

the challenge

Magazine of The Center for Gifted Studies



TWO LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR GIFTED CHILDREN IN KENTUCKY

The coming legislative session in Kentucky begins in January, and there are two important points that need your support – increasing gifted education funding to \$25 million and securing legislation to establish the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky in statute.

In September, the Kentucky Board of Education set raising the state budget for gifted education to \$17.1 million as a top priority. The budget for

gifted education had been stuck at \$7 million since the late 1980s. You can download the White Paper on Gifted Education at www.wku.edu/kage (it provides the rationale for the increased funding and tells how it will be used).

The Gatton Academy is off to an exceptional inaugural year, and what is needed is to establish the Academy in law. As the legislative session gets underway in January, please check the websites [www.wku.edu/gifted

and www.wku.edu/academy] for the specific bill number of the Academy legislation (the bill number will not be available until the legislation is introduced).

Please talk with your representatives and senators about the importance of including \$25 million in the 2008-2009 education budget and passing legislation to officially authorize the Gatton Academy. Legislators respond most favorably to the people who vote for them, their constituents. Schedule a personal visit or write a personal letter. Your message will be important to gifted education and the Gatton Academy.

DEAR FRIENDS OF THE CENTER FOR GIFTED STUDIES,

The fifty-year anniversary of the launching of Sputnik has been observed. The centennial year of Western Kentucky University has been celebrated, and The Center for Gifted Studies has moved beyond the quarter-of-a-century mark. All three anniversaries are important in this discussion of talent development. The first event highlights the critical need for continuing talent development while the next two events provide a means.

What are the essentials that must be in place for talent to develop? There are three such essentials if talent is to develop to a top level. At each stage of talent development, The Center for Gifted Studies can play a role.

The first point is that a child must have opportunities to discover her interests. No professional basketball player springs out of nowhere; there is a time that he picks up a basketball. The same is true about other interests that can be developed into talents whether they are an area of chemistry, a medium in art, or an aspect of political science. First, a young person must have an opportunity to engage in learning in that area that potentially could set the path for a passion for learning and, potentially, a career.

Next the young person must have opportunities to develop skill and to learn the content of the potential talent area. Children will learn basic skills and content from teachers who care a lot about the topic they are teaching. Interest is contagious. A Super Saturdays teacher who is fascinated with rockets, a SCATS teacher who loves and is talented in ceramics, or a teacher in VAMPY who is a fabulous writer may be just the individual to spark young people to pursue that interest and hone skills required for developing talent.

Finally, talent requires opportunities to progress to the next level of expertise. A person who wants to develop a talent to a top level will spend a great deal of time with a mentor or teacher working on aspects of the talent. Talents never develop to an advanced level without a lot of time and effort. Specific feedback is essential for techniques to continually improve. Opportunities to learn must be pursued. One such opportunity is a VAMPY class that allows learning about a specific topic of interest, a topic that may not be available for study in the school for some time. The Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky provides another opportunity to specialize as a student can engage in research in an area of interest.

Friends of The Center are key supporters of talent development. Gifts to The Center provide financial assistance to children who

could not participate in programs without that help. A gift from a Friend of The Center can create a new program for young people, perhaps with a focus on leadership or engineering or any other area of interest to the Friend. Friends "spread the word" about opportunities offered by The Center to parents of potential participants and to potential participants themselves. Remember, an opportunity is not an opportunity until you know about it! Thank you for being a Friend of The Center for Gifted Studies.

Sincerely,



Julia Link Roberts
Mahurin Professor of Gifted Studies



Letter from Julia

Plan to Celebrate 25 Years of SCATS and VAMPY

Next summer we will celebrate this quarter-of-a-century milestone. Details are not yet available, but please check the website for The Center for the date, time, etc. Please make sure that we have updated addresses for you and friends you made at SCATS and VAMPY!

the challenge

Editor/Writer
TRACY INMAN
Designer
MARCUS DUKES

SCATS TURNS 25!

In the early years, it was known as Academic Camp or Summer Camp. Later, it evolved into the Summer Camp for Academically Talented Middle School Students. Later the young people began calling the two-week summer experience SCATS, and the name stuck. Whatever the name, the campers knew it – and know it – as a place of challenge, acceptance, and learning.

In 1983, SCATS originated as a practicum for teachers working towards an endorsement in gifted education. SCATS provided the opportunity for educators to work with real gifted children – a chance to put theory into action. Still a practicum for teachers, it is also a hands-on, minds-on learning opportunity for young people who are gifted and talented. This past summer, SCATS' 25th year, 152 young people came from 66 Kentucky school districts and 10 states.

No matter which decade you attended, SCATS made a lasting impact!



To me The Center means opportunity. The opportunity to stretch your mind. The opportunity to meet other people who have the same goals as you and look at things the way you do. The opportunity to form friendships that allow you to pick up right where you left off, even if you haven't seen the other person in years. I have truly enjoyed my four years with The Center, both at SCATS and VAMPY. I have taken classes

as varied as Fairy Tale Writing and Forensics, Spanish and Paper Making. The Center has helped me and others widen our horizons and opened new opportunities for all of us. The Center truly offers many life changing opportunities.

CAT SMITH of Corbin, KY
(SCATS 2003, 2004, & 2005;
VAMPY 2006)
Carol Martin Gatton Academy
of Mathematics and Science in
Kentucky student

SCATS is one of my fondest and most influential memories. Just that short period of time experiencing a different educational style, different classes, and being exposed to new concepts really made a difference in how I perceived things like college and possible career paths. Some of the things I remember most clearly are the day-to-day dorm and college things we did, giving me a glimpse of what it would be like, and things like constructing geometric shapes in math that showed up later in high school geometry and college-level math courses. SCATS was a great primer for what came next in life while still being fun and exciting.

LEE COURSEY of Russellville, KY
(SCATS 1994)
Russellville Dental Lab, technician
and marketing coordinator

I was in our first year of camp; now it's 25 years later, and it's really grown, really touched a lot of kids' lives. When you're here with a lot of other interested kids, you almost feel as if you can be yourself for the first time. I still remember a lot of the campers from when I was 12. Some of them I still keep in touch with.

JOE NAPIER of Bowling Green, KY
(SCATS 1983; SCATS &
Super Saturdays Instructor)
Span Tech, production manager

Do You Remember?

- Checking in on a hot Sunday afternoon?
- Having "mandatory fun"?
- Crazy but wonderful counselors?
- Learning and laughing in four challenging classes?
- Playing ultimate frisbee in the quad by the dorms in the evening?
- The long walk "up the hill" for classes?
- The trip to Opryland and getting drenched on the flume ride or riding the Wabash Cannonball?
- Dancing to "It's the End of the World as We Know It"?
- The talent show?
- Learning to juggle?
- Creating paper costumes and props for paper theater?
- Wearing your camp name tag and adding a new Big Red (or Shmoo) each year?
- Bowling on the 4th floor of DUC?
- Playing volleyball outside Gilbert Hall?
- Enjoying cookouts on Sunday evenings?
- Swimming at Diddle or the Preston Center?
- Dressing up for the final dinner?
- Doing laundry Sunday afternoons?
- Leaving camp every summer thinking about what a great experience you've had and how much you were going to miss all of the friends you made?

2007 Presidential Scholar David Tao Reports for WFPL

This summer, David Tao (SCATS 2000 to 2001; VAMPY 2002 to 2005) from Bardstown, KY, reported for Louisville's public radio station WFPL on his week in Washington, D. C., where he was honored as a Presidential Scholar. What follows are excerpts from his piece.

It's late June in Washington, D. C., and the Indian Treaty Room of the Eisenhower Building is filled with an energetic crowd. They are waiting for Margaret Spellings, the U. S. Secretary of Education. Six representatives of the audience are about to brief Spellings on technology trends in American schools, but they aren't lobbyists or representatives of some large educational firm. These teenagers just graduated from high school and are the 141 presidential scholars for 2007. This is the program's National Recognition Week where scholars attend recitals, receptions, and ceremonies honoring their achievements.

Established in 1964 by an executive order from Lyndon Johnson, the Presidential Scholars Program recognizes the nation's top high school seniors. Based on ACT and SAT scores, the initial selection process identifies 2600 academic candidates who represent each state, D.C., Puerto Rico, and Americans abroad. At least two scholars are selected from every jurisdiction. Each of the semifinalists completes a packet of essays and an activities questionnaire to further narrow down the pool.

This year 121 students are academic scholars. The other 20 scholars specialize in the arts: poetry, sculpture, painting, and music. They're nominated by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts.



During a visit to the White House grounds, the scholars were greeted by President George W. Bush. A few photographs with the Commander-in-Chief, and the group is ushered back inside for a press conference. The President called the scholars an exceptional group. The

informal conversation among scholars includes research breakthroughs.

Many scholars took advantage of high school extracurriculars. Nearly all were involved in leadership organizations and community service. Some academic all-stars played double duty as varsity athletes.

On the last day, the group attends a panel discussion on ethics and morality. Scholars are encouraged to make a positive difference in the lives of others. While the Presidential Scholars Program honors academic and artistic achievement, it also hopes to educate scholars on moral responsibility. It isn't difficult to highlight the pessimistic aspects among America's youth. Schools still face sky-high dropout rates. Drug abuse, violence, and other deplorable activities continue to plague the nation's youngest adults. Those issues, however, take a back seat as these students connect and learn from their experiences. Watching the scholars listen closely to speakers emphasizing selfless service gives a different attitude toward today's youth, a sense of hope for the future.

For WFPL, I'm David Tao, 2007 Kentucky Presidential Scholar.

NOW A FRESHMAN AT HARVARD, David Tao has had a long relationship with The Center: SCATS 2000 to 2001; VAMPY 2001 to 2005. This relationship has played an important role in his life as he reflects: "The Center for Gifted Studies was vital in my development as a student and young adult. Through SCATS and VAMPY, I was able to connect with other students who shared my interests in a comfortable and welcoming setting. I'll always remember my summers at WKU fondly. There is nothing quite like in-depth study during the day followed by amazingly fun and interesting activities at night with some of the nation's top young minds. Even better, there are always people to remind you of your own special talents and abilities. The counselors, teachers, TAs, and program staff are supportive and helpful throughout each experience and program. I met many of my closest friends through The Center, friends I plan to keep for the rest of my life. My social skills have Center programs to thank for their development, and I am better able to interact with diverse groups of people because of my participation in the programs."

The other important relationship in his life that has influenced him greatly is his mother, Dr. Marilee Benson, a great friend to The Center: "I would love to thank my mother for her wonderful support throughout my life and especially throughout my career as a student. I wouldn't have been able to do any of it without her emotional support."

For more information about Presidential Scholars, go to www.presidentialscholars.org.

Imagine a world where the importance of Gross National Happiness far outweighs the importance of Gross National Product; a world that has been virtually isolated from the outside, nestled in the southern slopes of the Himalayas, bounded by Tibet and India; a world that fully embraces the peaceful principles of Buddhism; a world that carefully limits the number of tourists to preserve its unique culture; a world that viewed television for the first time in 1999. This place, Bhutan, is indeed a world unto itself. With only three-quarters of a million people, most of them living in rural areas and half unable to read or write, this Land of the Thunder Dragon is a place where “the people work harder and laugh heartily and propagate peace” (www.kingdomofbhutan.com).

Now imagine this world transported to the small town of Cadiz in western Kentucky, known as the gateway to the Land Between the Lakes. How was it transported? Through two world travelers and art patrons Janine and Ben Cundiff (Ben also serves on our Board of Advisors). The Cundiffs, along with Judy and Joe Barker, loaned their personal collections from Bhutan to the Janice Mason Art Museum. They also brought world-renown Thangka painter Phurba Namgay and his wife, Linda Leaming, from Bhutan to Kentucky in order for them to work and learn and paint for a year. Through the Cundiffs’ generosity, the VAMPY Humanities class was able to take a trip around the world in an hour-and-a-half van ride.

Now imagine the ultimate museum experience – one where locked cases are opened and treasures passed around; one where the creator of the art answers question after question after question; one where the docents (Ben and Linda) tell interesting stories about the pieces with humor and insight; one where unfinished canvases are unrolled and explained; one where good karma can be earned through the physical turning of the prayer wheel -- and one that ends with a lovely lunch at Lake Barkley State Park, compliments of the Cundiffs!



THE CENTER TRAVELS TO BHUTAN

(VIA CADIZ, KY!)

Experience that world through the eyes of the VAMPY campers who traveled there:

Since I live in eastern Kentucky, there aren't many opportunities to view international arts and items. I enjoyed it thoroughly because I've always been fascinated with different cultures, especially cultures like that of Bhutan which are still so pure.

Steven Maddox of Richmond, KY
VAMPY 2006 & 2007

I was amazed by the exquisite detail and colors of the paintings. I was even more amazed when you said you made all of your own paints and brushes (one cat hair!). I couldn't even begin to imagine the dedication and patience you had put into it and all of your other artwork.

Laura Fisher of Frankfort, KY
SCATS 2006 & 2007; VAMPY 2007

I also enjoyed the various silk weavings. I think it is just mesmerizing to imagine how all the dyes are natural. The way the color is vibrant but yet subdued is extremely captivating. But perhaps my favorite part was the stories and observations of this faraway culture.

Marietta Jo Miller of Louisville, KY
VAMPY 2007

A very special thank you goes to Ben and Janine Cundiff for making this trip possible for the VAMPY Humanities class – and for bringing such wonderful treasures to Kentucky!

“Fourth-years.” If the term confused you, realize that the language is just part of the VAMPY experience. Young people who are gifted and talented and earn qualifying scores on the ACT or SAT as seventh graders are eligible to come to VAMPY four years – from a rising eighth-grader to a rising junior. VAMPY campers have created terminology to describe their fellow campers. To explain: a fourth-year is someone who is a rising junior, so it's the last year she's eligible for camp. So a first-year, then, is someone who is attending camp for the first time. Second-years are coming for the second time and so on. Now it gets complicated as we combine actual year of attendance with year of eligibility. For example, a first-year fourth-year is a first time camper who only comes the last year of eligibility. A fourth-year fourth-year is a camper who has come all four years he was eligible. A third-year fourth-year is someone who has come to VAMPY for three years but is a rising junior, so it's the last year

she is able to come. Yes, it's a bit confusing, but ask any VAMPY camper. He can readily tell you what he is. (Remember, they are gifted!!)



Tradition is also part of the VAMPY experience with one of the most important being the banquet the last night of the three weeks. This night campers magically transform into well-dressed, coiffed young men and ladies (but, of course, they change clothes before the dance, slide show, and cookout that follow). The highlight of the banquet is the fourth-years giving their speeches. This is open to all fourth-years whether he is a second-year fourth-year or a fourth-year fourth-year.

How do VAMPY campers feel about the experience? Read what the fourth-years had to say.

The complete speech of Seung-Yen Park, a fourth-year fourth-year from Tennessee, follows. Read, too, part of what other fourth-years had to say.

In Their Own Words

FOURTH-YEARS REFLECT ON THE **VAMPY** EXPERIENCE



Corey Aldridge



SEUNG-YEN PARK of Collierville, TN
(VAMPY 2004, 2005, 2006, & 2007)

First of all, I would like to dedicate my fourth-year speech to Corey's iPhone, which is awesome (and by awesome, I mean totally sweet). That may seem like an awkward sentence to begin a speech, but it embodies what VAMPY is: Corny inside jokes, amazing counselors, and, most of all, a very special network of friends.

When I first stepped on the campus of Western, I was an extremely shy first-year first-year, awfully scared of being at a nerd camp. Everyone seemed to know each other, and I was afraid that I wouldn't quite fit in. But by the end of the first week of VAMPY as a first year, I completely discovered my place at camp. I would not have returned if it wasn't for my group and class that year. So now I stand as a fourth-year fourth-year, a proud veteran of Paper Theatre, Talent Show, 4th Floor DUC, Preston, and crazy VAMPY dances. I call on you younger campers to continue these traditions and to make priceless memories at camp.

VAMPY has both opened my eyes to a whole new world and has brought me so much joy. I have learned that intellectual debates are exciting and that I have a place among the gifted individuals

who will change the world. I would like to extend my gratitude to my teachers (Dr. Hagaman, Captain Anne, Mrs. Lanham, and Mrs. Inman), my TAs (Bernie, Lindy, Catherine, and Meribeth), my counselors (Sarah, Stephanie, Paige, and Ashley), and Dr. Roberts for making VAMPY such a precious experience. Thank you also to my roomies (Mary, Tara, and Merideth), the Asian Invasion Posse, and the ERS Royalties. Trust me, only at VAMPY can you become a queen because of your reflexes. You all made camp something to look forward to each summer. Thank you to all the past and present campers who ever took the time to say hi or even just smiled. I'll stop the list here since I know it will go on forever if I tried to list everyone who has had a positive impact on my life.

But this is what VAMPY is: creating a world in which intellect can be exercised and potential can be reached. At VAMPY, I discovered this new world. At VAMPY, I found my identity. At VAMPY, I learned that happiness is a journey, not a destination. So I'd like to end my speech with a piece of wisdom from Alfred D'Souza:

"Work like you don't need money, love like you've never been hurt, and dance like no one's watching."

CHASE BARCLAY of St. Louis, MO
(VAMPY 2004, 2005, 2006, & 2007)

But most of all, thank you VAMPY for the most unforgettable 12 weeks of my life.

DANIELLE BUEDE of Hebron, KY
(VAMPY 2004, 2005, 2006, & 2007)

It's a three-week haven that can be so perfect that I sometimes forget I have a life away from here the other 49 weeks of the year.

DYLAN GRIGGS of Boaz, KY
(VAMPY 2004, 2005, 2006, & 2007)

First-years: Come back. It's the best choice you will ever make. Also, don't be shy at VAMPY. No one here is going to judge you. Being outgoing is the best thing you can do to make your experience worthwhile. And if you plan on writing a fourth-year speech, start now. This is my 7th draft this year.

Fourth-years: Come back as TAs and counselors. VAMPY was built on the spirit inside of us and the best way to instill that passion in new campers is to come back and show them. I don't think I really have to tell any of you that though since you've come back year after year.

VIOLET MARTIN of Alexandria, TN
(VAMPY 2005, 2006, & 2007)

I think I learn more here in the three weeks than I do all year at school. I also feel closer to the people here than at school. We seem like a family. Everyone is accepted for who they are.

BROOKE ROBERTS of Louisville, KY
(VAMPY 2004, 2005, 2006, & 2007)

VAMPY is probably the only place I've seen so many different people come together and have no trouble getting along. I'm not afraid to be my slightly off, outgoing, crazy self here, and I hope that everyone here has realized that no matter who you are, you're accepted here.

GEORGE WOODARD of Bowling Green, KY
(SCATS 2004 & 2005; VAMPY 2006 & 2007)

I think we can all agree that we are better friends, students, and people for having been here, and that we have gained priceless friends and memories we won't soon forget.



Students and Young Educators Engage in Hands-on, Minds-on Learning at Super Saturdays

BY COREY ALDERDICE

Sitting in clumps of five and six at round tables, elementary students peer at each other through pieces of red and blue plastic. The promised effect isn't quite there. After all, they are already looking at people who are in 3-D. When the lights dim and they turn their attention to the screen at the front of the room, quiet gasps come from each corner along with shouts of "I can see it."

The paper glasses on their faces are part of a lesson on three-dimensional anaglyphs, part of the "Balloons, Tunes, and Ice Cream, Too" class during the fall 2007 session of Super Saturdays. In all, 600 students across the WKU campus were sharing similar experiences of hand-on, minds-on learning on a crisp November morning.

What makes this class different, though, are the five young teachers at the back of the room.

While their eager elementary students at the tables stare ahead in anticipation of the next slide, one can see a similar expression of rapt attention as they watch science in action. Even more so, they are watching a new generation of budding scientists come into their own.

The class, which serves as a practicum for science teaching methods, is directed by Mr. Rico Tyler. The goal of the course is to provide student teachers with an opportunity to not only gain hands-on experience in a classroom setting, but also to work with young people who are gifted and talented. While learning more about what it is like to work with elementary students, these teachers also begin to appreciate the needs of the gifted student and what they contribute to the classroom.

Gifted students bring many needs to the classroom explains Angela McColpin, a senior middle grades education major. "When you have gifted students, you have so many needs that have to be met," Angela said. "My goal is to do something that will engage them...that will really interest them."



The 3-D glasses were the culmination of a morning of several experiments that included making root beer and miniature speakers out of film canisters and magnets. Craig Bristow, a senior middle grades education major who developed the speaker experiment, said his goal for the class was to help students draw their attention to everyday science. "I want it to be something they notice every day but don't see the smaller parts." Craig said. "These kids ask why, and I try to answer that and then give them the ability to reproduce it and clarify what they see."

Kari Ward, senior middle grades education major who works with both science and language arts, noted the heart of all learning, both scientific and artistic, is a deep and rich desire to ask questions. "I want these students to develop a

curiosity for everyday things," Kari said. "I hope they will take the knowledge we give them and come to appreciate the world around them."

Kari also noted that even though some people fail to see the connection between her two areas of interest, that the links are numerous. "For me, the two

ideas have always gone together. You can incorporate the two subjects through experiments, writing, and seeing the links that exist." These connections come in the students' ability to shape their questions as they relay back what they observed in the experiments.

For these young teachers, many of whom were in charge of a classroom for the first time, believe this kind of experience is an opportunity to synthesize what they learn in the classroom in a comfortable environment.

"There's no pressure in this kind of environment," Kari said. "It's a great opportunity for both the students and us to learn together."

Several of the other teachers echoed her thoughts, noting the practical experience is always rewarding. "No matter what your instructors teach you about being in a classroom, nothing beats the experience of actually being in a class with students," Craig said through a chuckle.

Courtney Loftis, a biology graduate who is now pursuing teacher certification, shared that the experience has excited her about what is ahead as an educator. "It's a unique opportunity to work with gifted kids," she said. "Working with students in Super Saturdays has made me see that being in the classroom is going to be awesome."

LESLEY ALLEN (SCATS 1992 and 1993) went to U of L to pursue a BS in Biology. Lesley graduated from Bellarmine University in 2004 with a Doctorate of Physical Therapy degree and has since been practicing as a Physical Therapist. She works for the Visiting Nurse Association – Nazareth Home Care Agency as a home health PT, which she truly loves. She and her husband of three years are expecting their first child.

"I often think of the wonderful memories made during these two summers at academic camp. I had a great time!"

JILLIAN SHULMAN ASHLEY (SCATS 1992 and 1993) graduated from Harvard Law School in June and is beginning her career as an attorney with the New York office of Allen & Overy LLP. Her focus will be on international transactions, particularly those involving China, where she hopes to have an opportunity to use the knowledge of China and the Chinese language that she gained in her undergraduate East Asian Studies program.

PETER BUDNY (VAMPY 1996, 1997, 1998, and 1999) earned a Bachelor's in Computer Science from Georgia Tech. Along the way he studied abroad in Japan for six weeks in a Japanese language program. After a brief stint in industry, he's returned to Georgia Tech as a PhD student, again in Computer Science. He's also been singing with the Glee Club at Tech and has traveled with them twice to participate in the Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities.

KATE CAROTHERS (SCATS 1991, 1992, and 1993) graduated from the University of Georgia in 2001 with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Major in Marketing. For the past three years, she has worked for Humana as a Government Business, Grievance & Appeals Specialist in Louisville, KY.

"I still keep in touch with many of the people that I met during my time at WKU!"

PAUL CASEBOLT (SCATS 1992 and 1993) earned his BA in Corporate & Organizational Communication from Western Kentucky University in May 2002. He is currently pursuing a Master's Degree of Public Administration from WKU with an expected completion in December 2008. In April of 2003, Paul took a position in the WKU Office of Admissions as an Admissions Counselor where he is employed as the Tour Coordinator. In June of 2006, Paul married

Amy who also works at WKU in the University Honors College. They live in Bowling Green.

JULIA CHRISTENSEN (SCATS 1989 and 1990) is a professor of New Media and Emerging Arts at Oberlin College, where she teaches in both the college and in the conservatory. She has a forthcoming book, *Big Box Reuse*, which will be published from MIT Press in 2008. She earned a BA in Integrated Arts from Bard College, an MFA at Mills College in Electronic Music and another MFA in Integrated Electronic Arts from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

REBECCA S. CHRISTENSEN (SCATS 1991, 1992, and 1993) graduated from the University of Louisville in 2001 with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Major Marketing. She currently works at Commonwealth Bank & Trust Company in Louisville as the Graphic Designer and Creative/Design Coordinator.

ALUMNI UPDATE

LEE COURSEY (SCATS 1994) received his Bachelor of Science in Business and Marketing from Murray State University. After graduation he worked for various computer and software companies before finally landing with Dell, Inc. in Nashville, TN. He was married in 2003 to Amanda, and their first child arrived in 2006. They moved back to their hometown of Russellville so that he could step in as third generation in his family's business, Russellville Dental Lab. There he both works as a technician and as marketing coordinator.

AARON DAVIES (SCATS 1992, 1993, and 1994; VAMPY 1994, 1995, and 1996) went to Columbia University and majored in computer engineering. He is currently working as a computer programmer for Bank of America in New York City.

JOHNNA ROETTEIS DEJARNETT (SCATS 1992) earned a BS in Marketing in 2001 and an MBA in 2005, both from Murray State. She is the Director of Finance for McCracken County Public Schools and lives in Paducah with her husband, Nick. She has a stepdaughter, Taylor, who is 9 years old.

I was just talking to my husband about that camp two nights ago. My mom still has some of the craft projects that we did, like the string art and the dodecahedron (or maybe something higher) with origami pieces of paper.

In 1994, **CHRISTIAN (ALEX) DUNCAN** (VAMPY 1985) graduated from Johns Hopkins University with a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science and Mathematical Sciences and a Master's degree in Computer Science. He then remained at Hopkins to pursue a doctorate in Computer Science. In 1999, after completion of his doctoral work, he spent a year as a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Max-Planck-Institut fuer Informatik in Germany. He accepted an Assistant Professor position at the University of Miami in 2000. He married Taryn in May of 2001, and the couple had their first child, Noah, in April of 2003. In September 2006, Alex accepted an Assistant Professor position at Louisiana Tech. They are now adjusting to the difference in life-style between the big, beach-loving, city of Miami and the small, land-locked, town of Ruston.

JAMIE GILLENWATER (VAMPY 1996 and 1997) currently lives in Santa Rosa, Argentina, where he teaches English Literature on a Fulbright Scholarship. He graduated summa cum laude from Vanderbilt in 2005 where he majored in English and Spanish and minored in Economics. After graduating he lived in Spain for a year teaching and playing rugby, and last year was selected to the United States National Rugby 7s team. He played tournaments on the IRB World Series circuit in New Zealand, San Diego, and Hong Kong for the U.S., and he is slated to play in Singapore, Dubai, and South Africa later this year.

I benefitted greatly from the programs and hope to see them continue to thrive and provide educational opportunities for Kentucky kids.

MANDY GOSSETT (VAMPY 1990 and 1991) graduated from Western Kentucky University with a degree in Marketing in 1999. After that, she spent time working in Public Relations and Marketing in Seattle, WA; Fresno, CA; and Cincinnati, OH. She currently serves as the Mar-

keting Communications Manager for Bullard, a manufacturer of industrial safety equipment, with offices in Cynthiana, KY; Germany, and Singapore. She resides in Cynthiana.

ELLEN HAGAN (SCATS 1993) is an actress, writer, and educator. Not only has she performed two solo shows, but she also co-founded and works with girlstory, a multi-cultural, multi-generational collective that creates choreopoems/stories that braid time, place, gender, ethnicity and society. Nominated for a Pushcart Prize, she was a finalist in the *BOMB* magazine fiction contest. Ellen holds an MFA in fiction from The New School University and a BFA in acting from the University of Kentucky. She has also studied both drama and playwriting at Goldsmiths University in England. As an educator, Ellen works as a teaching artist with Adelphi University, DreamYard, the Community~Word Project, and the Kentucky Governor's School for the Arts. She recently finished her first novel, *BLUSH*, which won the Next Great Writers Competition at the Carnegie Center of Lexington, Kentucky.

I loved the program when I went, and it was an incredible experience for me.

ASHLEY VINSEL HERD (SCATS 1993 and 1994) is a third-year law student at Emory in Atlanta. She will begin working as a labor and employment attorney in Fall 2008. She recently married in Asheville, NC.

LESLIE KENDRICK (Travel to London) clerks for Supreme Court Justice David Souter. After her term ends, she will begin her teaching career as an associate professor at the University of Virginia School of Law where she earned her law degree in 2006. This 1998 Rhodes Scholar won the prestigious Brown Award in 2006, a \$10,000 national prize for excellence in student legal writing for her article "A Test for Criminally Instructional Speech," published in the *Virginia Law Review*. In addition to her JD from UVA, she earned a PhD in English Literature from Oxford.

SARA ARNETT LAYNE (SCATS 1984, 1985, and 1986) has been married to Jason Layne from Barren County for over 11 years. They have two boys, Noah who is 6 years and Ethan who is 4. She lives in Tulsa, OK, where Jason owns a small trucking company. She is a stay-at-home mom and keeps busy with school and church activities.

Academic Camp-What fond memories! Those were some of the best summers ever.

BROCK MARRS (SCATS 1991, 1992, and 1993) graduated from Washington and Lee University in 2001 with a BS in Physics-Engineering. He received the Master's degree in Biomedical Engineering from UK in 2004 and completed the PhD in Biomedical Engineering at UK in 2007. Brock is currently working as a Postdoctoral Scholar at UK's Center for Applied Energy Research. He married Ravin Wright Marrs in October of 2006.

SOPHIA MITCHELL (SCATS 2005; VAMPY 2006 and 2007) won First Place Overall in the Physical Sciences and First Place in the category of Physics and Astronomy at the 2007 Kentucky State Science Fair. She was also awarded a full academic scholarship to the University of Louisville and the University of Kentucky. Sophia is the first female freshman at DuPont Manual to ever win the state science fair. She represented Kentucky and the nation at the International Science Fair in New Mexico last spring.

EMMA MURLEY (SCATS 1992, VAMPY 1994, and Russia 1994) has been named to the American Symphony Orchestra League's 2008 class of its Orchestra Management Fellowship Program, the country's premier leadership training program for orchestra administrators. She has been assigned to manage the Chamber Orchestra at the Aspen Music Festival, and her host orchestras will be Orange County's Pacific Symphony, Dayton Philharmonic, and Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. A graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy, Emma Murley earned a BM from Indiana University and master's degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music in trumpet performance. She also studied at the Glenn Gould School in Toronto and Vienna Conservatory. Emma has toured extensively with ensembles to China, Italy, and Japan.

TIFFANY LAUDERDALE PHILLIPS (SCATS 1991) earned a JD from Mercer University in 2002. She received a BA from the College of Charleston in 1999 majoring in English Literature with a minor in International Studies. Tiffany spent one semester abroad at Harlaxton College in England. She currently is an associate and member of the Fowler, Measle, & Bell PLLC's Litigation and Alternative Dispute Resolution Groups. Fayette District Court recognized her for outstanding service as mediator with a Certificate of Recognition in 2006. Tiffany is a member of the Executive Board of the Women Writers Conference and served as committee chair. She

married George Micajah Phillips five years ago; they live in Lexington with their two-year old daughter.

ANGELIA PICKETT-CHIRICHIGNO (SCATS 1992 and 1993) earned a BS from the University of Kentucky in Mechanical Engineering and attended Stanford University for graduate studies in Aerospace Engineering. From 2002-2006, she was a Captain in the United States Air Force, working as an Aerospace Engineer for the Missile Defense Agency's satellite programs. Although she lives in New York City with her husband, Jason, a medical school student, Angela is a consultant for Stephen Meyers & Associates, an aerospace and defense consulting firm based in southern California. She serves on the Veteran's Advisory Council for Kentucky Congressman Ron Lewis. As her website attests (www.artofangelia.com), Angelia is also an artist, with recent exhibitions in Los Angeles, CA; New York, NY; Seoul, South Korea; and Hamburg, Germany.

Please let me know if there is any way I can be of assistance to any of the programs at The Center for Gifted Studies. I have very fond memories of my time there, and I think it's wonderful to see all of your current progress. As an aerospace engineer I was thrilled to see a program in place for Kentucky students promoting math and science. I am very interested in this cause.

AMANDA NELSON RAGLE (SCATS 1991 and 1992) and her husband, Steven, are both physicians in Nashville, TN. She is completing her radiology residency at Vanderbilt. Both are Glasgow natives but met in medical school at the University of Kentucky. Their first child, Porter, was born in June.

AMY RENFRO SPELMAN (SCATS 1989) is Research Coordinator for MD Anderson Cancer Center where she focuses on pediatric cancer research and long-term survivors of childhood cancers. She earned a BS in Agricultural Biotechnology from UK in 1997, and from the University of Texas, School of Public Health, a Master's in Public Health in 2004 and a PhD in 2007. She and her husband live in Houston, TX.

CARSON THURMAN (SCATS 1990, 1991, and 1992) lives in Jackson, MS, where he is a second-year law student Mississippi College School of Law. He is in the top 10 and a member of law review. He also works part time at a small firm doing oil and gas litigation and criminal defense.

WITH THE FALL SEMESTER DRAWING TO A CLOSE, the Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky is quickly reaching the midpoint of its historic inaugural year. The semester began as 120 of Kentucky's brightest high school juniors and seniors from 61 counties watched during the August 23, 2007, dedication ceremony of the Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky; it was named in honor of business leader C.M. "Bill" Gatton.

"This residential program selects the state's brightest students, who have demonstrated interest in pursuing careers in science, mathematics, technology, and engineering," WKU President Gary Ransdell said. "The goal of the Gatton Academy is to enable Kentucky's most exceptional young minds to learn in a rigorous intellectual environment which offers advanced educational opportunities, preparing them for leadership roles in Kentucky. We are truly grateful to Mr. Gatton for his leadership support."

Through a leadership gift, Mr. Gatton, a businessman from Bristol, TN, with business interests in Kentucky, has created an endowment that will offer substantial programming opportunities for the new Academy. He said he is pleased to be giving back to Kentucky. "I like to support education," he explained, "and since I am a native of Kentucky, I am pleased to be supporting this new program. The subjects of math and science are so important, and the Academy will provide in-depth training in these programs for Kentucky high school students. The long-range results of this educational process should help to improve the Kentucky economy and enhance living standards of all its citizens."

The inaugural year of the Gatton Academy affords this first class of students the opportunity to leave a lasting impact on the program and establish traditions for years to come. "You all are what this is about," Speaker of the House Jody Richards said. "You're why this was even dreamed of in the first place. You are truly special people and a part of history."

John Max Wilson, an Academy senior from Hickman, shared the student's vantage on the great public and private support of the Gatton Academy. "Today is a day of celebration and the welcoming of a great adventure," John Max said. "We will be challenged. We will grow and change. And with your continued support, we students will one day assume leadership roles throughout the Commonwealth and the global community. When those bright days come, we will have each of you to thank once more."

More information about the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky is available online at www.wku.edu/academy.



Photos by Sheryl Hagan-Booth and Mollie Hannah



ACADEMY

NAMED IN HONOR OF EDUCATIONAL



DEDICATED

PHILANTHROPIST C.M. 'BILL' GATTON

Challenging the Gifted Child in the Classroom

Since children who are gifted and talented are gifted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, the main responsibility for providing services falls on all teachers: classroom and teachers of specialty areas such as art, music, and health. What occurs daily in the classroom can either challenge the child and provide continuous progress or stifle the child and lead to unfulfilled potential.

Most teachers don't have formal training in meeting the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted children. While ongoing, professional development is by far the best answer, consider the following ideas *Cliffs Notes* or *Spark Notes*.

For each unit ask yourself these basic questions leading to differentiation (Roberts & Inman, 2007):

1. **Planning Question** – What do I want students to know, understand, and be able to do?
2. **Preassessing Question** – Who already knows, understands, and/or can use the content or demonstrate the skill?
3. **Differentiation Question** – What can I do for him, her, or them so they can make continuous progress and extend their learning?

What can you do for them, so they can make continuous progress and extend their learning?

Compact the Curriculum

- Give credit for the concepts mastered in the preassessment. Then have the child participate in whole group instruction just on those concepts not mastered.
- While the class works on concepts the child has mastered, he works on the



Corey Alderice

same concepts/content but on HIGHER levels. This can take many forms: internet exploration on the topic, enrichment project, long-term independent study of the content, etc.

Individualize the Pace

- Allow the student to continue with the class content but at a faster pace than her peers. This entails working through the text more individually. Perhaps other students will join her.

Differentiate

Modify the content, process, or product for gifted children. Ideally you're doing this for all children, not just the exceptional ones. See *Strategies for Differentiating Instruction: Best Practices for the Classroom* (Roberts & Inman, 2007), for detailed explanation.

- Content: Bloom Chart; Think-Tac-Toe
- Process: Venn Diagrams; Bloom Chart; Think-Tac-Toe
- Product: Think-Tac-Toe

Accelerate

Nation Deceived: How America Holds Back Its Brightest Students (2003) holds compelling

arguments for acceleration. (Get your free copy at www.nationdeceived.org).

- **By Subject:** If a child has mastered all the content for a subject in the grade level, allow him to move to the next grade level in that subject. This may mean cooperating with another teacher or another school, or it may mean your teaching two levels.
- **By Grade:** If a child has mastered content for an entire grade, use the Iowa Acceleration Scale to determine if full grade skipping would be beneficial.

Contract for Independent Study

- If a student has mastered the content for a unit, she may contract with you for an independent study focused in the content area of mastery. Winebrenner (2001) has designed a practical contract stipulating conditions.
- Perhaps a student has mastered the content for the entire year. An independent study may work well. You could contract with that student for the next level (e.g., algebra for a sixth grade math student) or you could arrange a virtual course (e.g., Kentucky Virtual High School).

What else can you do to challenge the children who are gifted and talented in your classroom?

Group Them for Instruction

- Cluster Group: Take 4 to 8 children gifted in the same area and place them in the same class. Differentiate the curriculum. See Winebrenner & Devlin (1996) or Why Cluster Group? in *The Challenge* (Summer 2007).
- Flexibly Group by Ability or Readiness: Preassess, then group those high-end students together. Their task should differ from the other groups' tasks. Gifted kids need time with others who are like they are.
- Flexibly Group by Interest, Learning Style, and Multiple Intelligence: Group and regroup kids so children work with various groups. Of course, each group needs a different task (e.g., a visual learning group will learn about the solar system using a different process or product from a kinesthetic group). This not only differentiates for all kids, but it allows children to work with many other children.

Hold Them to High Standards

- One of the most damaging things for a student is to receive high grades and praise for work that takes little to no effort. See What a Child Doesn't Learn? in *The Challenge* (Winter 2007).
- High expectations must be two-fold: one, teachers must have high expectations for their students; and, two, students must have high expectations for themselves. Remember that young people become life-long learners when learning takes place through challenging tasks.
- Don't let your grading scale top out at proficiency. Many of these kids are already proficient in their areas of giftedness. Remove the learning ceiling.
- Use rubrics that are more sophisticated in the requirements. Hold them accountable. See *Strategies for Differentiating Instruction: Best Practices for the Classroom* (Roberts & Inman, 2007), for the innovative DAP Tool (Developing and Assessing Product Tool).

Provide Options for Practice

- Gifted students need less repetition for mastery. In drill and practice or homework, do not require all students to do all the work – perhaps you could assign different homework based on who already knows the material. You could give all students the option to work the number of problems necessary to learn the material. (If students try to do less than needed, then require those students to do all the problems.) You could give the option of students either working all the problems/answering all the questions (from least difficulty to greatest) or answering two very challenging questions. Most would choose the difficult ones.
- Some gifted students will not need to write the process out in their answers (e.g., steps to solve a math problem). It is a mental process where they just “know” the answer. They will reach a time that this is necessary. Do not penalize them when it's not necessary. Perhaps compromise with them and have them show their work for three of the ten problems.
- Some students will not need to do the homework in order to do well on the test. Be sure the homework is challenging and necessary – not just drill and practice.

What NOT to Do with the Gifted Child in Your Classroom

Do Not Give Them More Work! Give Them Different Work.

No one wants to do all the odd numbers of an assignment quickly just to be burdened with the even ones on top of it. No one wants to write a paper in addition to the project when everyone else just does the project. Soon no one will want to be gifted!

Do Not Use Them as Tutors.

Do not use a gifted child as a tutor for another child if your goal for each child is continuous progress in the content. If a student has mastered adding fractions and is partnered with someone struggling with that concept, the gifted student will

not learn more! She may improve her leadership skills (with your guidance) but not math. Occasionally pairing the two (if your goal for one is learning content and the goal for the other is developing social/communication skills) can be effective.

Do Not Expect Them to Be Gifted in All Areas.

Students may be exceptional in one or more areas. Just because a child is three grade levels ahead in math does not mean he is three grade levels ahead in reading. He may be right at grade level or even reading below grade level.

Do Not Expect Them to Get It on Their Own.

All children need guidance in their learning. Yes, gifted children seem to absorb information. Yes, they make connections others don't. Yes, they can readily comprehend materials. But in order to thrive and develop their talents, they need explanation, discussion, questioning.

Do Not Expect Them to Be Model Students.

Many gifted children have not been challenged in the classroom. For some of them their characteristics have been misunderstood as behavioral issues. Therefore, they have learned coping skills: boredom, sleep, disruption, being off task (e.g., reading a novel in math class), daydreaming, etc. Many have become underachievers. See Rimm (1996) for specific strategies to reverse underachievement.

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The Center Plays Strong Role in National Math and Science Initiative: ExxonMobil Corporation Provides Support

Kentucky Science and Technology Corporation (KSTC) is pleased to partner with the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) to create a new enterprise for expanding Advanced Placement (AP) courses in Kentucky and the number of Kentucky students from across the state taking and excelling on various math, science, and English AP exams. With the understanding that the NMSI model is based on the success of the Advanced Placement Strategies, Inc. (which has been successful in increasing both the number of AP participants and their scores in Texas), KY-NMSI will emulate its proven approach to learning. KSTC is uniquely positioned to both implement and help capitalize this new enterprise in collaboration with Kentucky's strong policy leaders and educational partners. Key partners in this new endeavor include the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, The Center for Gifted Studies at WKU, and the Partnership for Successful Schools – and other critical partners emerging over the next several years.

KY-NMSI is a dynamic coalition effort for ensuring a rigorous content-focused

mission, attracting top talent, creating a sound business infrastructure, adding a strong voice in public policies essential to reinforce the mission and strategies of the new enterprise, and infusing into Kentucky schools high expectations from the business community for advanced student achievements. See www.kstc.com/?665 for available materials.

Through extensive KDE data analyses, 41 schools representing more than 18,000 high school juniors and seniors in 26 geographically dispersed counties have emerged as the initial target schools for KY-NMSI. During the 07/08 start-up year, up to 25 of these schools will be selected through a “request for proposals” to begin initial training efforts during the summer of 2008. The Center for Gifted Studies at WKU will offer College Board-certified teacher training to address the professional development needs of selected target schools.

ExxonMobil's support for the National Math and Science Initiative is the most recent example of the company's

commitment to excellence in the fields of mathematics and science. The National Math and Science Initiative, Inc. is a non-profit entity, overseen by a board of eminent persons in the field of math and science education, created to raise funds and to facilitate the national scale-up of programs which have demonstrated improvement in math and science education in the U. S. ExxonMobil has committed \$125 million to this nationwide project. Kentucky was one of 7 six-year awards of up to \$13,200,000 announced in August. The Center is proud to play a role in this endeavor.

This initiative came from a recommendation in *Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future* (2007). This report emphasizes the need to increase high level learning in mathematics and science knowledge and skills. This learning must start early to create interest and develop talent. To see the full report, go to www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=11463.

Go to <http://nationalmathandscience.org> for more information.

VERTICAL TEAM TRAINING INSTRUMENTAL IN NMSI

In order to increase the number of Kentucky students taking AP classes and excelling on AP tests, students must have strong feeder or pre-AP courses that prepare them for the AP classes. It is also important that curricula build on main concepts yearly, avoiding overlap and skipping key ideas. For this to happen, teachers must be prepared. This is where the Vertical Team Institute comes in.

2007 was our 11th year to offer the Vertical Team Institute wherein teams of middle and high school teachers explore ways to build capacity for academic excellence in their schools. Separate sessions focus on English, mathematics, science, and social studies. Our numbers tripled this summer to 104. Participants represented 15 Kentucky school districts and 8 states.

In order to meet the goals of KY-NMSI, many schools will need to send teams of teachers to be trained to vertically align the curriculum and examine strategies to encourage high-level learning. With the generous gift from ExxonMobil to KY-NMSI, we fully expect to increase our numbers again. The dates for the 2008 Vertical Team Institute are July 7-10.

I was able to learn new techniques and at the same time get the time to collaborate with team members that I normally do not.

I work with exceptionally smart women!

—2007 Social Studies Vertical Team Participant

This workshop was superb – based on common sense and rigor.

—2007 English Vertical Team Participant

Gifted in High School: *What Does That Mean?*

BY JULIA ROBERTS

Young people who are gifted and talented in high school need access to mentors, time with peers who are interested in the topic or talent area, classes that are intellectually challenging, opportunities to engage in extracurricular activities of interest and perhaps passion (robotics or creative problem solving competitions, poetry writing and reading, etc.), and other learning experiences in and outside of class that will allow continuous progress in their talent areas. Talent needs to be celebrated and encouraged in creativity, leadership, the visual and performing arts, academic areas, as well as in general intellectual development.

Advanced Placement (AP) classes need to be standard fare in high schools, but that is the starting point and not the only offering for gifted young people. AP classes are for any student who is ready to learn the material, and they should not be saved for the junior and senior years. The College Board offers 35 AP courses, so high schools should make AP available to students whose talent areas are in art and music as well as in science, mathematics, foreign language, language arts, and social studies. AP classes that cannot be offered on site can be of-

fered through virtual learning which is available in many states through a state network but are also offered through national networks.



The Center for Gifted Studies held a one-day conference entitled *Services for High School Gifted Students: AP and More*. Felicia Dixon, professor at Ball State University, set the stage for the conference. She is co-editor of *The Handbook on Secondary Gifted Education*, chair of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)'s task force on Secondary Education, and editor of a monograph on secondary gifted education that NAGC will be publishing in 2008. Dianne Bazell, Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs for the Council on Postsecondary Education in Kentucky, provided

data and insight into experiences that prepare young people to succeed in postsecondary opportunities. B.J. Henry, Elizabethtown; Patty Stinson, Warren County; and Jennifer Chaplin, Monticello, shared ideas for removing the learning ceiling for gifted high school students and for encouraging them to take rigorous classes.

Receiving all A's or being valedictorian will not ensure a successful college experience for gifted young people or for any other student.

Articles in previous editions of *The Challenge* of particular interest to this subject are "What a Child Doesn't

Learn" and "Why Take Challenging Classes?" (All previous editions of *The Challenge* are archived at The Center for Gifted Studies' website [www.wku.edu/gifted].)

Interest in appropriate services for high school gifted young people was high. Consequently, another one-day conference will be planned to focus on high school young people who are gifted and talented. Watch for a date for in 2008! Young people without intellectual stimulation and a strong work ethic are limited in what they can do, so we cannot take talent development for granted. We would never do that in sports.

Kentucky Counseling Association Receives Awards

Dr. Bill Braden, the Executive Director of the Kentucky Counseling Association (KCA), has been a friend to young people who are gifted and talented for many years. Having attended multiple Symposia on Kentucky's Children Who Are Gifted and Talented, Bill understands the issues and needs facing them.

Counselors play a critical role in the life of children, including those who are gifted and talented. We're excited that KCA recently received multiple awards.

At the recent Annual Convention of the American Counseling Association, KCA won Awards for Excellence in five areas – the only state branch in the nation to win in all categories. KCA received awards for Excellence for Best Leadership Development Program, Best Professional Development, Best Journal, Best Membership Recruitment Campaign, and Best Newsletter. Congratulations!

Coming Home AP Summer Institute Brings WKU Alum

Forty years is a long time to not see one's alma mater. And in the case of WKU, so much has changed! But as Dan Vara, WKU alum from 1967, points out about his coming back to Western this summer, some things haven't changed at all: "I returned because it had been too many years that I had not been to WKU and wished to see all the great new changes on the campus with its expansion and also wanted to see the integrity of the hill that was kept as I remembered in the '60s." The Center was pleased that Dan came home to serve as the AP Consultant for the Human Geography Beginning Workshop in our Advanced Placement Summer Institute.

From Massachusetts, Dan first came to Western because he "wished to experience college education in a different part of the U. S." Since he was interested in geography, the karst region intrigued him. He believes that "WKU gave (him) an exposure to become an educator to serve the youth in a capacity promoting academics." He started teaching in Louisville upon graduation but returned to



Massachusetts to teach for over three decades at the Braintree High School in suburban Boston. Dan explains, "I have been an

endorsed consultant with the College Board for twenty-five years, and I am currently adjunct faculty at Fitchburg State College and Salem State College in Massachusetts."

The Summer Advanced Placement Institute was highly successful. The one-week institute, designed for high school teachers who are presently teaching or preparing to teach College Board Advanced Placement classes in their high schools, was offered at WKU for the 24th

summer. The 348 participants came from 71 Kentucky school districts, 22 states, and 4 countries!

One participant, like Dan, was coming home after a long period of time. Anne Priddy, from Tall, FL, first attended WKU's AP Summer Institute in 1987 where she took Spanish Literature! Two decades later, she returned to refresh her skills. When her administration asked her to teach AP Spanish Language, she knew exactly where she wanted to be trained: Western Kentucky University. Anne exclaimed, "I am thrilled to be 'coming home' after twenty years!"

What makes the Institute so memorable that people want to return? Dan's first-year observation sums it up: "Rigorous, challenging, beneficial, high standards are just to name a few of the benefits of attending the Summer Institute at WKU." Dan continues, "I cannot thank enough Dr. Julia Roberts and the entire WKU AP Institute staff for a wonderful experience 'coming home again.'" We are pleased to announce that Dan will return June 22 – 27, 2008, for the next AP Summer Institute!

After leaving WKU, which always encouraged me to pursue academics, I had the honor of attending Harvard University Graduate School. I felt my strong background at WKU put me on par with other students from all over the world at Harvard which I can proudly say.

— DAN VARA, WKU '67; AP Summer Institute '07

WKU Names Center and Academy Priority Initiatives in New Campaign

This fall, WKU publicly announced A New Century of Spirit, a five-year campaign to raise an unprecedented \$200,000,000 in five years. By 2012, private philanthropic investments will provide the means to affect profound attitudinal, intellectual, financial, and physical changes in the campus. The campus-wide initiatives and entrepreneurial spirit created through the New Century of Spirit Campaign will position WKU to become the intellectual heartbeat of Kentucky. Both The Center for Gifted Studies and the Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky have been named priority initiatives. Thanks in part to Mr. Carol Martin Gatton's generous gift, over \$91 million has already been raised toward the \$200,000,000 goal.

The Center for Gifted Studies is a major center for gifted and talented education in the United States, with a vision to become a preeminent, comprehensive in-



ternational center. Our vision is two-fold. First, The Center seeks to enhance its national leadership position in advocating for appropriate educational opportunities for gifted children. And second, we desire to enhance that leadership position by providing comprehensive services which address the cognitive and social-emotional needs of children and young people who are gifted and talented. Friends of The Center may designate the purpose of their gifts.

Friends of The Center, this is an ideal time to make a gift that will help change the lives of young people who are gifted and talented. Many naming opportunities are still available at Schneider Hall, the new home of The Center and the Academy. In addition to having an office, study room, dorm room, or outdoor classroom named in your honor or in the memory of a loved one, the monetary donation can go towards enrichment opportunities, scholarships, a speaker series with a specific focus (creativity and leadership to name two possibilities) or something else. The Center for Gifted Studies provides a major naming opportunity. The choice is yours! Please contact Julia Roberts (270.745.6323) or Amanda Coates Lich at 270.745.2340 for more information.

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Naming Opportunities

In your name or in memory or honor of a loved one

- The Center for Gifted Studies
- An office in The Center
- Outdoor classroom of Schneider Hall

Art

- A piece of sculpture by internationally known artist Ed Hamilton commissioned specifically for the outside of Schneider Hall
- Art pieces to be enjoyed throughout Schneider Hall and the offices of The Center and the Academy

Annual Speakers' Series for Teachers, Administrators, School Counselors, and/or Parents

- A speakers' series for The Center with a focus on Creativity, Leadership, Science, Writing, or another topic of your choice

Financial Assistance

- Financial Assistance for children and young people to participate in SCATS, VAMPY, or Super Saturdays

Public Relations

- A PR campaign for increasing support for children who are gifted and talented

Other

- A project that you are interested in could be the beginning of a partnership between you and The Center for Gifted Studies

THE CENTER MOVES TO NEW HOME

This fall, The Center moved up the hill to the newly retrofitted Florence Schneider Hall. We joined the offices of the Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science on the first floor of the Academy. The Kentucky Association for Gifted Education, which has been housed at The Center since 1990, also relocated to Schneider. All of the contact information for The Center and KAGE remains the same.

Friends of The Center

Brenda Adams
Bowling Green, KY

Angela Anderson
& Matthew Saderholm
Berea, KY

Jerry Baker
Bowling Green, KY

Kathryn & Mark Bigler
Bowling Green, KY

Karen Brey
Hodgenville, KY

Karen & Jarrod Brown
Beaver Dam, KY

Anne & Darrell Crawford
Auburn, KY

Sheila & Bob Depp
Owensboro, KY

Dow Corning Corporation
Midland, MI
*Matching Gift: Diane
& Jim Matherly*

Mary & Sam Evans
Bowling Green, KY

Marjorie Farris
Richmond, KY

Doris & Jim Ford
Bowling Green KY

Daniel Gillen
Macon, IL

Ruthene Glass
Bowling Green, KY

Janice & Jack Glasser
Bowling Green, KY

Kim & Phillip Goodwin
Bowling Green, KY

Nancy & William Gravely
Glasgow, KY

Donald Greer
Fairfield, KY

Carolyn & Lowell Guthrie
Bowling Green, KY
Trace Die Cast

Carolyn & John Hagaman
Bowling Green, KY

Pam Hammond
Glasgow, KY

Renita Hines
Calhoun, KY

Dawn & John Hitron
Louisville, KY

John & Gwen Hornsby
Mandeville, LA

Mary & Ints Kampars
Hardinsburg, KY

Susan & Paul Kniery
Bowling Green, KY

Laurie & George Kwok
Bowling Green, KY

Nancy & David Laird
Louisville, KY

Laura Harper & David Lee
Bowling Green, KY

Mary & Paul Lewis
Cecilia, KY

Dixie & Pete Mahurin
Bowling Green, KY

Donna & Carl Martray
Macon, GA

Barbara McClard
Scottsville, KY

Daksha & Prabodh Mehta
Elizabethtown, KY

Terry Milam
Russellville, KY

Rose & Orville Miller
Laguna Woods, CA

Tom Moody
Franklin, KY

Kelly Morgan
Paducah, KY

Mary & Allen Ralph
Scottsville, KY

Julia & Dick Roberts
Bowling Green, KY
*In Memory of Bill T. & Eloise
Weaver, parents of Jan Lanham*

Pamela & Bob Robinson
Cox's Creek, KY

Martha & J.T. Sandefur
Bowling Green, KY

Amber (SCATS 1988, 1989, &
1990; Travel) & Brennon Sapp
Crestview Hills, KY

Ashley Short
Elkton, KY

Dana (SCATS 1983)
& Perry Simmons
Bowling Green, KY

Dinah & Charles Smith
Corbin, KY

Joyce Ann Spiceland
Salisbury, NC

Beth & Joe Stamps
Smiths Grove, KY

Susan Suttle
Paducah, KY

Cindy Tanner
Bowling Green, KY

Denei Thomas
Bowling Green, KY

Kathy & Ted Weiss
Miami, FL

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Our deepest appreciation goes to those who help us provide opportunities and services to young people who are gifted and talented, their educators, and their parents. Thanks for making it possible.



ANOTHER EASY WAY TO HELP!

Are you a supporter of public radio? If so, consider The Center for Gifted Studies when asked to give your information for donation recognition. You can simply say your name and then "a friend of The Center for Gifted Studies at WKU," or you may prefer just "A Friend of The Center for Gifted Studies at WKU." Any time you share The Center with others, you are helping us to meet the needs of young people who are gifted and talented by helping us get the word out about The Center. Thanks!

Dr. George Betts, an expert in the social-emotional needs of gifted children, provided much-needed information to over a hundred educators and parents this October. The Fourth Annual Berta Excellence in Education Series focused on the importance of life-long learning and the roles that parents and educators take in encouraging that learning. From the University of Northern Colorado, George has devoted his career to developing autonomous learners, so he was able to share many strategies while providing insight into the learner who is gifted and talented.

Tuesday evening's *Learning to Fly: The Facilitation of Our Gifted at Home* focused on ways for parents to encourage learning at home. From a positive nurturing environment to passion learning, George addressed multiple strategies for creating life-long learners.



Corey Alderdice

The Underground (who would rather belong socially so they underplay their talents), The At-Risk Learner (who is resentful and angry), The Twice-Exceptional (whose weaknesses are the focus instead of the strengths), and the Life-Long or Autonomous Learner (see the box for a full description.) Through his model, educators are able to meet the diverse

cognitive, emotional and social needs of learners. For more information about the Autonomous Learner Model for Teaching and Learning, go to www.alpspublishing.com.

Thanks to the generosity of the Berta family from Bowling Green, KY, The Center will host yearly seminars focusing on the social-emotional needs of the gifted at no cost to the public. The next series will be presented in Fall of 2008. We hope to see you there!

Berta Excellence in Education Series Brings Dr. George Betts to WKU

A kindred spirit, George has provided summer programming for over thirty years for young people who are gifted and talented. He fully realizes the importance of providing challenge, nurturing gifts and talents, and creating autonomous learners. In fact, in his writings and in his workshops, he emphasizes the life-long learner: "A life-long learner is one who loves the moment, seeks truth, friendship, knowledge and wisdom. This person accepts self and others, and realizes the chance to make this a better world. A life-long learner discovers new paths for growth, joy, knowledge, and friendship. The journey begins today..."

On Wednesday, he conducted a workshop for educators on the Autonomous Learner Model for Teaching and Learning (ALM), a model developed by George and his colleague Jolene Kercher. Profiles of Learners are critical to ALM. Gifted young people tend to fall into one of six profiles: The Successful (who know how to play the learning game yet lose their creativity in doing so), The Challenging (who are frustrated with the system and are unaccepted by teachers),

THE LIFE-LONG LEARNER (AUTONOMOUS LEARNER)

Has a positive self-concept/esteem

Is accepting of others

Is perceptive and understanding

Interacts effectively

Has problem-finding & problem-solving abilities

Is creative & independent

Discovers & develops passions

Wants to impact the world in a positive way

Sees learning as a life-long journey

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Ben Cundiff was recently awarded the prestigious Joseph Kelly Award. Look for an article in the next Challenge.

New Video Highlights Summer Opportunities

Want to know how young people really feel about our summer programs? Watch the video that showcases SCATS and VAMPY. The five-minute video, available on our website, is one more way that you can let others know about the opportunities The Center for Gifted Studies provides. Please feel free to share the video with others. Go to www.wku.edu/gifted to see it.



AP Calculus Consultant Was One of Twenty Teachers Named to the 2007 All-USA Teacher Team

Since the beginning of The Center for Gifted Studies' Advanced Placement Summer Institute twenty-five years ago, Benita Albert has been a consultant to beginning and experienced AP Calculus teachers, preparing them to teach students at high levels. This master teacher was one of twenty teachers named to the 2007 All-USA Teacher Team. Nominated by a principal, Benita received a trophy and shared a \$2,500 gift with her school, Oak Ridge High School in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Benita has taught AP Calculus for 40 years. Additionally she has served as an exam reader, table leader, and member of the AP Test Development Committee as well as a consultant for College Board in the Southeast. Of late, her committee work with Math Vertical Teams and Building Success in Mathematics has concentrated on Pre-AP educational services. She recently coauthored the *AP Teacher's Guide* to accompany the *Third Edition of Calculus* by Hughes-Hallett, et al., and through Skylight Publishing has coauthored *Be Prepared for the AP Calculus Exams* and *Calculus Calculator Labs*.

In the *USA Today* article "All-USA Teachers Strive to Give Students Confidence, Chances," author Tracey Wong Briggs (October 18, 2007) cites reasons for Benita's selection:

- Infuses college-level math with personality, nicknaming functions and giving students vector names: "She makes math creative and attractive," says Nabeela Ahmad, 17.
- Advises research students, including the third-place finisher in the 1987 Westinghouse Science Talent Search and the first-place team in the 2006 Siemens Competition in Math, Science and Technology.
- Opens room for tutoring by 6 a.m., through both lunch periods and after school until 4 or later.
- Encourages collaborative learning and sees almost all her students pass the AP Calculus BC test year after year, about 70% scoring 5 out of 5.

She ends with Benita's own comment: "I love seeing students become scientists at this age and continuing with it. I think of what I do in teaching as a gift I give to kids."

We are so fortunate to be able to share her gift with Calculus teachers each summer and pleased that Benita will return for the AP Summer Institute June 22 – 27.

Help Us Help Others

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DR. JULIA ROBERTS
Director

The Center for Gifted Studies
Western Kentucky University
1906 College Heights Blvd. #71031
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1031

Phone: 270.745.6323
Fax: 270.745.6279
Email: gifted@wku.edu

MS. AMANDA COATES LICH
Development Officer
**College of Education and
Behavioral Sciences**

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1906 College Heights Blvd. #11005
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CALENDAR

January 18

**College Board AP Teaching
and Learning Conference**

February 2, 9, 16, & 23

Winter Super Saturdays

March 28 – April 6

Spring Break in London

May 30

Kentucky Awards Ceremony for Duke TIP

June 5 – 6

Administrators Institute

June 8 – 20

**The Summer Camp for Academically
Talented Middle School Students (SCATS)**

June 22 – 27

The Advanced Placement Summer Institute

June 22 – July 12

**The Summer Program for Verbally and
Mathematically Precocious Youth (VAMPY)**

July 7 – 9

The Vertical Team Institute