Chapin. I’ve never been able to carry a tune and will probably never sing in public. But after years of dreaming about, and reaching for, the life of a “star” teacher, I recently came as close as I’ll likely ever get while simultaneously pondering the intimate lessons offered by Mr. Tanner. It took the equivalent of a trip around the world to bring the thrill and agony of this imaginary ideal to fruition, roving across a part of Scandinavia as an invited troubadour with a few stories of my own to tell. Unlike Mr. Tanner, my reviews were mostly positive. Nevertheless, since “taking the fling” and returning to my own shop, I seem rather content to “sing softly to myself” while sorting through the lessons of this capstone experience to my own teaching career. I’ve been asked to share a few highlights of that journey and so here they are.

Flyer announcing this year’s Roving Scholars

The main source of advertising for schools was the Fulbright Norway website where we each maintained a menu of descriptions for student workshops and teacher seminars, along with a schedule and Google map of planned visits.
Fullbright Norway

Browsing a Fulbright catalogue in 1989, my eyes were drawn as if by a magnet to a Norwegian award titled Roving Scholar in American Studies. Even then, I recall having the thought, “this gig has my name on it.” I went to Iowa for graduate school instead, but over twenty years later, the award was still in the catalogue, a romantic attraction was still vibrating in my soul, and “Roving Scholar” apparently still had my name on it. In the extensive application proposal, I pointed out that if teaching, teachers, teenagers, and creative ways to interact over American culture in Scandinavia were the four legs of the assignment, then I was a perfect fit to serve as a Rover. When vetting on both sides of the Atlantic was complete, Fulbright agreed and I was invited to join an elite tradition as one of three Roving Scholars in Norway for the 2010-11 school year. I was fortunate to have my wife along for the journey. Marcia helped me with a complex calendar and travel itinerary while navigating the challenges of daily living in a foreign country. She was also pleased to share her musical talents with Norwegian children and teachers while volunteering in a few elementary and middle schools along the way.

The main charge of this appointment - unique only to Norway in Fulbright’s constellation of opportunities - is to travel throughout the country facilitating student workshops while modeling innovative pedagogy for teachers. Arriving in Oslo on August 1, the rest of the month was occupied with preparation and the pleasure of getting settled in a beautiful city. Roving began in late September and lasted for nine months, during which I met with 5000 students and teachers in upper secondary schools called videregående skole (or VGS). I also visited a few ungdomskoler (lower secondary) and barneskoler (elementary/middle), with pleasant faculty gatherings occurring occasionally in coffee shops or teachers’ homes. My need for a university fix was met courtesy of several college invitations from Humanities or Education departments, and I was hosted as a guest faculty member by the Department of Literature and Humanities at Universitati Oslo, whose main campus was a ten-minute walk from the flat where we lived when I wasn’t roving. I made presentations at several conventions in Norway as well as a Society for the Arts conference in Berlin (“Singing From His Soul: Triumph and Tragedy in Harry Chapin’s Mr. Tanner”) and the American Studies Association of Norway meeting held last year in Kaunas, Lithuania (“Obama as Hero or Just Another Oprah”).

By the end of May, my adventure had extended from Longyearbyen on the island of Svalbard near the North Pole to Den Norske Skole Costa Blanca, a Norwegian K-13 school in southern Spain. The rest of the year was in Norway proper, where I never drove a car, utilizing an amazing public transportation system that extended from urban centers to rural mountain areas and from the staggering 100,000-plus kilometers of coastline - almost 63,000 miles including fjords and islands - to remote villages on the plains of the Sami, indigenous Scandinavian peoples known for their reindeer herding. Not including a holiday trek back to the states or personal visits to Sweden, Holland, and Germany, as well as countless trips on the T-Bane (subway), Trikk (trolley), and bus system in Oslo, or many round trips to the Flyplass (airport), here is an estimate of my Rover transportation totals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Workshops</td>
<td>170 (5000 students)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty Seminars</td>
<td>22 (100s of teachers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distance traveled</td>
<td>50,509 km / 31,393 miles (including 28,000 in the air and not including the countless steps taken on foot!)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Planes (53); Trains (27); Flytoget (fast train, 54); Bus (86); Ferry (12); Fastboat (8); Taxi/Auto (150+)</td>
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Schools and Communities

Most school visits came about via invitations from teachers and administrators who requested workshops from a menu I composed and maintained on-line throughout the year. Although advertising was provided by the Fulbright Norway office, the U.S. Embassy, and Fremmedspraksenteret, the official Norwegian center for foreign languages, I often made cold calls to schools in regions I wished to visit or followed up on referrals as relationships evolved. Norway is slightly larger than New Mexico, although it stretches the same distance as Seattle to San Diego. With a population less than Wisconsin, it’s a small country and by the end of the year, my reputation sometimes preceded my visit. The day before my very first school visit, on a scenic bluff overlooking Bergen and reached by taking a funicular cable car, I was approached by a stranger who had overheard me chatting in a crowd. "Geoffrey Scheurman?" the woman inquired. It turns out she was the teacher hosting me at a VGS the next day (and a graduate of Harvard). Such scenes became less and less surreal, as strangers approached me at a theater in Hamar as well as in the Grottebadet, a spectacular underground bathhouse in the town of Harstad, to inquire whether I was Rover Geoff. Fulbright provided a travel agent for the big stuff, but Marcia and I managed the details, including a steady stream of correspondence that was simultaneously challenging, exhausting, and infinitely rewarding. Once commitments were made, I would usually arrive in town the day before my school visit. The typical teacher’s day begins at 7:45 a.m. Classes begin at 8:00, but teaching schedules look more like that of an American college professor, so it wasn’t uncommon to have odd start times or else roam among several classrooms. I often wanted to arrive early and get a lay of the land ahead of my host teachers, so I learned to walk right in and find the men’s personal room, drop my wraps and Yak Trax (studs for hiking boots), and then help myself to the copy or coffee machine.

My hosts were always polite and welcoming, although the reputation of apparent Norwegian coldness is not just a legend. I might walk the halls for hours without anyone acknowledging my presence or saying “hello.” That said, the record number of times I was offered a cup of coffee before noon was seven, at Wang Toppidret VGS, a school dedicated to preparing Norway’s elite athletes in the coastal oil town of Stavanger. The Norwegians we met were kind and helpful to a person, often taking their humanitarian duties to obsessive degrees. You just had to ask for help as they weren’t often forthcoming, again with exceptions.

One autistic boy at my very first visit, a relatively “rough” public school in Bergen (quite tame by American standards), became a self-appointed valet. I invited Olé to assist me at the upper crust Katedralskole (Cathedral School) during a subsequent visit to the city. He and his father Idar became friends and ended up staying with us later in the year when they visited Oslo. Another student befriended me in the commons area at Sandnessjøen, a picturesque western coastal town, and then cut his afternoon classes to attend my workshop. At the end of the day, he invited Marcia and me to a tour filled with local lore about the fjord and Seven Sisters mountain range. We then picked up his research physician mother at the airport, and the two insisted we join them for reindeer stew at their home.

Although schools strive to create unique facilities and traditions, routines were the same nearly every place I visited. For example, the entire faculty and staff have lunch in an aesthetically pleasing lounge at the same time every day while students enjoy free reign of the school. I was surprised at the absence of supervision, especially in ultra-modern buildings that housed donated art collections worth millions of Norwegian kroner. Some schools didn’t even provide substitutes for absent teachers, not for lack of money but because kids came to videregående with well-established behavioral expectations, including how to check the on-line calendar for instructions and carry on independently. Although free time to socialize during lunch is sacred, brief business is often conducted during the hour, eliminating the need for after school meetings. When the school day ended at 3:00 p.m., I learned to pack up and head out by 3:15, no matter how personal or profound the day had been, or else I’d be closing the doors myself. Unlike American schools, Norway’s campuses become a ghost town after 3:30 - no teachers, students, athletes, clubs, or administrators. Throughout the year, there is ample time for preparation, collaboration, and one-on-one or juried exams, almost always within normal school hours. The Norwegians take their education seriously, but no more seriously than family or personal time. We learned quickly that few Norwegians take work home, literally or figuratively.
The highlight of the year was the workshops themselves, where as a guest I got to meet new people and ply my craft every day. English class was the most typical venue, mostly in studiespesialisering (general studies) but sometimes in yrkesfag, one of Norway’s many renowned vocational programs that often shared the same building. I taught classes to students preparing for apprenticeships as hairdressers, nursing assistants, truck drivers, oil riggers, graphic designers, and food service personnel, to name a few. The goal was always to immerse students in the language with a native speaker, whether presenting a topic relevant to the curriculum, serving as keynote attraction in a special “Multicultural USA Day” festival, or just providing an enrichment activity. English is considered Norway’s “second language” - as opposed to a “foreign language” - and so many people are fluent that I was hard pressed to practice Norsk in this truly bilingual society. Many videregående students concurrently study English along with two forms of Norwegian, Bokmål (traditional book language) and Nynorsk (“new Norwegian,” a deliberately invented language), as well as a foreign language - German, French, or Russian with Spanish increasing in recent popularity.

Like a baby in a candy store, I chose my own topics and designed presentations and activities, enjoying creative license to research and develop new ideas throughout the year. I spent a week in several schools, where I got to feel like a regular faculty member, but most visits were 1-3 days, meeting with students in 90-minute classes. Individual differences were evident like you would expect to find anywhere, and yet collective student responses became so pleasantly predictable that I would occasionally begin a workshop right where I had left off in a previous school, imagining that I was meeting once again with the same kids. With travel days between visits, liberal Norwegian holidays, and three-day weekends, there was plenty of time to experience museums, local cultural events, and pristine natural beauty.

In addition to many local experiences, including recitals featuring native instruments like the Hardanger Fiddle at the Norges Musikkhøgskole (music conservatory) right next to our apartment in Oslo, I was surprised by occasional pangs of American pride, such as when the skies filled with fireworks on New Year’s Eve, or at outings such as the Buddy Holly Story and the Legend of Johnny Cash, both containing narrative in Norwegian but music in English. I happened to be in the town of Hamar when students from an upper level English class attended a live theatrical presentation of One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest, while Marcia and I were moved by Virginia’s Brev, a locally written play in Trondheim about Virginia’s famous letter to Santa Claus that appeared in the New York Sun. It was inspiring to learn once again how the universal language of emotion knows no cultural or linguistic boundaries. We ushered in Yukigassen (annual snowball fight competition) in Vardø, an island in the Barents Sea further east than St. Petersburg and famous for burning 90 witches at the stake in the 18th century. This fact resulted in one of the more interesting workshops on the Salem Witch Trials I conducted all year. One teacher took us on a stunning personal tour of Dannå Island off the west coast after discovering our interest in the books of O. E. Rølvaag about Norwegian immigrants to America. The author of Giants in the Earth had ancestors who migrated to the United States from the island, while Rølvaag himself was a professor at St. Olaf College and his grandson was the governor of Minnesota.

Lest I give the wrong impression, most of these highlights were (thankfully) not very sensational. The best thing about roving was...
In addition to the joy of working with adolescents and their teachers, reflecting on the Roving Scholar experience continues to raise intriguing questions and yield many insights. Here is a taste of the more popular workshops along with a few lessons that developed over time from each one.

Web Announcements following visit to Lakselv

School home page following visit to northern salmon fishing village of Lakselv. Most of the time, I slipped in and out of schools without much fanfare. But on several occasions, I was the focus of a local news story or school web announcement.

You and the Law: Students’ Rights Under the United States Constitution. This workshop often began with a discrepant event inquiry involving a student from Woodbury, Minnesota who was suspended for wearing a “Straight Pride” tee-shirt as a protest. I quickly learned that such scenarios seemed incredulous to Norwegian students. Over time, their consistent reactions helped me construct an understanding of the nation’s social democracy as existing within a frame defined by an implicitly strict code. On the one hand, as long as Norwegians operate within that frame, individual liberties are sacrosanct, inviolable, and equally applicable to children and adults. In fact, the code demands allegiance to civil rights in ways that make some American treatment of students look condescending if not abusive or tyrannical. On the other hand, our sense of “hazardous freedom” (phrase coined by Justice Fortas in a famous Supreme Court case involving student expression) invites American students to risk stepping outside norms and challenge written and unwritten codes in ways that the Norwegian psyche just couldn’t seem to grasp. At seemingly every turn in the story, I was greeted with similar questions: “Why would one student need to protest other students’ privileges; isn’t it their right? Why would the others be offended by his protest; isn’t it his right? Why would the principal suspend someone for what he wears; isn’t that the student’s right? Why would the student sue for being suspended; isn’t that the principal’s right?” More often than not, I was pushed to a point where my only answer at each juncture was, “well, we treat ‘rights’ a little differently in the United States.” Disagreements, if they existed at all, often felt perfunctory. I often got the sense that in Norway, you had debates because in a democracy you are supposed to have debates. Protests and demonstrations occurred in Oslo, but they were always scheduled, contained, and very controlled. Although I found many reasons to be jealous of Norwegian schools, most of all genuine egalitarianism and respect for individual liberties, I also found myself pining for the kind of “disputatious” interaction that once made America the envy of the world.

Born in the USA: The Mystery of America’s Musical Tapestry. In this dynamic workshop, I often focused on a different legendary performer like Springsteen, Dylan, Elvis, Johnny Cash, Dolly Parton, or Harry Chapin, inviting students to consider how elements of Jazz, Blues, Country, Folk, and Rock & Roll merge to create an array of fascinating forms with various motives and outcomes. I was caught off guard by the zealous identification young people (and many teachers) had with these icons and loved witnessing students’ surprise each time I invited one of their classmates to swing dance to Garth Brooks. They in turn liked my surprise at their reaction when they learned that Woody Guthrie’s familiar (to them!) This Land is Your Land was a song of protest. The Norwegian tradition of allemannsrett - literally “every man’s right” or freedom to roam - is so ingrained that the notion of private property and Guthrie’s lament over “no trespassing” signs were experiences with which Nordic adolescents could hardly relate. This forced me to reflect on unexamined assumptions and practices maintained by American citizens, including the way we allow fences and purchased political privilege to rob us of a sense of common place and collective stewardship of the land.

Sports as A Stage for Social Change and National Identity. Norwegian teenagers seemed to love hearing what it was like to grow up as an athlete in America. After sharing a few personal but socially symbolic stories, students would then explore case studies of famous sports figures including Jesse Owens, Jackie Robinson, Mohammed Ali, Billie Jean King, and others, ultimately asking themselves “If this person reflects America, then what is America?” I learned that it is illegal to televise professional boxing on NRK, Norway’s state media outlet. This only heightened anticipation for me to show an old 1938 video of Joe Louis battering Max Schmelling senseless in two minutes and nine seconds and then act out the victory demonstrations that ensued in the back alleys of black neighborhoods around the country. At some point the already popular workshop received an energy spike when I decided to end it with a local connection. “If Petter Northug reflects Norway, then what is Norway?” I would ask. Northug is the best young Nordic skier in the world, known for his cocky attitude, brash bordering on disrespectful interviews, and uncharacteristically huge endorsement deals. Many of my new colleagues likened him to a Norwegian Ali. Compared to American sports celebrities, Northug seems like a cute and innocent kid to me, but he was a polarizing figure and always instigated an electric exchange between students and teachers. His superstar reputation...
invited discussion about the tradition of janteloven, an unofficial but pervasive cultural law that says you are never supposed to think highly of yourself as someone special. Many citizens oppose the tradition while admitting its repression of Norwegian progress. Janteloven seemed so real at times that it helped me unravel the paradoxical aloofness of “Minnesota nice” that I have never quite understood. Ironically, students loved the special attention whenever I asked them to teach me about the impact of Jante and Anti-jante law on Norwegian culture.

The Future Myth of Obama. Students in this workshop considered various figures in historical and contemporary American society, leading to conceptions of folk, mythic, and popular heroes. They then completed a sorting task including facts, images, and quotations by and about famous “heroes” to whom President Obama was being compared during the first campaign. After assembling profiles of unidentified people, I would ask students to select the one they thought was the real Obama. It turns out that none of them were, although they all bore remarkable similarities, including Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglas, Franklin Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Sidney Poitier, Tiger Woods, and even Oprah. Norwegians generally love Obama. I discovered several schools where classes held all-night vigils when he was elected, waiting to hear his acceptance speech from Chicago live at 4:00 a.m. Many students openly admitted that Norway takes its lead from the American President, Norway’s “big brother.” The executive director of Fulbright Norway explained their affection in this way: “Norwegians never felt good about themselves for not liking America under President Bush. When Obama was elected, a burden was lifted instantly as they could like themselves again for liking America again.” Right-wing views are so antithetical to Norwegian thinking that most people could barely understand things like the Tea Party movement. They would often ask questions such as, “why wouldn’t you want everyone to have health care?” Despite good feelings for Obama (and more than a few tears from teachers any time I delivered an oration of excerpts from his speeches), students everywhere parroted a party line of reserved judgment on his potential legacy. He still had to earn his premature Nobel Peace Prize, they would say, which was awarded more for hope than action. I heard over and over a black and white assessment (no pun intended) of Obama’s promise to get the troops out of Afghanistan and how at that time there were actually more on the ground than before the election.

A surge of excitement came when I inquired how the Obama phenomenon compared with Norway’s most recent pattern of Eurovision Contest selections. Alexander Rybak, the only Norwegian to ever win the European singing competition, is a native of Belaruse. Everyone had an opinion about him, as well as about the current candidate, an African-Norwegian named Stella Mwengi. Norway is incredibly homogeneous, although the demographic landscape is changing considerably and deliberately. Exploring the tensions accompanying these shifts with native and ethnic Norwegians, against the backdrop of the American experience, was fascinating to say the least. A teacher at one school asked if I’d facilitate a short unit on civil rights in America. Not wanting to give the stock presentation, I concocted a workshop based on the contrasting approaches of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, with the inquiry question, “How much violence does a ‘non-violent’ approach require to be effective?” The unit was successfully provocative (a relative condition in Norway), but not without a few moments of tension when the teacher in this passionately pacifist country feared we might end up glorifying or condoning violence in any way.

I facilitated other workshops, including If I Were A Cowboy where students explored images from history, art, rodeo, music, film, and politics, as well as my personal experience at the annual spring cattle branding. The class ended with students writing their own short “Code of the West,” which they would share with the class in English and Norwegian. I have since been invited to offer my perspectives after growing up in the Rocky Mountains in a book titled “30-40 Years West of Here,” but it was 4000 miles east of here where I became keen to the realization that every time I asked my young Scandinavian charges to consider their similitude with the American cowboy, I was inquiring into the shaping of my own personality as a native of Wyoming.
Context and Conclusions

I learned plenty of cultural lessons outside of school as well. One example was when Marcia and I overheard a convivial conversation between two Statoil (Norway’s state-owned energy company) businessmen in an intimate 18th century vintage restaurant in Trondheim. I learned to blend in anonymously most of the time, but would sometimes play the “forward American card,” which was almost always met with reserved delight by otherwise reticent Norwegians who were unlikely to initiate such an exchange. This evening I paused to engage our spontaneous and boisterous (again, a relative concept) dinner comrades in a hearty exchange that ended with one of them making this comment: “We never used to have this much food; we must behave ourselves.” I pondered the context of his comment for months, and drew the following inference. Thanks to North Sea oil and social policies that guarantee everyone a modest share of the wealth, there is an assumption of respect for ancestral suffering as well as compliance with social norms and public restraint. Since everyone is enjoying the good times, to get out of control, let alone complain or drive after drinking, would reveal a lack of gratitude, an attitude familiar in America but taboo in Norway. Zero tolerance policies that are often ignored or repealed in this country are accepted and embraced almost universally in theirs.

This attitude was pervasive across the country, with both good and bad connotations. On the one hand, crime and poverty is almost non-existent, national pride runs high, and overall educational achievement is among the best in the world, with abundant opportunities (including free university education) for all young adults beyond high school. On the other hand, teachers often complained that the sense of entitlement and security provided by collective wealth also breeds complacency among Norwegian youth and constrains superior levels of achievement. Many students were quick to recognize the same thing and often intimated their awe of American greatness and jealousy of our competitive, creative, and ambitious spirit.

Finally, my chapter in Norway was filled with edifying personal encounters. For example, my former Dean (Faye Perkins) introduced me to her friend and former co-exchange student, Ingrid, and her husband Reidar. Along with their children and a small band of loyal lifetime friends, these kind people took us in the entire year as if we were part of an extended family. We enjoyed many special occasions with the group, including one of many dinners at the home of another couple, Dagfinn and “Princess” Anne, with whom we were fortunate to celebrate Syttennde Mai (May 17 or Independence Day). Among other things, they re-taught us cross-country skiing (actually, they re-taught Marcia as my lower back was stubbornly resistant), something we had both left behind from our younger days. They gave us everything from furniture and transportation to a feeling of connection and security. We spent our first night in Norway with Ingrid and Reidar and they were the last to say goodbye.

This once in a lifetime adventure as a Fulbright Roving Scholar enabled me to read liberally on a variety of subjects, examine many cultural assumptions and practices, as well as renew my credentials as a high school teacher. As importantly, the length and intensity of the experience challenged me to develop new pedagogical approaches to meet the demands of situations never before encountered. Most importantly, it invited me to reconsider and clarify the very nature of teaching itself, as a potential (and too often unrealized) means of personal transformation and conceptual understanding, without the specter of standards and standardized tests breathing down my neck. I admit to getting spoiled from being a guest of modest distinction nearly every day at work, and I never grew tired of teachers who found “charming” the way I greeted every new student with a handshake and then remembered their names after class or warmed up to their friends in the hallway. It was also a rare treat to enjoy an audience who quietly affirmed their appreciation for challenging content and inspirational pedagogy. Imagine if we did that for one another here at home.

I am appreciative to the University of Wisconsin - River Falls for supporting this activity with a sabbatical leave. Like Harry Chapin’s Mr. Tanner, who I introduced to several Norwegian classrooms, I may be “singing” more in the quiet of my own office since returning, not to mention leaving work a little earlier and taking a little less home with me, but I expect the knowledge and experience I gained overseas to be significant to our students for years to come. I have a greater sensitivity to the reality that teaching is life, not a livelihood, and that regardless of where one experiences it, without heart and soul, wholeness is just a distant fantasy. Like performing in Carnegie Hall or roving in Norway.
Department News

Communicative Disorders

Department Grows

BY MIKE HARRIS

Clinical Supervision

The Department of Communicative Disorders is pleased to report that its program will grow next year. We were allocated an additional 1.0 FTE clinical supervisor who will begin in August 2012. This person will supervise in the University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic in the lower level of the Wyman Education Building (WEB) as well staffing the River Falls Area Hospital (RFAH) speech-language pathology program. The RFAH has been contracting our services since the fall of 2008.

With the additional staff member, we will be admitting 20 new graduate students to our program each year. As our program is a two-year (5 semesters), full-time program, we will soon have 40 graduate students in our graduate program, in addition to approximately 100 undergraduate students majoring in communicative disorders. Graduate students admitted for fall 2012 were selected from a pool of 159 applicants.

The department also hired a .20 FTE Billing Coordinator during the 2011-2012 academic year. Tami Miller is responsible for establishing billing policies, sliding fee scales, and directly billing third party insurance companies. Funds generated by the billing process help support the material and equipment needs in the University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic.

Another exciting event was the allocation of funding to support a digital recording system in the University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic. This system will replace an analog VHS recording system and will greatly enhance our ability to provide quality clinical training.

We look forward to the upcoming academic year with 17 faculty and staff members serving in the department. Department members and their specialty areas are:

- Dr. Gary Cottrell: Audiology, Aural Rehabilitation, Central Auditory Processing Disorders
- Ms. Kristin Carlson: Clinical Supervision
- Ms. Linda Culhane: Academic Department Associate
- Ms. Laura Decheine: Clinical Supervision
- Dr. Mike Harris: Augmentative Communication, Speech Science, Communicative Replacements for Challenging Behavior, Phonological Disorders
- Dr. Naomi Hashimoto: Motor Speech Disorders, Aphasia, Research Methods
- Mr. John Krumm: Clinical Supervision
- Ms. Tami Miller: Billing Coordinator

Dr. Barbara Rebuhn (Adjunct Professor)

- Special Education

Ms. Sharyl Samargia: Dysphagia, Anatomy/Physiology, Voice Disorders

Dr. Satomi Shinde: Special Education

Ms. Sarah Smits: Clinic Director, Clinical Supervision

Dr. Lori Swanson: Language Development, Language Disorders, CHARGE Syndrome

Ms. Debra Bilbrey: Sign Language

Clinical Supervisor (search is in process)
The school psychology program was pleased to host the president of the National Association of School Psychologists, Dr. Phil Lazarus. The school psychology program student association supported the visit by Dr. Lazarus. Among those present at the presentation was Dr. Larry Solberg, Dean of the College of Education and Professional studies and NASP President, Dr. Lazarus. After review of his impressive credentials and contributions by NASP leader Amanda Weinkauf, Dr. Lazarus spoke on the topic of a comprehensive service delivery by school psychologists. In his remarks, Dr. Lazarus emphasized that school psychologists must maintain a focus on full-service delivery for all students. While it is necessary to emphasize academic functioning in the development of the child, a whole child approach is necessary to ensure that students receive the full benefit of services while in the school setting. Approaches that do not consider the students’ social, emotional, behavioral, or interpersonal development, may fail to support the student in important ways.

Dr. Lazarus referred to research that indicated many students have significant mental health needs. Unfortunately, prior assumptions that community-based services would be adequate to support the needs of such students have proven to be false. In rural areas for example, mental health resources within the community may not be available. While in urban settings, barriers such as affordability, transportation, and access to services may make it difficult for students to receive services away from the school setting. Such challenges continue to point to the school as a point of service for many students. Therefore, school psychologists equipped to work with students who have a mental health need is essential.

At the NASP convention in Philadelphia the president of the association recognized Dr. Savage for his many contributions to the organization and the field of school psychology. The President’s award is given at the President’s discretion to members of the association who have excelled in supporting various initiatives that benefit the association and the community at large. Through his active involvement and leadership, Dr. Savage has contributed to initiatives that have supported the social, emotional, and academic needs of diverse learners. Congratulations to Dr. Savage.

Alum Sally Baas, EdD, was chosen as president elect of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) for 2012-2013. She will begin her presidency of the national organization July 1, 2013. Throughout her career Sally has been an advocate for children and families, and she has served in a variety of leadership positions. Congratulations to Sally on her achievement.
Food Drive
Sigma Psi Tau, the school psychology student association, conducted a food drive for school psychology awareness week. As part of the food drive a friendly competition between the cohort groups occurred. Proceeds from the food drive were donated to the Second Harvest Heartline shelter. The second year cohort of students was declared the winner of the food drive, which enabled them to receive an additional $150 donated by the school psychology faculty to the shelter. Members of the second year cohort group (photo) are Jen Lewandowski, Christina Madison, Adam Vold, Julianne Larson, Lisa Sturm, Samantha Bialozynski, David Thompson, Sommer Bowers, Chad Ruter, and Katherine Lemire. Kristin Arnt was not present for the photo.

Open House
The UWRF school psychology-training program hosted an open house for prospective students on January 12, 2012. Faculty members were present to provide answers to questions about the program and a panel of current students attended to give their perspective on their experiences within the school psychology program at UW-River Falls. Many thanks to Christina Madison, Courtney Domka, Shaun Felipe (front row), David Thompson, Nicole Hogan, and Amanda Weinkauf (standing) for giving of their time on a Thursday evening to help prospective students find out about school psychology training at UWRF.

Amery Wisconsin High School Depression Screening
Students from the school psychology and school counseling program supported the Amery, Wisconsin school district in their annual screening of students for depression at the high school. The school district uses the Teen Screen program to assess students for depression, determine their status, and make referrals to community based services if needed. Screening was offered to 117 students. Of those students parents gave consent for 51 students to be screened. 46 students assented to screening. School psychology students participating in the screening were Julianne Larson, Samantha Bialozynski, and Katherine Lemire.
Department of Teacher Education

It Takes a Child to Raise a Village…

BY ANGELA KAISER

To a number of people the quote “It takes a village to raise a child” might sound familiar and true. In our preschool we feel the opposite is also true.

The University Preschool has been in existence for a number of years. What once was called Ames Preschool and housed in the former Ames building is now located in the lower level of the Wyman Building with a new name. Many people confuse the CHILD Center Daycare with the preschool, but they are in fact two separate entities.

The University Preschool houses 17-21 four and five year olds, Monday through Thursday mornings. If one uses any of their senses on a daily basis, one will find us. You can hear the giggles, laughter and singing pouring from our doorway each morning. You can see the energy of the children as we play on our playground each day...sledging down the hill in the winter or picking the many dandelions each spring. You might smell the delicious muffins, green eggs and ham or cookies we bake for the children; and if you are lucky, you might even get to taste some of the leftovers as you pass by the doorway!

The classroom also has a variety of adults who learn from children each and every day. Two lead teachers, Angela Kaiser and Sheila Behrendt, have been co-teaching together for 23 years. Angela is hired as academic staff by UWRF and Sheila works for the River Falls School District to teach children with special needs. Both Angela and Sheila utilize their daily lessons from the children to teach courses in early childhood and education for the university.

Student teachers are also learners in our classroom. Each day they come into the classroom to learn what the daily life of a preschooler is all about. Every 9 weeks a new set of teachers starts again...and every 9 weeks the children welcome them with open arms.

College students in a variety of courses utilize the knowledge of the preschoolers to learn about life skills. One of these courses includes Communicative Disorders graduate students from the Speech and Hearing clinic located directly across the hall (isn’t that convenient?). These students are required to complete a select number of hours for certification. A small group of children with speech and language needs work with the graduate students twice a week. The children love the activities the students provide, and the students learn what it is like to work with preschoolers.

Along with these students, other college courses that utilize the preschool children for learning interactions, research or play based activities include Preschool Curriculum, Parent Education, Developmental Learning, Early Childhood Language Arts and Educational Psychology. Geoff Scheurman has “borrowed” groups of children to teach about Piagetian Tasks to his group of college students. Hillary Pollock brought her reading students into the classroom to watch children’s beginning reading and writing skills. Molly Gerrish and Gay Ward often utilize the classroom for hands-on learning, preschool curriculum experiences and observation practice. You may have noticed another contribution of our preschoolers; the entire Wyman Building has been decorated with their brilliant paintings! The University Preschool is often a revolving door of learning.

Two people who are standard visitors with the children are Dr. Camilla Horne (music) and Annette Blanchette (story lady). Dr. Horne comes into the classroom every Thursday and volunteers to do music with the children. Her vibrant energy is exciting to the children, and she teaches her music students how fun it is to do music with preschoolers. Annette Blanchette has been reading monthly to the children forever...she lives in our community (formerly worked with us in Teacher Education) and LOVES to read to the children. She dresses up each month as a holiday character. We have seen her as a witch, an elf, a red Valentine.

The School District of River Falls hires specialists to work with the children with special needs on a weekly basis. We have a speech language pathologist (a graduate of UWRF, Kate Dulaney), a physical therapist and an occupational therapist who visit our classroom routinely and work with individual children. These are great resources for us to have in case we have any questions about children with specific needs.

The preschool has an (open door) observation room. We sometimes have parent or student observers, but we welcome any person who might need a little break from their work or studies. Watching children learn through play can be very relaxing, might give you a smile or even a giggle or help you get through a long day of correcting papers.

Life is so much easier when you are a part of a network of friends and family. The support we give to our college community as well as our larger community is evident each day as we share the joys of preschool children. It might take a village to raise a child...but on our campus it takes a child to raise a village.
impressed and thankful that our UWRF students provided quality instruction and hope that this will continue again next J term.

The theme was Inclusion in March at the Emogene Nelson workshop. Topics included Cerebral Palsy, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and Diabetes. The valuable information on each focus enlightened our HHP students and our appreciation goes out to Dr. Faye Perkins who coordinated this workshop.

In April of 2012 the “Devotion to Motion” Physical Education workshop was held in Karges gymnasium. There were over fifty professional physical educators and fifty future professionals that attended the workshop where two presenters from California and one from Georgia shared what quality Physical Education is and demonstrated it through various physical activities sessions. The students absorbed what being a true professional includes and the importance of being a life long learner. A special thank you to UWRF WHPE Future Professional Vice President Dave Lostetter and Professor James Gostomski for organizing this workshop.

The HHP Club hosted the Turkey Trot last fall and the Spring Fun Run. The money raised has assisted the club in lowering the cost to attend the Wisconsin Health and Physical Education Conference. We hope for increased participation in these two events for the next school year.

BY JAMES GOSTOMSKI

The Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) program in the department of Health and Human Performance has had a sensational school year for 2011-2012. It began in September 2011, when two students, Kelley Kern and Jonathan Keepers, were selected to represent UW-River Falls at the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD) Midwest Student Leadership conference in Pokagon, Indiana. They were two of five students that represented Wisconsin, and they brought back their new experiences and knowledge and shared it with our Physical Education majors.

In October 2011, sixty UW-River Falls students attended the Wisconsin Health and Physical Education (WHPE) state conference in the Wisconsin Dells. We had the most Physical Education majors attend from the state. We also had two presentations that students from our Elementary Physical Education Techniques course wonderfully presented that were well received from professionals in the field. We have certainly had a presence and positive influence in our state association!

The Adapted Physical Education program continues to grow, and our partnership with River Falls Public Schools has been a delightful collaboration. This past J term of 2012, fourteen Adapted Physical Education Minors had the opportunity to closely work with all students of various disabilities in the River Falls High School pool in an adapted aquatics course. The instructor, Dana Zimmerman, is also the Adapted Physical Educator from the River Falls Public schools and was extremely pleased with our UW-River Falls student’s preparation and interaction with his adapted physical education students. Dana also stated that the parents of the students were very
Department of Social Work

Social Work Field Experience moves into “Digital Age”

Taking another step towards a “paperless” environment, the Department of Social Work has successfully tested a transition of its digital field-work application process. Introduced by Ms. Jennifer Gervais, M.S.W., who joined the department this year to coordinate field-work, the web-based process essentially uses an infrastructure similar to on-line social introduction services.

The department solicited field agencies and supervisors interested in have social work students as interns fill out a simple web-based questionnaire about agency services and requirements. A similar web-based application is filled out by junior students seeking a placement for their senior year field experience. The software analyzes several variables and proposes possible “matches”.

“The process is still very much a human one,” said Ms. Gervais, “faculty are still involved in oversight of the prospective placements, and students must personally interview with the respective agencies. What the software does is to assist the matching process, and, of course, it’s electrons and not paper. We can keep records easier and more securely.”

Students and agencies seemed to gravitate to the change easily. The number of new placement agency opportunities has increased slightly, possibly due to the convenience of the application process. Ms. Gervais indicated plans are underway to place more training and orientation opportunities for both students and field supervisors in an on-line support environment.

Advisor’s Corner

MIKE MARTIN,
CEPS SENIOR ACADEMIC ADVISOR

New and Newsworthy from Wisconsin and Minnesota Teacher Licensing News

Wisconsin ACT 166 –
Wisconsin ACT 166 -legislation regarding the new Lead to Read initiative in Wisconsin and teacher preparation.

http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/related/acts/166

Minnesota -
legislation regarding basic skills testing for teacher licensing

https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/?id=122&doctype=chapter&year=2012&type=0

If you have questions about adding additional fields of teaching to an existing teacher license please feel free to contact me at michael.martin@uwrf.edu.
From the Dean

UWRF Alumni and Friends:

My first year as dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies has passed quickly. It has been an exciting and productive year. I feel fortunate to be in a college with the caliber and commitment of the faculty and staff that we have. We would not be able to prepare the quality of graduates that we do without them. At our recent spring commencement, nearly 270 bachelor’s, master’s, and education specialist degrees were conferred, adding these CEPS graduates to our nearly 13,500 living alumni. Welcome new alumni!

Regarding alumni, this year we presented our first College of Education and Professional Studies Distinguished Alumnus Award. Our Distinguished Alumna is Deborah (James) Hulbert, a 1970 physical education graduate, who was recognized at our Spring Awards Reception and Program on May 3, 2012. Approximately 250 student awardees and their family members, alumni, scholarship donors, outstanding collaborating professionals, and faculty and staff members joined us for this celebration in the University Center. This will be an annual event to celebrate those who make the CEPS the great college it is.

Spring semester we also said goodbye to Dr. Teri Crotty and Dr. Margaret Phinney, both professors of Teacher Education. Dr. Crotty is retiring after 22 years of service at UWRF, serving as chair of the Teacher Education Department (TED) for nine years and assistant dean of the college for four years. Dr. Phinney retired in January after 12 years at UWRF. She directed our Reading master’s program and taught reading in the elementary education block program. Both Drs. Crotty and Phinney were involved in international education efforts. They have contributed much to the TED and the college. They will be missed.

In our last Dialogue issue, I made reference to the new Falcon Center building project. By the beginning of fall semester, the architects and engineers will have been selected and design planning will begin. Tentative plans are for construction to begin in 2014 and be completed by late 2016. The new building will house the Health and Human Performance Department, Athletics, and Recreation. A volunteer fundraising committee for the Falcon Center has been formed. The committee’s goal is to help raise the $2 million UWRF commitment toward construction of the $63.5 million Falcon Center project. The group is co-chaired by Connie Foster, former HHP professor and chair, athletic director, CEPS dean, interim provost, and interim chancellor and Mike Davis, retired HHP professor and chair and former CEO of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD).

In closing, I extend my sincere thank you to all of you CEPS alumni and friends who have contributed to scholarship funds and our Fund for Excellence. Without your generosity we would not have been able to award 58 scholarships this year or support CEPS students who are studying abroad.

Best Regards,
Larry Solberg
The CEPS Distinguished Alumnus award was established this year to recognize 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.

Deborah (James) Hulbert, who graduated from UW-River Falls in 1970 with honors and a major in physical education, is our inaugural recipient. She was recognized at the CEPS Awards Reception and Program on May 3, 2012.

Deb graduated when intercollegiate sport programs for women were in their infancy. Four UWRF students, including Deb, started a gymnastics team. Working on their own without a coach, Deb led the team with an individual conference championship on beam and placed fifth overall on the vault.

In addition to competing, Deb began to work with young athletes in River Falls. The first youth team competed in AAU gymnastics in 1968. She also initiated a gymnastics feeder program by teaching tumbling in the UWRF wrestling room where her father, Byron James, was head coach.

To promote gymnastics, Deb organized and managed the first River Falls Invitational. At the time there were no Wisconsin schools participating at the tournament because competitive gymnastics was not offered. This tournament was later moved to RFHS when Deb became the RFHS gymnastics coach.

While teaching in the River Falls School District, Deb started an intramural program at the River Falls Junior High. Intramurals included a variety of sports, one being gymnastics, which led to the founding of girls athletics in River Falls. Deb initiated Saturday gymnastics workshops in surrounding communities to get girls interested in gymnastics. This work led to other schools offering interscholastic gymnastics to their students. As a result of her relentless work to establish and promote interscholastic sports for young women and for her successful gymnastics coaching career, Deb was one of two coaches inducted into the inaugural River Falls Athletic Hall of Fame in 2011.

Deb has served UWRF in numerous ways. She has taught several classes on an ad hoc basis for the Department of Health & Human Performance. She also served as a collaborating teacher for many UWRF Physical Education majors, allowed faculty to use her classes as a “real world lab experience” for college students, and allowed countless students to observe her classes. We are indebted to Deb for her years of service and contributions to UW-River Falls, the River Falls Schools, and the community.