

NEWSLETTER for the College of Graduate Studies & Adult Learning



SPRING 2024

MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA



A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Welcome to the spring 2024 edition of the CGSAL newsletter! As the Bard once said, parting is such sweet sorrow, and it is with that mixed emotion that I share the news that I will be departing my position as Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning at the end of this academic year. It has been a wonderful six years at the helm of the college, and although we have had to navigate waters both still and stormy, I am very proud of the work that our outstanding students, faculty and staff have accomplished over the years.

I am very proud to say that Millersville led all PASSHE schools in graduate student enrollment growth this year. Our hardworking graduate coordinators and admission staff recruited a record number of new graduate students this year. I am delighted to report that Millersville now enrolls more graduate students than at any time in its history, with over 1,100 enrolled graduate students in spring 2024! Congratulations to everyone for reaching this remarkable milestone.

Enrollments in our Online Degree Completion programs also continue to grow. In several programs, we have already surpassed our enrollment goals and in some cases have exceeded capacity! At last count, we were approaching 700 online degree completion students in nearly a dozen programs. Of particular note, we have begun recruiting for our first four-year online undergraduate programs, both in the Lombardo College of Business. The Office of Online Programs looks forward to working with our first cohort of fully online, first-time college students!

I am also proud to say that CGSAL enrolled more students in our Winter Session courses than we have in any term since the pandemic. Our summer enrollments, anchored by a great diversity of Summer Institutes, also are projected to hit new record highs. Kudos to the Office of Adult and Continuing Education for their outstanding work in this area.

As I leave my position for new adventures in retirement, I do so in the knowledge that I am leaving with the College of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning in a position of strength and success. Thank you all for your support over the years, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

Until we meet again,

James A. Delle, Ph.D.
Outgoing Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning

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Millersville
University

Congratulations

WINTER 2023 GRADUATES



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



Dr. A. Nicole Pfannenstiel

Dr. A. Nicole Pfannenstiel, graduate coordinator for English & World Languages, led efforts to openly publish “Inclusive Practices: Ideas for Classroom Integration From

Millersville Classrooms to Yours.” This peer-reviewed edited collection was published as an Open Educational Resource (OER) to maximize access to and adoption of the teaching and learning practices discussed in the included chapters.

This resource is openly available here:

<https://oercommons.org/courses/inclusive-practices-ideas-for-classroom-integration-from-millersville-classrooms-to-yours>.

This OER includes a range of interdisciplinary classroom practices to support inclusive course design. This OER also includes definition chapters to build a context for diversity, equity, inclusion and reflective teaching as pedagogical approaches to remixing the inclusive practices discussed.



Dr. Joe Behun

Dr. Joe Behun, graduate coordinator for School Counseling was named Counselor Educator of the Year by the Pennsylvania School Counselors Association. This honor is awarded to individuals who have dedicated

themselves to instructing, training and mentoring students preparing to become school counselors. The award recognizes their efforts and rewards them for the commitments they have demonstrated for preparing students to help others in the profession of school counseling.



Dr. Jennifer (Jinni) Meehan

Adjunct faculty **Dr. Jennifer (Jinni) Meehan** has been the developer and primary instructor for our course Space Weather Decision Support as part of the graduate certificate in Space Weather, Environment and Policy offered at

Millersville. Dr. Meehan has started a one-year special position detailing to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy as Assistant Director for Space Policy until February 2025.



GRADUATE STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS



Brianne (Bri) Hurst

While working as a graduate assistant for the Vilas A. Prabhu Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) during the fall 2023 and spring 2024 semesters, Social Work MSW student **Brianne (Bri) Hurst** served as a coeditor for the Open Educational Resources (OER) “Inclusive Practices: Ideas for Classroom Integration From Millersville Classrooms to Yours.” Through this opportunity, Bri not only gained experience coediting an academic publication, but she also applied several social work core values (including social justice, importance of human relationships,

competence, service) as part of her work. In supporting a publication centered around “social justice” and inclusive practices, she emphasized the “importance of human relationships” by providing comments to the chapter authors as they revised. In her work as coeditor, she not only demonstrated “competence” in successfully transferring her classroom learning practices, but she also embodied “service” as she built editorial skills and experiences that will help her in her future working as a social worker. To see the full volume, and the results of Bri’s work, visit <https://oercommons.org/courses/inclusive-practices-ideas-for-classroom-integration-from-millersville-classrooms-to-yours>.



Dylan Boas

Dylan Boas, school counseling student, presented an educational session titled “Student Wellness and the School Counselor: How to Implement Wellness Coaching Strategies and Techniques for ALL Students” at the Pennsylvania School Counselors Association 68th Annual Conference in the Poconos, Pennsylvania.



Eva Tice

Eva Tice, school counseling student, presented her poster titled “The Identity of the Professional School Counselor and How It Differs From Other Related Fields” at the Pennsylvania School Counselors Association 68th Annual Conference in the Poconos, Pennsylvania.



Becca Betty, Dr. A. Nicole Pfannenstiel and Heather Verani.

Planning and coordinating a conference require an immense amount of work. The planning committee works to balance venue and space needs, coordinate schedules and food, anticipate the expected and unexpected needs of attendees, and ensure faculty attendees learn and engage with conference ideas. During the fall 2023 and spring 2024 semesters, English MA graduate assistants **Becca Betty** and **Heather Verani** served as committee members on the Lancaster Learns planning committee, experiencing and supporting this complex work. As part of this work, Becca and Heather collaborated with faculty and instructional designers from universities across Lancaster County to host Lancaster Learns 2024 at HACC Lancaster, supporting before and during the conference. In addition to their support for the coordination, they attended the keynote address and various research presentations during the conference. To see more information on the conference they helped organize and offer, see <https://www.lancasterlearns.com>.

GRADUATE HIGHLIGHTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RECENT ED.D. GRADUATES!



Dr. Travis Peck

Elementary Principal,
Newberry Elementary School,
West Shore School District

"The Perceptions of Elementary School Principals on Maintaining a Positive School Climate During Teacher Turnover"



Dr. Theresa Jackson

Principal,
Valley View Elementary,
York Suburban School District

"The Cost of Caring: An Analysis of Teacher Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, Compassion Satisfaction, and Resilience"



Dr. Luther Green

Principal,
Central Dauphin
East High School

"Obstacles or Opportunities: The Perceptions of Recent Graduates of Color Attending a Suburban Educational Environment"



Dr. Alexis Wertz

Principal, Tri-Community
Elementary School,
Central Dauphin School District

"Principal Coaching and School Climate: A Phenomenological Study"



Dr. Jill Freedman

Assistant Professor and
Coordinator, Master's in Educational
Leadership, School of Education
at Florida Southern University

"Crisis Communication During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study of a K-12 Public School District"



Dr. Tommy Henley

Head of Schools –
KIPP Public Charter Schools

"Breaking the Circumstance: Key Factors Influencing Latino Male Aspirations for a Four-Year College Degree"



Dr. Kenesta Mack

Regional Director of
Special Education,
Commonwealth Charter Academy

"A Narrative Inquiry: Perceptions of High School Seniors With Autism of Their Involvement in IEP Meetings in a Cyber Charter School Environment"



Dr. Doug Enders

Assistant Superintendent,
Eastern York School District

"Growth Mindset: An Elementary School's Effort to Prevent Fixed Thinking During the Middle School Years"

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

FROM THE PERSONAL TO THE POLITICAL

Most people hear “social work” and think about careers in human services agencies and working with children, teens and adults in a myriad of areas, from child welfare to skill development, to mental health care, to elder care. All great populations and issues that need attention.

But have you heard of “political social work”? Political social work is an area of social work practice that is receiving more attention in the profession and is of growing interest to our students. Political social work involves working with local, state or federal legislators to enact changes that affect many people compared to the more familiar one-on-one client work.

One such student is MSW student Patricia Maila (MSW '24; BASW '19), who is completing her specialization year practicum in the office of State Representative Smith-Wade-El (D-49th). In her practicum with Rep. Smith-Wade-El, Patricia is involved in supporting community members in identifying and resolving their needs. For example, Pennsylvania is increasing access to rental relief, and constituents call the representative's office asking how they can

receive this benefit. In this way, political social work can feel much like direct practice social work, as Patricia analyzes a person's needs and determines the best solution. But political social work can also include a deep dive into understanding state agencies and state policies that either help constituents or, at times, drive them crazy with a lack of responsiveness. In this way, Patricia advocates for constituents by making the system work better for them. And, finally, political social work is about creating the future. What policy, programs or services do the Commonwealth and the representative's constituents need? What data is needed so the representative can introduce or support legislation to make Pennsylvania work for all residents, especially those who often are overlooked or left out? Patricia is working with Representative Smith-Wade-El on an affordable housing task force.

The strength of political social work is that program and policy development is approached from a more inclusive lens, and decisions are not made on a simple cost-benefit basis that often neglects to ask who is it costing, what is it costing them, and who benefits? Political social work is about growing the political power of all community members, with special attention to underrepresented groups and constituencies, and maybe even running for elected office. Patricia may not decide to run for elected office, but she is off to an important and strong start in using her social work skills to make Pennsylvania a better place to live and work.



State Rep. Smith-Wade-El; Secretary Dr. Val Arkoosh; Patricia Maila, MU SW grad; Vanessa Philbert, Community Action Association of Pennsylvania, Chief Executive Officer.

Patricia stated, “Among many legislative issues that Representative Smith-Wade-El pursues, and one that I have a passion, for is affordable housing and addressing homelessness. Through this practicum experience, I have been working closely in a legislative group on homelessness, writing funding letters of support for community organizations and partners in need of finances to address needs that have been recognized in the community, most specifically for marginalized and ethnic populations. I have been exposed to many organizations in the Lancaster County area and have had the opportunity to meet with CEOs, founders, agency department heads and other elected officials. I now have an interest in reading policy, when last year at this time I was intimidated to look at legislation. I have been able to have one-on-one time with constituents in the district office and at community outreach events. I have had well-rounded exposure to micro, mezzo (community and organizations” and macro (policy) social work practice.

“I developed an interest in working with Representative Smith-Wade-El because I needed to challenge myself. I did not want my internship at the master's level to be easy or something I have already done and developed skills in. The district office environment was different and necessary for my growth, I am thankful I challenged myself.”



Holiday district office retreat, winter2023 – office staff (Patricia is front left).



Visiting MU, winter2023 – district office retreat – office staff.

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

MARVELOUS MARAUDER



Amber Liggett

Amber Liggett (M.S. Emergency Management alum 2020) celebrates Black History Month by honoring those who came before her while also looking to the future. She is passionate about connecting with younger audiences and teaching them how to prepare for natural hazards. Watch full video [here](#).

Amber was also honored as a **Marvelous Marauder** in 2023. Amber's personal motto: "Always be yourself, and put your best foot forward."

GIFTED ENDORSEMENT

Patrice Semicek and **Amy Davis McShane** earned their Gifted Endorsements from MU in 2021 and currently serve as gifted liaisons for the Pennsylvania Department of Education. They were instrumental in securing a \$3.5 million grant to develop systemic support for closing the excellence and achievement gap in Pennsylvania. Dr. Charlton Wolfgang, coordinator of the Gifted Education graduate programs, asked them to provide a brief write-up about the significance of this initiative. They shared the following information about this impactful grant:



Patrice Semicek



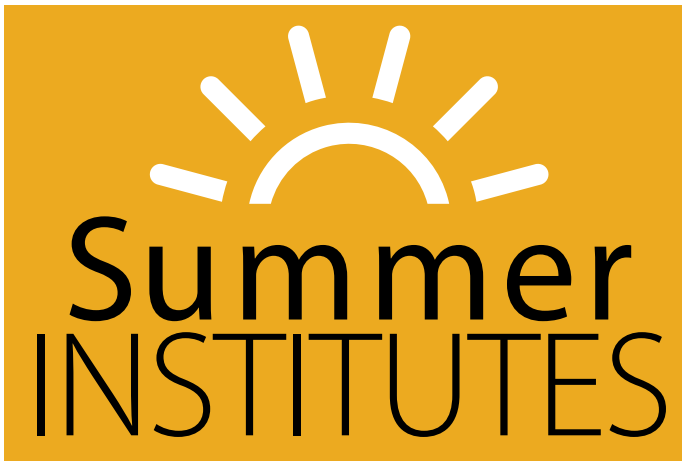
Amy Davis McShane

The Gifted in PA team of Shirley Moyer, Patrice Semicek and Amy Davis McShane is thrilled to share the news of Pennsylvania securing a Jacob K. Javits Grant. Over the next five years, this funding will support research, training and resources aimed at empowering gifted educators to enhance the identification and retention rates of underrepresented students in gifted education.

In Pennsylvania, Chapter 16 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code (22 Pa. Code Ch. 16) outlines the guidelines for school districts to fulfill their obligations to students in need of gifted services. As part of this commitment, school districts are tasked with identifying potentially gifted children in the community who could benefit from enrichment or acceleration. While regulations are in place, the laws provide districts with the flexibility to make local decisions regarding how they identify gifted students.

The Pennsylvania Gifted Equity Initiative, a key undertaking of this project, is designed to equip school districts with the necessary tools, training and resources to implement effective identification procedures. The primary goal is to increase the identification of culturally, linguistically and economically disadvantaged students. Presently, only 3.2% of Pennsylvania's public school students are identified as gifted, with 68% of those students being white. This initiative seeks to address this imbalance and foster a more inclusive and equitable gifted education system in the state.

FEATURES



SUMMER INSTITUTES PROGRAMMING FOR 2024

The College of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning is pleased to offer **Summer Institutes** for working education professionals. These three-credit graduate courses can be applied to certain graduate programs offered at Millersville and offer 90 hours of Act 48 credits for educators. Millersville's Summer Institutes are designed to provide quality instruction, knowledgeable speakers, and strategies to take back to your school or workplace.

Summer Institutes are scheduled for one week of intensive studies, with some preparatory assignments and final projects on a more flexible calendar. We have 14 institutes planned for 2024, including our popular **Literacy Institute (RDED 630)**, Expressive Arts Institute (SOWK 641) and Trauma Institute (SCCN 586).

Registration is open now!

RDED 630: SUMMER READING INSTITUTE

Dr. Pauline Schmidt | Dr. Matthew Krager-Ross | Grace Choi | Rasheeda Jones

24-28 JUNE | **8AM to 4:30PM**
Online and F2F Options Available

“WHAT IF THEY WON'T WRITE?”

Writing is such an important skill which can reinforce foundational literacy, critical thinking, and reading skills. But what if our students have had negative experiences that keep them from writing, are unsure how to start writing, or lack confidence to grow into the writer they could be? This summer institute will focus on a plethora of ways to engage, motivate, and entice students to write for all types of purposes. Our diverse speakers will focus on social-emotional, academic, idea generation, and encouraging ideas for teachers to use in the classroom to break the cycle of fear and avoidance of writing. Enjoy engaging speakers, hands-on activities, and relevant assignments and readings to help you incorporate the concepts covered during the course into your teaching in the upcoming school year (K-8).

REQUIRED TEXT

- The Responsive Writing Teacher
- poetry pauses
- Reimagining Literacies in the Digital Age

FACILITATOR

Dr. Aileen Hower
Graduate Coordinator
MEd in Language & Literacy
aileen.hower@millersville.edu

Millersville University

NEW TOPICS FOR 2024 ...

EDFN 586 AI (Artificial Intelligence) in Education.

Gather strategies and suggestions for incorporating emerging artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in the PK-12 classroom.

GFED 686 Empowering Gifted Learners.

Learn strategies on how to create authentic learning opportunities in the classroom, connecting curriculum to real-life learning to empower gifted learners for success.

EDFN 589 Watershed Education.

Spend a week expanding your watershed education knowledge and pedagogy while canoeing on the Conestoga River.

EDUC 586 Elementary Engineering.

Helping elementary teachers meet the new Pennsylvania Science, Technology & Engineering, Environmental Literacy & Sustainability (STEELS) standards with hands-on/ minds-on activities.

For more information, including a full list of institute topics with meeting dates, please visit the **Summer Institutes** web page.

Many institutes have content appropriate for teachers of any grade or subject, and several are also open to administrators and other professionals working with children and families, including social workers and school counselors.

Institutes begin the week of June 10 to June 14 and wrap up with the final week of offerings from July 29 to Aug. 2. Institute course formats vary from in-person, blended or hybrid options to fully online learning. Low-cost, on-campus housing opportunities are available for most weeks.

Contact Barbara Havercamp, Director of Adult Learning and Continuing Education, with any questions.

barbara.havercamp@millersville.edu | 717-871-7641

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION

Examine the power and possibilities of
generative artificial intelligence (GenAI)!

JUNE 24 - 28, 2024

EDFN 586.01 9:00 - 4:00 PM

Discover how GenAI can enhance learning experiences and engage students through hands-on exploration and practical applications.

This is a blended course with online and face-to-face instruction.



**FOR MORE
INFORMATION CONTACT**

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