

SIREN

Significant Information for the Research and Evaluation Network

Spring 2011

2010 R&E Dissertation Award Winners!

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The NAGC Research and Evaluation Network Awards Committee is pleased to announce the 2010 Dissertation Award Recipients.

First Place: Kristen Pearis, Duke University, University of California, "Sociometric and Adjustment Profiles of Academically Gifted Adolescents"

Second Place: Janice C. Robertson, The College of William and Mary, "Advanced Learner Perceptions of Psychological Well-

Being and School Satisfaction in Two Educational Settings"

Third Place: Jill Olthouse, West Virginia University, University of Toledo, Berkeley, "Talented Young Writers' Relationships with Writing"

The Dissertation Award is hosted by the Research and Evaluation Division each spring. Each applicant must submit an article-length description of their dissertation research.

The Awards Committee would like to thank every applicant to the process this year. The committee was greatly impressed by the quality of scholarship and research that the young scholars in our field have produced!

Awards Committee: Dr. Hope E. Wilson, Co-Chair, Dr. Alicia Cotabish, Co-Chair, Dr. Marcia Gentry, Dr. Carolyn Barber, Dr. Anne Rinn, Dr. Abdullah Fici, & Dr. Connie Phelps.

2010 Graduate Student Research Gala Winners!

The fifth annual Graduate Student Research Gala, sponsored by the Research and Evaluation Network took place on November 12, 2010 in Atlanta, Georgia.

The chair for the event was Hope Wilson. There were 31 graduate student participants, the largest level of participation we have had for this event. It was truly a close competition, as the papers were of high quality. Thank you to all of our judges for the event, who were able to provide quality feedback to our partici-

pants: Betsy McCoach, Cheryll Adams, Catherine Brighton, Carolyn Callahan, Larry Coleman, Felicia Dixon, M. Katherine Gavin, Marcia Gentry, E. Jean Gubbins, Nancy Hertzog, Susan Johnsen, Matthew Makel, Tonya Moon, Jean Peterson, Karen Rogers, Rena Subotnik, Beverly Trail, Joyce Van-Tassell-Baska, Patti Wood, and Frank Worrell

This year's top winners included: First Place Doctoral Research Project Completed: Rachel Boren

(University of Virginia), First Place Doctoral Research Project In-progress: Russell Warne (Texas A & M), First Place Non-doctoral Research Project Completed: M. Alexandria Vuyk (Emporia State University/University of Kansas), First Place Non-doctoral completed: Mary McNeill (University of Arkansas, Little Rock).

Other winners included: Monica M. Alicea, Deborah Daily, Joanne Russillo Funk, Sheena Miracle, Karen Rambo, and Christine Trinter.

SIREN

Significant Information from the Research and Evaluation Network

News and opportunities from the AERA SIG: Research on Giftedness, Creativity, and Talent

Submitted by Marcia Gentry, SIG Chair

As a longtime member of the R & E network and as Chair of the AERA SIG, Research on Giftedness, Creativity, and Talent, I am keenly aware of the important role these organizations have played in encouraging quality research and improving the quality of the research in our field.

I am hoping to see many members of R & E at AERA in April, and I encourage those who have not yet joined AERA and the SIG to consider doing so. The SIG numbers nearly 200 members, and we engage in a variety of research-related activities, including mentoring, publishing an e-journal and newsletter, developing the AERA SIG program, awards, and new research initiatives. We would welcome new colleagues and new ideas to enrich our SIG. This year we have an exciting program of 33 papers spread across four paper sessions, two roundtables, and one poster session. We are also featuring a group symposium on translating insights from psychology and neuroscience to gifted education. Go to www.aera.net to search the program. Also check out the SIG's website at www.aeragifted.org.

R & E members who attend AERA are cordially invited to attend our business meeting, program, and social, immediately following the business meeting.

The business meeting will be held on Sunday April 10, 2011 from 6:15 to 8:15 in the Sheraton Rhythms Ballroom I. Again, and with the leadership of former SIG board member Robbie McHardy, we have arranged for an exciting program to follow the business meeting. Robbie is the Chief Academic Officer for the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts (www.nocca.com), and she has arranged for some NOCCA alumni to serve as guest speakers/performers to help us celebrate the addition of *Creativity* to the name of our SIG. She tells me that we are in for a special treat. The social will be held from 8:30-10:30pm at Ralph and Kaco's Seafood Restaurant at 519 Toulouse Street in the French Quarter, walking distance from our meeting. The cost is \$22 for regular members and guests and \$10 for graduate members and includes a selection of local cuisine hors d'oeuvres; a cash bar; conversation and networking; and live music. Everyone is welcome. RSVP to Kristina Paul by April 1st (kayerspaul@gmail.com).

Finally, I wanted to mention that as Chair, my initiative to help put research concerning giftedness, creativity, and talent among Native American populations on the map got underway with an initial meeting at NAGC, and will continue this spring with the 2nd Annual Leadership Summit on Identifying and Serving Gifted Native American Students, which will be

held on May 5th and 6th, 2011 in Ganado, Arizona in the heart of the Navajo Nation. Contact SIG member Jaime Castellano for registration information (928-755-1300; jaime.castellano@yahoo.com). My research group will fly into Albuquerque, rent a car, and stay at the Holiday Inn in Chinle (<http://www.holidayinn.com/hotels/us/en/chinle/chnaz/hoteldetail>). The \$150 registration for the summit includes breakfast and lunch each day.

We encourage you to consider submitting your research for next year's conference and/or volunteering to be a reviewer, discussant, or chair. Program Chair for the 2012 conference is Catherine Little, catherine.little@uconn.edu. Submissions are made on-line at aera.net and are due in July.

NAGC R & E members with questions about how to become involved with the AERA SIG can reach me at mgen-try@purdue.edu. Our membership chair is Kim Chandler at klchan@wm.edu. Our newsletter editor is Angela Housand at housanda@uncw.edu. Del Siegle chairs the elections committee, and he can be reached at del.siegle@uconn.edu. Rena Subotnik, rsubotnik@apa.org, chairs the Awards committee, and Jill Adelson chairs the membership committee (jill.adelson@louisville.edu).

R&E Proposal Info: 2010 & 2011 Conference

For the 2010 conference, the R&E Network received 47 proposal submissions and an additional submission referred to us from another network. We recommended 29 proposals for our 18 paper sessions, including a presentation from our runner-up Dissertation Award winner. We also recommended 10 sessions for acceptance as poster sessions. Our overall acceptance rate was 83%

We will again be hosting the Research Crackerbarrel on Friday, November 4th,

from 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., followed by the Research Gala from 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. These two events historically are outstanding opportunities for graduate students and early scholars to learn about conducting research, as well as showcase their research experiences. We hope both events are well-attended by our membership!

We are also excited to announce our two Super Sunday Sessions: *Is Giftedness a Qualitative or Quantitative Construct*

with scholars David Lohman, Tracy Cross, Betsy McCoach, and David Dai, and *The "G" Word: Defining or Debunking Giftedness*, with scholars James Borland, James Gallagher, Joseph Renzulli, and Nancy Robinson. These sessions will evoke thoughtful discussions about the construct of giftedness in terms of research investigation and educational identification, advocacy, and intervention.

Letter from the Chair: *Betsy McCoach*

Happy Spring! At the time that I am writing this letter from the chair, the R&E network has 456 members. NAGC introduced a new membership model in September. Now, all new and renewing NAGC members may select up to three Networks to join as part of their NAGC membership. As a result of the new model, our membership has increased substantially. Part of our challenge as a network is to be sure that we are providing member benefits and services for both our “old” and new members. At NAGC 2010, several people have asked me about creating smaller subgroups within the Research and Evaluation Network so that people with similar interests could communicate and network with each other. For the moment, let’s dub these “interest groups.” These interest groups would create smaller communities within the larger network. I think this is a really interesting idea, but before I launch interest groups, I’d be interested to hear what the membership thinks about such an initiative. To that end, I have created a brief survey on survey monkey. The web address for the survey is <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NAGCREInterestgroups>. If you could complete the survey by April 25th, 2011, I will use the results to plan the potential implementation of interest groups.

Second, we are already hard at work planning the 2011 NAGC conference. We have planned a couple of great Super Sunday sessions for this year, so do plan to stay through Sunday morning. In addition, we’ll be holding the Dissertation Crackerbarrel and Graduate Student Research Gala on Friday night. This year, the Research Crackerbarrel will occur first, probably from 6-7. Then, the Research Gala will run from 7:30-9:00. The break in between the two events will give Gala participants an opportunity to hang their posters and the caterers an opportunity to refresh our food and drinks. Finally, we have devoted a session to the research of this year’s dissertation award winners, Kristen Pearis, Janice C. Robertson, and Jill Olthouse. You can read more about the dissertation award winners in this newsletter. Next year’s dissertation award submissions will be due January 30th, 2012. Any dissertation related to gifted education that was defended during the 2011 calendar year will be eligible for submission, as long as the author is a member of the R&E Network.

Finally, we are looking for a few more leaders for the R&E Network. We have two open positions: Assistant program chair and Co-Awards chair. Elections will be held this summer, and the new officers would begin their terms in fall 2011. Both are two year terms. The assistant program chair is responsible for planning the Dissertation Crackerbarrel for the 2012 conference, and then takes over as Program Chair for the 2013 conference. The co-awards chair would oversee the Research Gala in November 2012, and then would take responsibility for overseeing the Dissertation Awards process for submissions that are due in January of 2013.

As always, it is my pleasure to serve you, and please don’t hesitate to drop me a note (betsy.mccoach@uconn.edu) if you have ideas for new Research and Evaluation network initiatives or if you have suggestions for improving the operation of the network.

Betsy

Graduate Student Corner

2011 Research Gala

The Sixth Annual Graduate Student Research Gala will be held at the 2011 NAGC Conference in New Orleans! This event highlights the high caliber of research conducted by graduate students (of all levels) in the field of gifted education. Categories include doctoral-level and non-doctoral level in-progress or completed research; however, completed dissertation research is excluded from the competition.

A 20-page research paper is submitted by July 1, 2011 to be judged by a panel of experts in gifted education research. Participants will also be asked to create a poster for presentation at the gala event at the NAGC convention. While participation in the research gala is not a requirement, it is highly encouraged among participants.

The winners will be announced at the Graduate Student Research Gala at the NAGC conference in New Orleans this November. This is an excellent event to showcase your research projects. It also provides an opportunity for graduate students to network with gifted education researchers. Please forward all questions to Dr. Alicia Cotabish at axcotabish@ualr.edu

Graduate Student Committee Information

Greetings from the Graduate Student Committee!

Whether you have spent the past few months digging out of the snow, digging out of your workload --or both, like me -- spring is just around the corner. You will shortly be receiving an online survey asking about a variety of offerings that we would like to make available to graduate student members of the Research and Evaluation network. Please take the time to respond so that we can help target new ways to be relevant to your lives as graduate students.

In the next issue of the R and E newsletter we will be featuring advice from recent graduates on the transition from being a student to being "in the field." Soon you will be able to look for us on Facebook, too, so that topics of specific interest to graduate students (you know, little things like surviving your dissertation/thesis and getting a job eventually) can receive extended opportunities for discourse.

Also, please remember that submissions for the Graduate Student Research Gala are due July 1st. For many of us, May and June will be an ideal time to work on our

own independent research projects once the pressures of course assignments are finished for the semester. We had a good showing last year at the Gala and hope for an even larger number of submissions this year. So don't be shy!

Best wishes to everyone as you finish up your spring coursework, perhaps head off to AERA and/or NCME (save some room for jambalaya and pralines in November!), and enjoy your summer. Again, be on the lookout for our online survey in your inbox.

2011 Dissertation Award

We will be running the third annual Dissertation Award competition this year. The winner of the award will receive a plaque, a special session to present his or her research at NAGC 2012, and conference registration for

NAGC 2012 (valued at \$360). To be eligible for the dissertation award, the applicant must: 1) be a member of the Research and Evaluation Network of NAGC, 2) have defended his or her disserta-

tion during the 2011 calendar year. Applicants should submit an article length manuscript (no longer than 25 pages) based on the dissertation. Be watching for more details. The deadline will be in January 31, 2012.

Finance Committee Update

The Finance Committee is a newly formed committee given the charge of thinking of new ways for the Network to raise money and stay financially solvent. All members of the committee – Jill Adelson (chair), Alicia Cotabish, Nancy Heilbronner, Karen Rambo, Catherine Schreiber, Joy Selberg, and Bess Wilson – were present at the committee meeting at

NAGC. Since that meeting, the committee work was temporarily put on hold while NAGC determined the financial structure for Networks given the new membership model. Recently, the NAGC Board met and approved a financial structure that involves a cost-sharing model for Networks with all money from dues going into a collective pot. However, money raised by

the Network will continue to be maintained in the Network's account. Therefore, the Finance Committee now will be moving forward in their efforts to raise money. At their meeting in NAGC, the Finance Committee brainstormed several ways to do that and now will be contacting NAGC to determine which of those are doable.

Research and Evaluation Committees

Publications Committee

The publications committee will be deciding whether we should pursue a network publication, and if so, what the publication should be. If we decide to pursue a network publication, the publications committee will, in consultation with the chair, oversee the choice of authors/editors as well as the negotiations with NAGC and the publisher. This is an ad hoc committee. Chair-- Catherine Little Catherine.little@uconn.edu

Communications Committee

The communications committee will assist the communications chair with the newsletter, the web, and any other communications related initiatives (such as listservs, groupsite space, blogs, mass emails, etc.). One goal for the coming year is to establish a listserv for the research and evaluation network. Chair: Karen Rambo karen.rambo@gmail.com

Membership Committee

The membership committee helps to recruit and retain members. They send out emails to new and lapsed

members, they develop membership materials, and help with public relations events. The membership committee also works to find ways to increase benefits to R&E members.

Chair- Scott Peters peterss@uww.edu

Finance Committee

The finance committee is in charge of thinking of new ways for the network to raise money and stay financially solvent. Chair—Jill Adelson jill.adelson@louisville.edu

Policy Committee

The policy committee is in charge of writing policies and procedures for the network. The goal of this committee is to have a draft of a policy and procedures manual to share with R&E members by NAGC 2011. Chair-Cheryll Adams CADAMS@bsu.edu

Awards Committee

This committee will help judge the Research Gala and the Dissertation Award. (Additional judges will be recruited for each event to help with judging!) This committee will also determine whether we should offer additional awards, and if so, what the

criteria should be. Chair- Alicia Cotabish axcotabish@ualr.edu, Co-Chair: Bess Wilson wilsonhe2@sfasu.edu

Program Committee

This committee assists with NAGC Convention Program, Research Crackerbarrel, Research Gala, and all things NAGC program related. Program Chair--- Kyung Hee Kim kkim@wm.edu

Grad Student Committee

The grad student committee will help with graduate student initiatives and will help to develop further grad student offerings. The grad student committee will work closely with the program committee, the membership committee, and the awards committee to help with the Research Gala, the Research Crackerbarrel, the Dissertation Award, the recruitment and retention of graduate student members, and the development of additional member services for graduate student members. Grad student committee chair--- Jen Foreman jen4man1@gmail.com

Upcoming Election!

We are looking for a few more leaders for the R&E Network. We have two open positions: Assistant program chair and Co-Awards chair. Elections will be held this summer, and the new officers would begin their terms in fall 2011. Both are two year terms. The assistant program chair is responsible for planning the Dissertation Cracker-

barrel for the 2012 conference, and then takes over as Program Chair for the 2013 conference. The co-awards chair would oversee the Research Gala in November 2012, and then would take responsibility for overseeing the Dissertation Awards process for submissions that are due in January of 2013.

Communications Committee Update

The new communications committee is well under way! Of particular interest, we are planning to launch an R&E website and are currently working with NAGC to decide on the most appro-

priate host for the website. If you have ideas for articles for the SIREN or ways to improve communications for our members, please contact Karen.rambo@uconn.edu.

2010 Dissertation Award Winner- Abstract

Kristen Pearis

Duke University, University of California,

Sociometric and Adjustment Profiles of Academically Gifted Adolescents

The current project is the first study to investigate the competence of academically gifted youth across multiple dimensions of the peer system. To date, there is no comprehensive examination of the social functioning of gifted youth, severely limiting what is known about the overall social world of gifted youth and the extent to which the subset of gifted youth with peer problems experience the same adjustment difficulties related to negative peer interactions. By examining how aspects of sociometric status, friendship and social network centrality relate to a myriad of outcome variables, the current study permits a comprehensive investigation of the risk profile associated with problematic peer relations among gifted youth within the adjustment do-

main (behavioral, academic and psychological functioning). Participants included 327 adolescents, 149 identified as academically gifted, who were initially assessed in the 7th grade and were then reassessed 2 years later. Consistent with prior research, findings from the current study provided evidence that academic giftedness was generally associated with more positive peer relations as well as more positive functioning across behavioral, academic and adjustment domains when compared to non-gifted adolescents. However, findings from the current study did not find evidence suggesting that gifted youth experience significantly *less* peer problems than their non-gifted peers. As such, the current study substantiates predictions that

there are indeed subgroups of gifted youth who experience peer problems and they were found to be similarly at risk as non-gifted adolescents with peer problems regarding negative behavioral, academic and psychological adjustment. However, the most alarming finding revealed that the negative effects of being rejected were more pronounced for gifted students, who were the most victimized students in the entire sample, even more than non-gifted peers who were rejected. Findings from the current study highlight the complexity of the social world of gifted adolescents and underscore the importance for future research to continue examining the social difficulties of gifted youth. Limitations and implications of these results are discussed.

Interview with Michael Matthews, winner of the 2010 NAGC Early Career Scholar Award

by Jennifer Ritchotte

1. What do you think is the most significant contribution you have made to field of gifted education thus far?

Because my research interests always have been relatively broad, I can't really point to a sustained contribution in any single area. However, one of the things I find interesting is looking into the things 'everyone knows', where sometimes I find that we don't know as much as we may think we do. My favorite example of this is the study on gifted dropouts that I published in *Roeper Review* in 2006. Even though people frequently repeat the 'fact' that '20% of dropouts are gifted', it turns out we don't really have a solid foundation for this estimate, at least as far as I've been able to determine. In my own study, which I'll be the first to admit was based on what was not necessarily a representative population, I found a much lower dropout rate of around 3/4 of one percent. There's only really one other data-based report looking at dropout rates among gifted learners, and it too works out to well below 20 percent.

Another example of this is that we often hear proclamations that nonverbal-format aptitude tests are the best way to identify gifted students who are English language learners. I have seen very little data supporting these assertions, so Lauri Kirsch and I have written a study on this using actual district-level data, which is now in press in the *Journal of Applied School Psychology*. In our data, which include scores from over 400 ELL students referred for gifted eligibility testing, there were eight different IQ tests used enough to allow comparisons to be made. The two nonverbal tests showed no difference in score means or profiles compared to five of the six traditional IQ measures; the only one of the eight IQ tests that did not seem to yield the same score performance was the Stanford-Binet V, and on this measure the ELL students on average performed significantly lower than on any of the seven other IQ measures. The SB-V is not a nonverbal test, but it does include a larger amount of nonverbal content compared to the previous SB-IV version, so these findings are interesting in contradicting what we so often read.



On their own, neither of these studies is a huge contribution, but I hope that they at least might be enough to get us all thinking about examining our assumptions and using actual data rather than someone else's

opinion to support our assertions about students with gifts and talents.

2. What led you to the field of gifted education? Who sparked your interest in gifted education?

I came to gifted education through a rather circuitous route; though it's one that makes sense to me in hindsight, I'm not sure I know anyone else whose career has unfolded in quite the same manner mine has.

I was quite fortunate to grow up in Athens, GA. I was a student in a public school system where there were a number of teachers who had studied under Paul Torrance and later Mary Frasier, and as a child I attended summer programs run by Torrance and his students and colleagues. At the time, of course, I'm sure I thought that students everywhere had access to these types of opportunities, but in actuality such programming was probably still quite rare in the late 1970s. Later when I entered high school, there was only one teacher who taught 'the gifted program', and I didn't like the feedback he provided, so after 9th grade I left the 'gifted program' and took mostly advanced and AP courses for the rest of high school. We had a lot of really strong teachers at the school at that time, and I felt like I got a very good education there even though I wasn't in the gifted program any longer. This experience may be one of the reasons I'm interested in secondary education today.

I did well enough in high school to get a four-year merit scholarship at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, where I was in the University Honors Program. I earned my bachelor's degree magna cum laude in chemistry, a field I chose largely due to the good experience I had with the teacher in high school chemistry and AP

chemistry, but I became interested in archaeology as an undergraduate so I decided to go to graduate school in archaeology. I went to the University of Wisconsin, on a graduate fellowship, and got my M.A. there in archaeology. After a few years working for the state of Wisconsin doing archaeological survey and excavation work as a seasonal temporary worker, I decided I wanted a job indoors and with benefits, so I eventually found a job working as a chemist for the state. In the chemistry lab, we had a couple of guys who worked in the lab every summer but were science teachers during the school year, and talking to them I thought teaching sounded like a good career move. But it turned out that the licensure requirements in Wisconsin were very inflexible, and they basically told me I would have to go back to being an undergraduate for 3 more years if I wanted to become a teacher there, so I decided to move back to Georgia instead. Of course, when I decided to move I wasn't really aware that starting teacher salaries in Georgia were around 2/3 what they were in Wisconsin, and it took me about 10 years to catch back up to the salary I would have been making if I had stayed on at the chemistry lab. Fortunately, I find today that being a professor is much more interesting on a day to day basis than analyzing the same water sources for the rest of my life, and looking at recent developments in Wisconsin, the economy here in NC don't seem quite so bad after all.

Anyway, since I already had a master's degree and had a bachelor's degree in science, in Georgia it only took me three quarters to complete the requirements for a lateral entry teaching license by studying at the master's level. This left me still enrolled as a graduate student, but in the nice position of not having to complete the science education master's degree program; since I already had an M.A. degree, the state would grant me the masters-level teaching license on completing the initial licensure coursework. Near the end of this year of study, I was fortunate to find a high school teaching position in chemistry and physical science for the following fall while I was completing my last quarter of licensure coursework.

During my first year teaching high school, I became interested in the high-ability students in my classroom who

were not doing as well academically as I thought they should be. Teaching in the same system where I had attended public school myself gave me a very different picture of education, and specifically of gifted education, than I had been aware of back when I was a student. To learn more, during the summer between my first and second year teaching, and in the summer that followed, I enrolled in and completed the gifted endorsement coursework at the University of Georgia. I feel very fortunate that I took some of these courses with Mary Frasier and with Bonnie Cramond, both of whom were quite inspiring, though in very different ways. Enjoying the endorsement coursework, doing well in it, and still feeling like I wanted to eventually earn a doctorate, all led me to go back to school as a full-time doctoral student in gifted and creative education at the University of Georgia. There I studied with Bonnie Cramond, Mary Frasier, Tom Hebert, and my doctoral advisor, Tarek Grantham.

3. What are your current research interests?

Stated concisely, my research interests include underachievement, gifted education policy, the assessment and identification of gifted learners from diverse backgrounds, and the content areas of science, mathematics, and second language acquisition. The nice thing about gifted education being such a small field is that we have tremendous opportunities for new scholarly work. It's not like some other areas of education or psychology, for example, where the research questions have to be very narrow in scope because so many people are working on them. Of course, a downside to this is the lack of funding for research in our field; we have to be very creative to secure funding, especially now that the Javits program seems to be in jeopardy.

4. Which scholars have had the greatest influence on your work?

There are a lot of brilliant scholars working in our field, but none of them do exactly the same sorts of

Interview with Michael Matthews, continued

work I do, so I don't really consider my work to be a protégé of anyone else's line of inquiry. With the possible exception of the late Julian Stanley, whose work is foundational to so many of our practices today, no one person stands out above the rest in terms of their influence on my work. Some colleagues whose scholarly work, careers, and work ethics I particularly admire include (in alphabetical order) Carolyn Callahan, Marcia Gentry, David Lohman, Betsy McCoach, Elizabeth Shaunessy, Del Siegle, and Frank Worrell. This is not by any means an exhaustive list, and I'm sure I inadvertently have neglected to name several important friends and colleagues.

5. How has your research shaped your perceptions of giftedness?

I think my own perceptions of giftedness have been shaped more by my personal experiences, first as a student in gifted programming and later as a teacher and professor who has been fortunate to work with many very smart people, than they have by my research. I do feel that although there are a great number of areas in which high-level abilities can be developed, most of us in gifted education really should concentrate our efforts on those areas that are developed within the scope of public schools and through the efforts of teachers in these settings. Talent development in music, for example, is quite interesting on its own, but outside of the rare arts magnet school I just don't envision high-level musical abilities being developed in the regular school setting. We should focus our efforts in gifted education on learning how to develop students' abilities in math, science, reading and writing, and social studies; on identifying what makes programming in these areas effective; and on how to determine which students would be most likely to benefit from rigorous, high-level learning opportunities in these areas.

6. What projects are you currently working on?

I have quite a lot of different things going on; too many, I sometimes think. Over the past two years, working with Jennifer Jolly at LSU, I've become interested in parenting of gifted children. We published a paper on this topic last fall in *Gifted Child Quarterly*, in collaboration with LSU colleague Alex Garn, and we have another couple manuscripts that are

in progress on related topics. During this same time I've also been serving as the external evaluator for a Javits-funded project, led by Carolyn Callahan and Holly Hertberg-Davis at the University of Virginia, which is implementing a variety of interventions designed to improve outcomes for minority learners in Advanced Placement coursework. Also related to AP, I've recently finished developing some instructional materials designed to familiarize AP teachers in North Carolina with gifted education instructional practices and models.

Last year I was elected to the board of the North Carolina Association for the Gifted and Talented, and I am currently leading the effort to revise the organization's white paper on gifted education in North Carolina. Internally to my university, I've spent the last year and a half redeveloping our M.Ed. program of study and developing new course offerings at the doctoral level for students in the AIG track of our special education Ph.D. program. I am also working on an ongoing basis with my students at the master's and doctoral level on their varied research projects.

Elizabeth Shaunessy, Matt McBee, and I have nearly finished a study Elizabeth and I began back in 2006, in which we are examining the effectiveness of district policies in Florida designed to address the disproportional representation of low-SES learners in gifted programming. A related paper came out last year in *Gifted Child Quarterly*, and we will be presenting some newly completed analyses at the AERA conference in April in New Orleans. I find this work exciting because although these policies have been in place for years, no one seems to have investigated whether or not they are effective. If they are, which our preliminary analyses suggest they very well may be, our findings could be very informative for other districts and states who struggle with disproportional representation.