

Spring 2018

IMPACT, Spring 2018

San Jose State University, Connie L. Lurie College of Education

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IMPACT

*Preparing tomorrow's educators
and professionals today*

READY, SET, SUCCEED!

Donna Bee-Gates

Student Success Center offers a campus home for education students



When it's warm outside, doors along the east side of the Sweeney Hall courtyard are flung open — a sign that the new Student Success Center is open for visitors.

Described by some as the heart of the Lurie College, the Success Center beats with workshops, panels, advising help,

tutoring, career counseling, movie nights and even puppies and pizza.

The center's director, Janene Perez, has built a full-blown schedule for the spring semester but measures the success of the space through more than head counts.

"The tangible pieces are the number of events we're having and how many

people are attending," she says. "But also I think that it has brought the college together because it is a unifying space."

Plans for revamping three rooms along the east wall of the courtyard began under then-Dean Elaine Chin and then-Associate Dean Mary McVey. The rooms were combined into one airy open space



FROM THE INTERIM DEAN

Welcome to the Spring 2018 Impact newsletter. This issue highlights several College initiatives, including our efforts with technology-enhanced pedagogy, Student Success Center activities and the virtual exchange partnership with the Modern University for Business

and Science in Beirut, Lebanon. In this issue you will also find profiles of two of our remarkable alumna, Irene Castillon and Peggy Anastasia, both of whom are dedicated change agents and education advocates. And, our Faculty Accomplishments list showcases recent academic journal publications spanning a variety of contemporary topics, including, the impact of home language on reading skills; critical race theory; literacy assessment practices; preschooler’s science problem-solving; loneliness and stress among adolescents; and care ethics in social studies and science.

In addition to my decanal responsibilities, the Spring, 2018 semester finds me co-teaching Ed.D. 591 (Proseminar II, Practitioner-Led Research) with Thomas Moriarty, the director of the Writing Across the Curriculum program. Our 13 doctoral students are an engaged group of nascent scholars who are developing the core elements of their dissertation literature reviews. Their interests reflect diverse problems of practice, including the impact of

fiscal, legislative, and Board of Education decisions; strengthening early childhood education programs; understanding the unique perspectives of foster care youth; measuring the impact of social skills training for students with behavioral disabilities; and strategies to enhance science education in high schools. It’s a privilege working with such a passionate and dedicated group of students.

As you read this issue, please feel free to contact any of the Lurie College staff and faculty mentioned in these articles. We welcome your feedback, a good dialogue, and the opportunity to share our ideas.

Paul W. Cascella, Interim Dean
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PEDAGOGY – THERE’S AN APP FOR THAT

When a student in one of Assistant Professor Lisa Simpson’s special education classes needed to go home in the middle of the semester for a family emergency, she didn’t have to miss a class. Simpson hooked up to Zoom, a web conferencing service, and brought the student into her classroom via cloud computing and two laptops.

And when Ellen Middaugh, an assistant professor in the Children and Adolescent Development Department, wanted to get a sense of how much her students retained after a course on how non-profit organizations operate, she asked them to go to their devices and use Shout It Out, a web-based dialog that threw their answers up on the SMART Board in her classroom.

In Evelyn Merritt’s Introduction to Audiology course in the Department of Communicative Disorders and Sciences, she wanted to see whether students understood one aspect of the ear before moving on to a new concept, so she directed them to Nearpod on their laptops, tablets or phones for a quick quiz.

In universities across the country, and in classrooms throughout Sweeney Hall, professors still lecture and hand out reading assignments, but more and more technology is enhancing lessons, encouraging interaction and allowing for immediate formative assessment.

And it’s solving problems. For Simpson’s Department of Special Education student, an emergency absence didn’t require a missed class and make-up work. For Middaugh, Shout It Out allowed her to hear from the entire class, not just those confident enough to raise their hands. And in Merritt’s class, she got real-time feedback to help her gauge whether to review concepts or move on.

Merritt, a clinical supervisor, also uses an interactive SMART Board

and many of its associated features to allow students to draw ear anatomy, work on group projects and pair up on concept review.

“It’s not that the students aren’t capable of following a lecture, it’s just that they were brought up with a different learning pattern,” Merritt says. She has been using SMART Board, the web-based interactive technology that has replaced white boards in classrooms across the country, for three years and is sold on its usefulness.

“It’s really infinite,” Merritt says. “You’re just really limited by your imagination.” Middaugh is another early adopter and she has tried numerous apps and web-based platforms since starting at SJSU three years ago.

“I’m an enthusiast,” Middaugh says. “I don’t think of technology as a panacea. But for me, I was just frustrated that I was hearing from the same five students in my class and I wanted to make it more interactive.”

Iclicker, Pollit, SMART Amp, Shout It

Out and other technologies have solved that problem, by allowing even the shyest or most tentative students to jump into a discussion or ask a question and have their input shared with the entire class. Middaugh has found another benefit.

“It lets them see that others also get the wrong answer,” she says. “And then that can spark discussions.”

Simpson has found that using SMART Amp to replace traditional white boards allows groups to keep and share their brainstorming work and to build on it later in a semester.

“Unlike an actual white board that will be erased at the end of a class, this is stored. And, they can pull in pictures and bring in video clips. They can explore a topic more deeply.”

Robin Love, interim associate dean, also hopes getting comfortable with technology in Lurie College classrooms will give graduates a level of technical literacy by the time they leave the program and join the workforce. ➡



CHANGE AGENT

Alumna looks to even the playing field



At the end of the school year, Irene Castellón, the academic dean at Luis Valdez Leadership Academy in East San José, finds herself seated at a lot of kitchen tables, speaking in Spanish to the parents of her seniors about what comes next after graduation. All of the kids are going to college — most of them the first in their family to do so — and there are lots of decisions to be made about which college is the best fit and which financial aid packages will be best for the family.

These conferences, the culmination of four years of hard academics and kind mentorship, are both the highlight of her job and the most bittersweet part.

“I think I’m going to need a box of tissues for each one,” she tells her seniors, before jokingly reminding them that homemade enchiladas pair well with tears of joy.

For Castellón, the steep ladder from a low-income upbringing to a college dormitory is personal. Raised in East

Los Angeles and San Bernardino by her parents Celedonio and Consuelo, immigrants from Mexico, she was the first in her family to graduate from high school. Through the help of AVID, a college readiness program, she was encouraged to apply to Brown University, one of the Ivy Leagues, and she got in.

She saw snow for the first time and felt very alone in a sea of white faces. She experienced imposter syndrome and she understood for the first time the educational inequities between wealthy and low-income neighborhoods in the K-12 system.

“I think that my experience at Brown really opened my eyes to some of the inequities of education, because up until then I had nothing to compare my educational experiences to,” she says today. “So when I started to speak to my peers about their experiences at their private schools or public schools in wealthy areas, that’s when I realized my experiences were definitely not like that.

There was a lot of questioning myself, like, should I really be here?”

After graduating from Brown with a BA in education, she got her master’s in education at Stanford University, taught history and government in San José and East Palo Alto for four years and then moved to Luis Valdez when the charter school opened four years ago.

Castillón was passionate about instructional coaching, but she became interested in academic administration because of the opportunity to have more of an influence on broader policies.

And at a meeting of the Latino Leadership Alliance in Silicon Valley she heard a troubling statistic: that 6 percent of the administrators in California schools were Latinos and Latinas.

“I was like, ‘That needs to change,’” she says.

In the spring of 2017, Castellón received her master’s in administration and supervision from the Lurie College.

She picked the program in large part because of Educational Leadership Department faculty members Rebeca Burciaga and Patricia López, both Latina.

“I saw myself mirrored in the faculty,” she says. “And one of the things I developed at San José State was this critical lens by which to look at systems in our society and the impact that they can have on students. So now I’m able to realize the reason why I felt like that was because of oppression I internalized through educational inequities in my school. So it was like an aha moment, where I realized there was nothing wrong with me to begin with.”

That Educational Leadership degree opened the door for Castellón in many ways. She was able to move into a leadership position at Luis Valdez, where her principal is another Lurie

educational leadership graduate, Jeff Camarillo.

And midway through her master’s program she got a seat at the table in Washington, D.C. — literally.

Educators from around the country were invited to a “Tea with Teachers” with then-Secretary of Education John B. King Jr. to talk about serving and supporting undocumented students.

The experience was a highlight of Castellón’s career, because she was able to learn from other leaders in the field and be heard at the highest level of the Department of Education on a topic she is passionate about.

Castellón was recently honored again by the Department of Education. She was featured on the DOE’s White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics website.

Castellón has ambitions to lead a school as a principal and eventually find her way into university teaching.

“My own educational experiences have definitely shaped the kind of leader that I want to be and the kind of school I want to lead,” she says. “I want teachers to enter the classroom being equipped with the tools they need to serve their students socially and emotionally and academically. And that includes acknowledging our own privilege as it relates to issues of racism, classicism, nativism and patriarchy — and I don’t think that’s happening right now. Schools don’t exist in a vacuum, they don’t exist in a bubble, and so we need to be able to talk about the different factors that impact our kids.” ➡



with modern furnishings and a sleek glassed-in conference room.

Interim Associate Dean Robin Love says the next step was to transform a beautiful room into a welcoming home that would serve the needs of education students and begin to hum with life.

While most of the other SJSU student success centers focus on undergraduate advisement, Love recognized that Lurie is different because at least half of its students are in graduate school with a

“I really want to create, not only a sense of community and a home for the students who are here right now, but also for the alumni,” she says. “My long-term goal is keeping students connected, bringing them back for grad school and then engaging them after they graduate.”

To that end, workshops skew toward skills and practices that will help students achieve their degree and post-graduate ambitions, be they a master’s degree, a credential program or a job.

school entrance exams and to help connect graduate students with career opportunities.

On a chilly day in February, Flores had ordered in pizza and had a full house for a noon workshop on time management. Students sat around tables and worked through their various obligations: classes, study time, work, laundry, exercise, family and friends. Flores helped them prioritize those activities within the day, the week and the semester.

Julie Nguyen, in her fourth year in ChAD, had never visited the Student Success Center before, but found it comfortable and attractive and the seminar helpful.

“I thought it was really useful,” she said “I thought I had time management down, but I found spaces where I had an hour I wasn’t using.”

While the center is not a lounge, and is not open to students when it is unstaffed, it is available to students five days a week for various workshops (often accompanied by hot pizza), education-themed movies and for students to study.

Perez still teaches two practica courses and advises students. She tends to spend time grading papers in the center, gently eavesdropping on students’



Janene Perez, director

track record of school success. But they still have challenges.

“The university is big and Lurie students often commute to campus, take their classes and leave quickly to go to work or home to their families,” says Love. “We wanted to create a place — Janene refers to it like a home — where there’s resources for the students, where they really feel like they’re part of a college community.”

Hired as the center’s director last fall, Perez, a longtime lecturer in the Child and Adolescent Development Department and undergraduate advisor, has conceived of the space as a welcoming home for everyone involved in the college.

One of the best-attended events was a graduate program carnival where all of the Lurie departments that offer graduate degrees set up tables and described their programs and the career possibilities after graduation.

Another popular event was a de-stressing day tied to finals last spring, complete with snacks and puppies to cuddle.

The college also hired an academic advisor, Jahzeel Flores, to work out of the center to help keep undergraduates on track to graduate on time, but also gave her responsibilities for helping them prepare for graduate



conversations and jumping in with advice or encouragement.

Another facet of the center's mission is the Lurie College of Education Promise Group Initiative led by Donna Bee-Gates, a lecturer in ChAD. The group is named after the statewide initiative that encourages incoming freshmen to sign a pledge promising to graduate in four years.

"The thing about that group of students is that they make this promise to graduate in four years without a lot of support to do so, so that's where we're stepping in to try to fill that gap," Bee-Gates says.

About a dozen students majoring in ChAD and Communicative Disorders and Sciences have joined the group, all Latinas and many of them the first in their families to attend college.

In addition to helping with study, writing, resume-building and financial management skills, all offered at the Student Success Center, Bee-Gates is focused on building a community. And that is based on research that shows that students who feel connected to an institution and feel they belong there are more self confident and less likely to drop out.



"And sometimes," she says, "that is quite difficult for low-income students and students of color."

A big part of building those connections and confidence is a mentor program that matches each Promise Group student to a faculty member. The pairs meet at least twice a month for a year and the mentor has an open door for questions.

"They have someone beyond their peers who can open a whole world to them," she says.

Peggy Anastasia, a member of the Alumni Board who helped fund the

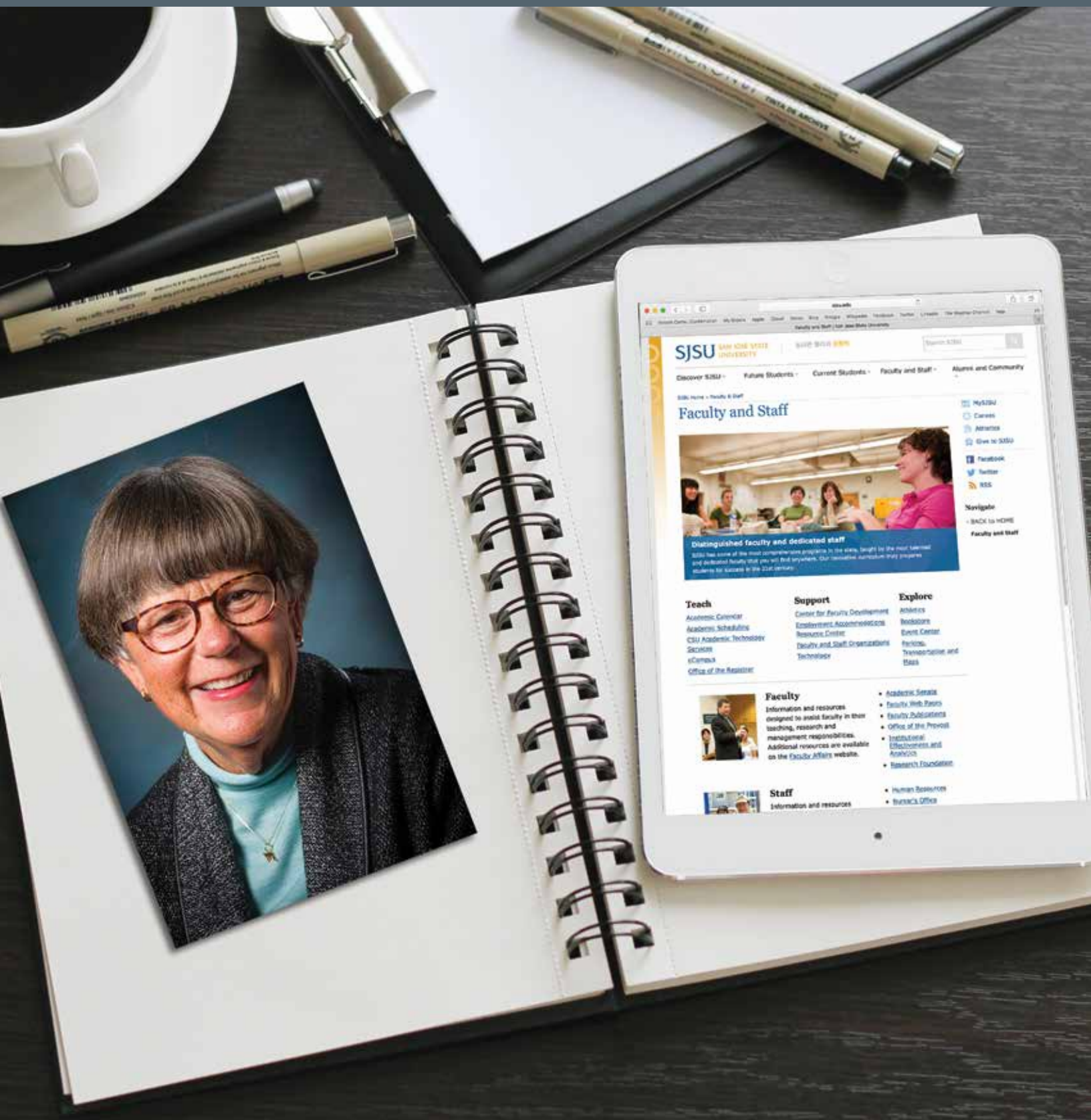
center (see Page 8) has seen new life breathed into the building, just what she imagined when she donated funds to get an architect involved and plans started for the renovation.

"Janene Perez and Robin Love have embraced that center and Janene has just made it alive," says Anastasia. "She's the perfect person to lead it. Her love of people and connections, that's what that building should be about. It brings to that part of campus an inclusiveness that was never there." ☺



"THAT WAS MY RECONNECT"

Alumna makes a campus reconnection after a 34-year career in education



Peggy Anastasia's desire to teach was sparked by her parents. Neither Phil nor Ellie Anastasia, the children of immigrants, had the opportunity to attend college or become educators. They sold fish, shrimp and crab at Anastasia's Fish Market on the Monterey Bay wharf and later ran Mike's Seafood, a popular restaurant on the wharf.

But they modeled education and mentorship to the young people in their lives.

"My parents, neither one of them could at the time they were growing up become teachers," she says, "but they always seemed to mentor young folks."

And so from an early age Anastasia knew she wanted a career in the classroom. She volunteered in elementary school classes while she was in high school and after graduation enrolled in a local community college for two years.

She transferred to San José State in 1968, and received her BA in sociology and psychology in 1970 and her multiple subject teaching credential in 1971.

Anastasia retired in 2005 after 34 years as a teacher, principal and district administrator in the Cupertino and San José Unified school districts.

Since reconnecting with San José State and the Lurie College of Education, Anastasia has given generously of her time and money. She sits on the Alumni Board and has served as its president.

She also endowed a scholarship in her parents' memory — the Phil and Eleanore Anastasia Scholarship, which is awarded to students who are the first in their families to attend college.

And she donated seed money to start plans for the Student Success Center, which is now in full swing (See Page 1) Anastasia wasn't the first in her extended family to attend college. An uncle had graduated from SJSU before she enrolled after two years at a community college in 1968.

When she arrived at SJSU, she was dropped into a campus bristling with revolt and change.

"It was a very interesting time to be in college, a pretty exciting time," she says, remembering Spartan track and field athletes' protest at the 1968 Olympics, farm worker activist Cesar Chavez's campus visits and a strike by professors.

"When I was marching last year and this year in the Women's March in San José, I said, "You know, I thought we had done this already. Why are we having to do this again?"

After receiving her credential, Anastasia began a varied career that began in a 2nd grade classroom at Dilworth Elementary School, the same school at which she had done her student teaching. She then taught students in 1st through 6th grades in need of extra support in language arts, then taught a gifted combined 5th and 6th grade, then a combined 2nd and 3rd grade class. She was mentored in the Cupertino district office by another SJSU graduate, Patricia Lamson, became the acting assistant principal at a middle school, and then principal at two elementary schools.

Anastasia moved back to the district offices, training new teachers in human resources and instruction and then serving as director of curriculum and instruction and human resources administrator, the job she retired from in 2005.

Anastasia's father's parents were immigrants from Sicily. Her mother's parents were immigrants from Spain and Portugal. When her father was a young man he drove a truck for Coca-Cola before he left that job to help his parents at their fish market. When the opportunity arose to buy a nearby restaurant, he, his brother and another partner made an offer and the restaurant became Peggy's second home.

"I always say that one of the best jobs that prepared me for teaching was working in my father's restaurant," she says. "I was the cashier/hostess. People

walked through that door from various streams of life and you learned how to work with them, as well as all the employees. You really learn a lot about human nature. It gives you a lot of tools."

Anastasia still supervises student teachers in the field and sees in them the same commitment she carried through her career.

One of her students recently told her, "You know I come home exhausted every day but then the next day I'm ready and I want to go back and try something new."

"To be a teacher you have to love what you're doing," Anastasia says. "When I was working with teacher interns I used to ask them, 'When you get up in the morning are you really looking forward to going back into the classroom?' And you have to be able to say yes. It is hard work."

Working with teacher interns was what brought Anastasia back to SJSU. She was in need of college courses for her interns at San José Unified when she reached out to Carolyn Nelson, who was then director of elementary education.

"That brought me back to the college," she says. "That was my reconnect." ☞

You can reconnect by joining the Alumni Board for wine and light appetizers at its annual Wine Tasting Fundraiser Gala on April 26 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Joseph George Wines, 1559 Meridian Avenue, in San José.

The cost is \$35 per person. Make your reservation at coewinegala.eventbrite.com or send a check payable to the College of Education Alumni Board in care of Bob Pedretti, 1482 Iris Ct. San Jose, CA 95125.

All proceeds will support Lurie College of Education scholarships and the One Room Schoolhouse at History Park San José.

FACE TO FACE WITH STEREOTYPES



Virtual exchange pairs students across cultures

Americans think people in the Muslim Middle East are violent, conservative and close-minded.

Middle Easterners think Americans are violent, permissive and lacking rules that govern their conduct.

These stereotypes intrigued Nadia Sorkhabi, an associate professor in the Department of Child and Adolescent Development, and Nael Alami, a visiting professor in ChAD.

How could they challenge those stereotypes, especially among young people pursuing education degrees that would lead to professional careers as educators or human service professionals where those stereotypes might influence how they serve students and families from different cultural backgrounds?

Those questions led to a virtual exchange program between students at Lurie College in San José and students at Modern University for Business and Science in Beirut, Lebanon. Over two semesters students in ChAD's Senior Seminar course have been paired with students of the same course in Beirut, listening to the same lectures and cooperating on the same projects.

According to Sorkhabi, who teaches the ChAD Senior Seminar, it's all a technology-boostered experiment in testing cultural attitudes while building bridges between two groups at odds.

"We knew that we were dealing with two cultural groups that have very negative views of one another," says Sorkhabi, who is of Iranian descent. "There really

is mutual antipathy, where Middle Easterners see Americans as violent, given their experiences of war, and similarly Americans believe that Middle Easterners are violent."

Alami, who is Lebanese and vice president for research and innovation at Modern University for Business and Science in Beirut, said one of the most meaningful aspects of the project has been the face-to-face interaction, via Skype or other conferencing technology, that has allowed paired students from Lebanon and San José to learn about parenting styles through weekly hour-long guided conversations.

"The virtual exchange allows students to easily communicate, understand and explore individuals from this culture that they wouldn't interact with otherwise," Alami said. "There's so much value in that."

Students explored parenting practices in their countries through long interviews about their own experiences from the ages of 13 through 18. What was discipline like? Did parents have rules about homework or dating? How did they enforce them?

Before the exchanges, both sets of students believed that the stereotypes they had about the other group also applied to their parenting practices. Americans believed Middle Eastern parents were conservative, rigidly authoritarian and biased against daughters.

The Lebanese students believed American parents were too permissive, allowing their children to do whatever they want.

Those stereotypes, if left unchallenged, can cause harm in the workplace, Sorkhabi said.

"These assumptions that service professionals and teachers make about parenting and home life [and] children's experiences growing up, really do affect children, their access to education, how they are treated and the kinds of services and quality of education that they get," she said.

"That's where the value of the virtual student exchange comes in," Alami said. "To tackle and overcome these stereotypes you can use a theoretical framework and literature that states how these negative stereotypes are not necessarily based on factual evidence, or you can allow the students to undergo an exchange program face to face."

After the virtual exchange semester, students reported different views of their counterparts' culture and parenting. And many expressed an interest in continuing the friendships they had made online.

The students will soon be joining the workforce, and Alami and Sorkhabi hope the exchange semester will prepare them for meeting people of different backgrounds and cultures.

"It will broaden their horizons," Alami said. "It might trigger a sense of curiosity in them and they might explore other preconceptions that they've had."

Sorkhabi and Alami have collected and are analyzing the data and plan to publish the results. They are also working on a documentary about the project. ☞

FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Allison Briceño, with A.F. Klein, contributed the article [The Influence Of Home Language On Emergent Reading: Two Case Studies](#) to *The Oklahoma Reader*. Her article Literacy and language learning as partners in the classroom, with Klein, J. Zuniga and A. Elías Torres Klein, was published in *Principal Magazine*.

Rebeca Burciaga, with A Covarrubias, P.E. Nava, A. Lara, V.N. Vélez and D.G. Solorzano, contributed [Critical Race Quantitative Intersections: A Testimonio Analysis](#) to the journal *Race Ethnicity and Education*.

Brent Duckor, with K. Draney and M. Wilson, contributed [Assessing Assessment Literacy: An Item Response Modeling Approach For Teacher Educators](#) to *Pensamiento Educativo: Journal of Latin American Educational Research*.

Dina Izenstark, with Aaron T. Ebata, contributed the article [The Effects of the Natural Environment on Attention and Family Cohesion: An Experimental Study](#) to the journal *Children, Youth and Environments*.

Maria Fusaro and **Maureen C. Smith**, contributed the article [Preschoolers' Inquisitiveness And Science-Relevant Problem Solving](#) to the *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*.

Ellen Middaugh, with L.S. Clark and P. Ballard, contributed [Digital Media, Participatory Politics, and Positive Youth Development](#) to the journal *Pediatrics*.

Grinell Smith contributed the article [Teaching in the Age of Humans: Helping Students Think About Climate Change](#) to the journal *Schools*.

He and **Colette Rabin** contributed the article [Social Studies from a Care](#)

[Ethics Perspective in an Elementary Classroom](#) to the journal *Social Studies Research and Practice*. They also contributed [Caring Enough to Teach Science: Helping Pre-Service Teachers View Science Teaching as an Ethical Responsibility](#) to the journal *Science and Education*.

Kim M. Tsai, with A. Majeno, V.W. Huynh, H. McCreath, and A.J. Fuligni, contributed the article [Discrimination And Sleep Difficulties During Adolescence: The Mediating Roles Of Loneliness And Perceived Stress](#) to the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*.

MEET OUR LEADERS



From left to right, Teacher Education Department Chair Patty Swanson, Communicative Disorders and Sciences Chair Shaum Bhagat, Ed.D. Program Director Arnold Danzig, Department of Special Education Chair Peg Hughes, Au.D. Program Interim Director June McCullough, Child and Adolescent Development Department Chair Ravisha Mathur and Department of Counselor Education Chair Dolores Mena.

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Jahzeel Flores

MAKING AN IMPACT

We're celebrating the success of Lurie College's new Student Success Center in this issue. It's a place for community, connections and growth and it was sparked by a donation from a graduate of the College. Like all contributions, it helps make Lurie College better able to serve its students, who will become the teachers, speech-language pathologists, counselors, administrators and specialist providers of the future. If you would like to recognize your time at the College of Education with a gift, contact Betty Tseng, senior director of development for Lurie College.

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IMPACT

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