PREMIER

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

NEW PARTNERS, A SHARED LEGACY

A RHYTHMIC ROAD TO LEARNING

LEARNING AND LEADING WITH CHARACTER
Drew Foster: Burlington, Iowa native, elementary/middle level education dual major, class of 2019, and the first UNI Panther in 19 years to be crowned a national champion at the Division I National Wrestling Championships. Drew will finish his academic career with student teaching this fall at Lowell and Hoover elementary schools in Waterloo, Iowa, while training for the 2020 Olympic trials. He shared his thoughts on . . .

Student teaching this fall: “I will probably get hit with a lot of things you can’t teach in a classroom, but I’m prepared to grow and go with it.”

Learning at a champion in education: “There is such a friendliness and openness here. I felt like teachers were invested in you, would ask what’s going on outside the classroom, if I needed help. With Levels 1, 2 and 3 (field experience), you get a real feel for teaching. I don’t think you get that at other schools. It’s cool to be part of education, because you get professors who are teachers as well, so they know how to teach you and they’ve been there.”

How wrestling and education work together: “We have a quote outside the wrestling room: ‘How you do anything is how you do everything.’ So the way you go about wrestling, focusing on the little details, that translates into your education, your relationships...It’s about giving your effort, paying attention and being focused; wrestling really contributes to other lessons in life.”

Becoming a national champion: “Honestly, like, ‘holy cow, we did it!’ I had to watch videos to remember! The coolest part was when I look back on social media, and everyone’s ‘we’re so happy, we’re going crazy.’ To share the moment with teammates, coaches and my family, that was the coolest piece, they were all helping along the way.”

The future: “Right now, I’m finishing up my schooling. I’ve had people reach out to talk at wrestling camps, that’s really neat and humbling. I am going to continue to wrestle; I will be on campus with the Panther wrestling club; and will try to make the Olympics this year. I’m not putting teaching away at all; the biggest thing is I want to make a difference and have an impact. I’ve had great coaches here who’ve been impactful to me, I want to make that kind of difference. I could teach or substitute teach, keep wrestling, and coach. That would be really awesome.”
Dear COE Alumni and Friends.

Change is constant. Sometimes it comes unexpectedly. Sometimes we plan for it. But how we react to that change can often mean the difference in whether we progress successfully, or fall backward.

Little did I know when I joined the University of Northern Iowa College of Education as associate dean for undergraduate studies and student support services in July 2018 that I would be addressing you this fall as the interim dean.

I am grateful to former Dean Gaëtane Jean-Marie, who bid us good-bye in August. I plan to work closely with the college leadership team and our talented faculty, staff and students to maintain the momentum that Dean Jean-Marie created.

This is a crucial time in the history of UNI and the college. Change is all around us, whether that’s new perspectives on how we teach, how students want to learn, where they want to get an education or just the realities of demographics. It is clear to me and our leadership team that we have one direction to go: forward.

We have a long, rich legacy of educating students for success. For today’s College of Education students, that can mean teaching, leading a nonprofit, training athletes or guiding youth in a community — nearby or halfway around the world.

Stories in this issue of Premier magazine reinforce our commitment to:

- lead, through initiatives like the Institute for Educational Leadership;
- engage, with programs like Teach Waterloo and Hip Hop Literacy Camp;
- adapt, as two departments become one, and one school became two departments.

We also share individual stories of accomplishment, from elementary education student and new NCAA wrestling national champion Drew Foster to the diverse paths taken by alumnae Becky Wolfe and Sarah Hanson.

In my first year here, I was struck by the passion and commitment of our UNI family, including alumni, donors and friends. We greatly appreciate your continued support, and I look forward to meeting more of you over the next year!

With warm wishes,
Colleen S. Mulholland, Ed.D., Interim Dean

FAREWELL TO DEAN JEAN-MARIE

After three years leading the UNI College of Education, Gaëtane Jean-Marie announced her departure for a new role as dean of the College of Education at Rowan University in her home state of New Jersey.

“This is an opportunity for me to return home and lead a college much like UNI, filled with great promise and potential,” says Jean-Marie. Like UNI, Rowan had its beginnings as a normal school to prepare teachers.

While dean at UNI, Jean-Marie oversaw structural and programmatic change, led efforts to enhance student support and advising services, and introduced sustained faculty and student support, including financial initiatives. She also worked to improve diversity among faculty, staff and students, and expanded research and engagement with efforts like the Bill and Linda Tubbs Teaching Connections, Carlton-Mellichamp Lecture Series and programming such as UNI Minority Educators for Today and Tomorrow.

Colleen S. Mulholland, Ed.D., is serving as the interim dean for the 2019-2020 academic year as UNI proceeds with a national search.
HIP HOP LITERACY:
A Rhythmic Road to Learning
Four groups of 5- to 14-year-olds are hard at work at Cunningham Elementary in Waterloo this summer.

First, they choose a beat, then a topic. Next comes brainstorming words and phrases, looking up synonyms on their Chromebooks.

Drafting, editing, revising follows. Organizing from beginning to end with purpose. Publishing a full eight stanzas in their notebooks. Then time to memorize and practice projecting their voices.

Finally, recording at Sound Studio in Waterloo. Groups of one, two, three or more take their turn around the microphone in the vocal booth. The engineer on the other side of the glass in the control room records and mixes the tracks from many into one.

Hip Hop Literacy Camp is back.

For three years, the UNI College of Education and the Waterloo Community School District have partnered on this camp. It’s an outgrowth of community efforts begun at a local church by Emeritus professor Al Hayes. Leading the effort are Shuaib Meacham, associate professor in literacy education, and Lamont Muhammad, a fifth grade Waterloo teacher who has written and performed music for years himself.

The dictionary definition of literacy is “the ability to read and write.” Hip hop requires both.

“You use the same writing tools for hip hop as for traditional writing. The expression is different, but the process is the same,” Muhammad says. “As important, the students are also reading; the two go hand in hand.”

Meacham says the added element of performance is something new for these kids compared to his experience on the East Coast. “Here, recording is something that someone else does,” he explains. “Often there is that trepidation in the recording studio. We build their confidence up, encourage them. They do that first one, and then they hear themselves and hear how good they sound, and want to do more.”

Four UNI students from different backgrounds assist at the camp. Each has a different background, but their interests intersect with kids, music and words. Marcus Jackson is a senior in vocal music education; Stephen Church, leisure, youth and human services; Dylan Hutzel, English education; and Hunter Thompson, English.

“We’re able to captivate their attention, relating literacy to something they’re already interested in,” says Church, a three-year participant who now finds his career interests drawn more toward working with younger kids. “You work with them, and then the light bulb goes off, and they don’t even realize what’s going on!”

The students take on a group identity — YBG (Young Bold and Gifted) Dynasty, Trap Royalty, Game Changers and Flow Nation. They write and record five to six raps following a weekly theme (for example, community). They also hear from guest speakers and perform community service. In addition to pop-up performances at Sidecar Coffee, the students close out camp with a public performance their last day.

“It brings me joy to merge hip hop with education. You see students record and perform—and you see their reactions,” Meacham says. “They see themselves as writers of actual content. They are authors. I like seeing their confidence.”

INTERNATIONAL HIP HOP

Hip Hop Literacy went international in the past year, when members of the Hip Hop Literacy group performed at the Hangzhou Citizens Leisure Festival in October 2018.

“In China, the global demand of US hip hop was a real source of fascination,” Meacham says. “We had the youngest group there, yet had teenagers looking for our kids in hallways and wanting to know them better.”

Though the trips were not coordinated by UNI, the McElroy Trust provided support to help make the China trip possible. The group has been invited to perform again this year.
Since the first physical culture department was formalized in 1892, the value of healthy activity and its intersection with education has been part of the University of Northern Iowa and College of Education story.

More than 125 years later, UNI still prepares highly skilled teachers in physical education. But today, the college’s focus on health and well-being is multi-faceted.

Its breadth and depth is reflected in the proud history of the School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation (1979-1990); School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services (1990-2016) and School of Kinesiology, Allied Health and Human Services (2016-2018), all within the College of Education.

The past year, a new chapter in health and human services education began, as the college launched two new departments in place of a school structure:

- **Health, Recreation and Community Services (HRCS)**, led by Oksana Grybovych Hafermann. The Ukrainian native, who joined the faculty in 2008, is an expert on tourism and nonprofit management.
- **Kinesiology**, headed by Fabio Fontana. Originally from Brazil, Fontana has focused his research on vision in sports and weight discrimination.

“Part of our history is that what made us so large was the success of our individual programs,” says Fontana. “The separation came as a need because of that size, rather than any disagreements. We share information and ideas, and we’re very supportive of each other. I think we’re in a better position to be two departments to manage, grow and meet our students’ needs.”

**GETTING ORGANIZED**

The two departments are now divided into five divisions. In HRCS, they landed on health promotion and education; leisure, youth and human services; and athletic training and rehabilitation studies. Kinesiology has kinesiology, encompassing movement and exercise science, and physical education teaching.

“We had extensive conversations of what the configuration would look like, who goes with whom. I remember the meeting where our three programs got together. There was something magical that happened in the room. It was really amazing. There was so much excitement as to what we could do with this opportunity,” says Grybovych Hafermann.

“My big goal for this last year was to create one cohesive department. I think we’ve done a tremendous amount of work. We’ve looked closely at curriculum and enrollment and explored and formed new partnerships,” she says, citing the renaming of health promotion to public health and education and new partnerships with departments like Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Similarly, Fontana’s team took steps to make needed curricular changes in every program.

“We’ve been able to make changes to programs to meet market demands and be most helpful to students. In the fall we have a new sports administration minor, and we’re proposing a new minor in strength and conditioning, so we will have three minors attached to exercise science that will more specifically lead to a profession,” Fontana says.

The kinesiology programs are known for their opportunities in research, even at the undergraduate level. Fontana was pleased to get support for new advanced equipment this past year to aid students’ understanding of complex concepts more easily. This included a new metabolic measurement system, EMG system, and an update to its motion capture system.

**FROM ONE TO MANY, BUT CONNECTED**

What was once a singular department of “physical culture” now has multiple components within these two departments. HRCS is perhaps the most diverse. Its well-regarded athletic training program is just one segment. The largest divi-
sion is leisure, youth and human services, which supports an array of potential careers, from youth coaching to nonprofit management and therapeutic recreation and more. Then there are the emphases areas within public health and education, from wellness and fitness to global, environmental and women’s health.

When asked what ties these programs together, Grybovych Hafermann replied: “We all have this overarching focus on either health and wellness or quality of life. That’s the really big emphasis on everything we do.”

In kinesiology, the response is similar. “Everything is related to sports and physical activity. We have our traditional preparation of physical education teachers, but we also help prepare coaches, strength and conditioning specialists, sport administrators and fitness professionals,” Fontana says. “We’re a well-rounded department in terms of covering pretty much all of the professions associated with sports and physical activity.”

**NEXT STEPS**

With one year behind them, both leaders are focused on what’s next. Grybovych Hafermann hopes to merge two master’s programs in health and leisure and create a new one in community health and recreation. Now that athletic training is a master’s-level program, the undergraduate major may be renamed to more accurately reflect its pre-clinical career preparation.

She also says you can expect changes within HRCS. “We are trying to define more clearly who we are and what we do. Our names, that’s our image,” she says. Giving a hint for what may come, she says, “For example, we have a strong advantage with nonprofit leadership, but do students recognize that?”

**RESPECTING THE LEGACY WHILE MOVING FORWARD**

While ready to move forward, the two understand their role in preserving history as well. “For me, especially for physical education, there has been a very long history, so we want to keep the legacy of a good program and make sure it’s still meeting current needs and improving as time goes on,” says Fontana.

“I think both departments recognize advantages of being our own department, but we still work together, and we know that because we have such a long history as one, we need to be respectful of that, be aware, and we need to figure out how to carry that history forward,” adds Grybovych Hafermann. “We are re-creating and re-positioning ourselves; hopefully that will be the new legacy.”

Some things don’t change. Both leaders point to quality of programming, the opportunities for real-world experience embedded within most majors, and importantly, the faculty and staff within each department.

“Our attention to students is a common value in the department. You see doors open for students, opportunities for students to participate in undergraduate research or projects like UNI Panther Play, or professors who go beyond traditional expectations in the classroom,” says Fontana.

“We have people with so many different areas of expertise, and yet they’re all driven by the same passion and same purpose,” Grybovych Hafermann adds. “We want our students to succeed. We get very proud and excited and humbled to see what they can and do accomplish in the world.”

“We are re-creating and re-positioning ourselves; hopefully that will be the new legacy.”

**WHAT’S NEW? FROM PROMOTION TO PUBLIC HEALTH**

Public Health and Education is the new name of a division within Health, Recreation and Community Services.

Students previously received undergraduate degrees in health promotion and graduate degrees in health education, as well as minors in health promotion, school health education, and certificates in global health and environmental health. Going forward, “public health” replaces most references to health promotion.

The change reflects industry trends. “Public health encompasses everything from public health agencies at state and local levels to human service, education, youth, recreation, economic, philanthropic and environmental organizations,” says Grybovych Hafermann. “This new name represents acceptance of public health as the overarching definition of what our students are engaged in daily, in the classroom and in the field.”

**ADVANCING CAREER AND EDUCATION**

This fall, a new master’s program in kinesiology and sports performance is intended to meet multiple needs.

“Whether you’re looking to continue your education or further your career, this new program has a blend of coursework that supports your interests,” says Fontana.

The degree is geared toward graduate students interested in coaching, strength and conditioning, fitness and sports administration careers. It also flexes for students working toward their doctoral degree.

“Our goal is to offer degrees that meet market needs, and we saw this as an opportunity, building on the strength of our undergraduate programs,” Fontana says. Also new for fall 2019 is a sports administration minor.
THE 2+2 PROGRAM

MASTERS IN PERSEVERANCE

It’s a typical evening in the Sanduka household. The three boys are gathered around the house, working on assignments. Their mom is at the kitchen table, on her computer. She’s just as focused. She has homework, too.

Kiley Sanduka, 44, is part of the 2019 cohort in the 2+2 program University of Northern Iowa College of Education offers in partnership with Dea Moines Area Community College (DMACC). Her goal: completion of a bachelor’s degree with a dual major in elementary and middle level education.

“I never thought I could work and have my family life and go to school full time. I didn’t think that was going to work,” says Sanduka, who is currently a library associate in Gilbert, Iowa. However, after being encouraged by her school’s teacher librarian to continue her education, she found the 2+2 program.

Sanduka’s cohort formally began in January 2019 and will finish with student teaching in spring 2021. She represents the profile of many: older, with jobs, leading busy lives — who want to become teachers.

Through 2+2, students complete an associate degree to satisfy UNI liberal arts requirements. They take the remaining education-specific core courses via equivalent classes at DMACC, while UNI faculty teach the professional education classwork. Though the majority of courses are online, there are a handful of face-to-face courses that UNI faculty teach on campus at the DMACC Ankeny, Boone or Carroll locations.

The program welcomes students who may complete initial core classes at other community colleges statewide, but who are willing to travel as needed for the on-site classes.

“They want this degree, they want to be teachers, and now they want the best teaching degree in the state of Iowa, from UNI,” he says.

Sanduka previously completed an associate degree in business, and worked in marketing for several years. But when her family returned to the United States after living in Belgium, she took a full-time position at the local school district. When she started the 2+2 program, she began anew at DMACC to get the right base of core liberal arts courses.

NEW BACKGROUNDS, NEW COHORTS

Renning notes that while the 2+2 program was built for a pathway from the associate to bachelor’s degree, more and more students with an existing bachelor’s degree are opting in as well.
Already 48 when she started, McCoy-Parker says she, like many, brought life experience to her learning. “My cohort was very nontraditional, a lot were on second and third careers, a lot of moms, a lot of school associates and paraprofessionals who decided they had what it takes,” she says.

**A PROGRAM WITH EXPECTATIONS**

Anyone enrolling in the 2+2 program can expect a rigorous program. Students take six to nine credits per session, and the program continues over two summers. There are daily readings and assignments. Often classroom discussion online means you cannot hide, as engagement is part of course expectations. “You really have to be disciplined. You’re typically balancing three classes,” McCoy-Parker adds. “Group work online is not the easiest thing either — working with assignments as a group and at a distance. But in reality, it makes you lean on your cohort a little more. You have to be trusting to get through group work.”

McCoy-Parker now teaches fifth grade. And while Sanduka is just beginning, McCoy-Parker is nearly finished...again. She went on to complete her master’s degree online in elementary education with a minor in instructional technology and now has just her dissertation to finish for her doctorate in education (Ed.D.) from UNI.

“Sometimes you have a different drive when starting later,” she laughs. “For my doctorate, I just wanted to be an effective classroom teacher. This continuous path has allowed me options for later. I would love to teach pre-service teachers, even as an adjunct or part time, just because I have a lot of life experience I bring.”

More than 275 students have graduated from the 2+2 program since 1995. At spring graduation, Renning joined Dean Gaëtane Jean-Marie and others at a special ceremony at DMACC in Carroll, part of a tradition established early on. “This time of year is so exciting for me, because some of our students are starting to land teaching positions,” he says. “To see the excitement and relief on their face that this was all worth it, it just sends chills up my spine. It makes me proud to help these students reach their goals of becoming a teacher.”

Program details and enrollment information are offered through UNI at a Distance. Learn more at continuinged.uni.edu/distance.
Learning and Leading With Character

February 2019. It’s snowing, again. Superintendents, principals and other educational leaders are gathered in a room in Waterloo. In between small group activities and leadership presentations, many participants are on their phones with their teams back in their districts, cancelling school and ensuring students get home safely.

Leader Denise Schares, associate professor, educational leadership, and director of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) for the UNI College of Education, originally scheduled a break outside. But it’s too cold and snowy for that. Thus is born the indoor snowball fight, as part of an activity to review Iowa school leadership standards.

Questions and answers about standards are turned into colored slips of paper. The participants line up, wadded slips in hand, and begin tossing and catching, back and forth. When Schares calls time, the group gathers in a circle. Individuals share a question, prompting the search for the right answer gathered in the snowball session.

“When life hands you snowstorms, improvise.”

While there is much more to the IEL leadership camps, the perseverance demonstrated that snowy day reflects the commitment to learn and lead with character shown by both instructors and participants from school districts across Iowa.

The educational leadership faculty at the UNI College of Education have been guiding administrative growth through professional development for educators for years. IEL began with a partnership with the Iowa Superintendents Finance and Leadership Consortium (ISFLC) 20 years ago. About four years ago, two one-day think tanks for superintendents were added twice a year. In 2018, IEL piloted a two-day leadership camp for principals. Then the IEL received a four-year, $663,940 grant from the Kern Family Foundation.

The Learning and Leading with Character program, funded by the grant, supports superintendents, principals and schools boards, giving them skills and knowledge to positively impact schools and communities, with an emphasis on rural districts.

“This is about giving people opportunities to come together and collaborate, with the end result to make good decisions for kids,” says Schares, who has served as IEL program director for six years, taking over when Dave Else retired.
This gift has allowed the institute to expand its offerings. A scaled-up effort now includes:

- **Think tanks** — Eight one-day regional programs per year, expanded to include principals and superintendents.

- **Leadership camps** — Eight or more two-day camps serving principals and superintendents.

- **School board dialogues** — Five workshops for school board members and superintendents per year.

- **Mentor training** — Three workshops for superintendent and principal mentors per year.

- **ISFLC** — Continuing two conferences per year, connecting with 200 leaders.

Superintendents were the focus of early programs, but principals are now part of the mix, outside of the school board sessions. The goal is to connect with at least 800 educational leaders by 2022, with 75% in rural districts. While each program offers a different learning opportunity, a common thread is bringing together peers to learn from the program and one another.

The leadership camps focus on facilitated processes to examine the six Iowa Standards of School Leaders, supporting the required evaluator renewal. For school boards, UNI faculty engage board members in discussion on the ethics standard and how that relates to board policy and members’ interaction with their communities.

“Everybody brings a challenge to the table, and then they go through a protocol to have conversations. People said they couldn’t believe the level of conversation. They were just really appreciative of the attention to their challenge and the support for resolving,” she says.

The IEL plans to share what it learns. “Part of our goal is dissemination. We’ve submitted to a number of conferences and have been accepted for presentations,” she says. “For any college or university providing leadership training, there is great potential here. Even though there may be different leadership or school board standards in their states, we are creating dialogue guides and crafting questions that we believe anyone could use.

“So far the questions about the program have really been on the potential of replicating this work and what is making it well received by people in the field,” she adds. “I think part of it is credibility; our team has credibility. We’ve all been leaders, we’ve been in the field, so I think that’s important in replicability.”

Before launching expanded programming in early 2019, Schares and her UNI colleagues...
spent six months focused on evaluation, working with the UNI Center for Social and Behavioral Research. “Every time we get feedback, we want to utilize that feedback to make changes. We want to get better and better at what we’re doing and improve even further in delivery and support we’re providing leaders.”

Schares, a former superintendent herself, enjoys supporting UNI graduates and fellow administrators, and sees value in every session she leads.

“This has really illuminated for me the need for high-quality professional development and, most importantly, how isolated, both geographically and positionally, people can be. When you’re the superintendent, it might be miles between your nearest colleague. You can call and email, but the ability to come together is such a need, even more so than I imagined,” says Schares.

“How can we foster learning conversations and support growth to lead and learn with character?” she adds. “It keeps coming back to that.”

The weather has turned. Principals and superintendents gather on a muggy, partly sunny day in June at Prairie Lakes Area Education Agency in Pocahontas for an IEL leadership camp. Ten men and 10 women represent mostly north central and northwest school districts. The morning includes sharing personal articles that reflect Standard 5 on ethics and integrity. After lunch, they’ll have their “snowball fight,” and then role play as principals and superintendents before debriefing and heading home.

Comments throughout the day reflect time well spent:

“The standards are one of those things you look at once a year, but the last two days, we dove into them deeper for a better understanding, learned some strategies and tools, and it’s made it more like a living, breathing document all year.”

“I appreciate the essential question: How do we lead with character? And I appreciate Denise’s intentionality with use of protocols. We know that traditional teaching works for some populations, but if you want to reach a more diverse group of people, we need more. I appreciate Denise’s modeling of that.”

“The professional collaborations have been priceless.”

Welcome to EPFLS

Effective July 1, everyone has a new department acronym to remember: EPFLS, or Educational Psychology, Foundations and Leadership Studies.

EPFLS represents the consolidation of the former educational psychology and foundations department, and educational leadership and postsecondary education. Benjamin Forsyth, is the new department head while Timothy Gilson, serves as assistant department head.

Forsyth previously served as head of educational psychology and foundations, while Gilson was interim head of educational leadership and postsecondary education.

This merger brings together two areas with longstanding ties in the college. Educational psychology and foundations was one of the three departments created in 1970 as education transitioned into a college. Another of those three was school administration and personnel services, which was renamed and organized again in 1983 and 2000.

Forsyth earned an undergraduate degree in physics teaching and taught high school before completing his doctorate in educational psychology and educational technology. Early in his studies, he had little interest in administration. He has since learned through experience.

“I have helped with team teaching for educational leadership and have heightened respect and admiration for what school leaders do in their educational endeavors,” he says. “I myself have come to love being in leadership positions. I like the service component of it. As a department head, I can clear the way for other people’s great ideas, and I really enjoy that.”

While welcoming new responsibilities, Forsyth values the leadership that Gilson will continue to provide.

“It is so important that the educational leadership and postsecondary perspective doesn’t get lost. We want to preserve the good things that were happening already,” he says. “We are becoming one department, but that requires that we continue the past. Tim is an excellent colleague and I know he’ll make sure we’re taking care of leading those programs to the best of our ability.”

EPFLS faculty connect with nearly 2,000 undergraduates annually while leading four courses within the professional core sequence required of all UNI education students, preK-12. At the graduate level, the new department is home to several highly regarded programs:

- School psychology
- Principalship/Superintendency master’s and certificate programs
- International teacher leadership
- Postsecondary education: student affairs

EPFLS also coordinates the intensive study area in educational administration, part of the College of Education’s doctoral program leading to the Ed.D.

“Our faculty’s efforts have an overarching impact across the majority of educator preparation at UNI,” Forsyth says.

With the program’s reputation to uphold, he confidently looks ahead. “The principalship has grown from two to three cohorts. We’re the only school psychology program in the state,” Forsyth says. “We have a lot going for us, with the strength and health of our programs. We are definitely taking two healthy departments and making them even stronger.”
For Dawn Boone, a new program offered at the University of Northern Iowa was an opportunity she could not pass up.

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Boone came to Waterloo in June 1992 after high school graduation to babysit for her aunt and uncle (Chuck Means, who led minority student affairs at UNI at the time). She enrolled at UNI, started in teacher education, but withdrew. She went on to an associate degree in early childhood education, and then returned to UNI to get her bachelor’s degree in 1999 in leisure services from the College of Education. She has been a Head Start teacher, a behavioral interventionist, a family support counselor and paraeducator within the Waterloo Community School District (WCSD).

Then she heard about this new program called Teach Waterloo, offered by the UNI College of Education in conjunction with the WCSD.

This grant-funded program, in partnership with the R.J. McElroy Trust, has a goal to increase the number of minority teachers to support student success. Changing demographics indicate that minority or underrepresented students of today may be the majority in schools in the near future. When students complete Teach Waterloo, including student teaching, they will be eligible for licensure in Iowa.

Working together, partners in the WCSD and at UNI identified prospective students who are employed as paraeducators in the district. Some had their associate degrees while others had their bachelor’s in another field. They were interviewed, selected and then enrolled in the UNI bachelor’s program for elementary education. Classes started in summer 2018 for the cohort as a transition toward fall coursework with fellow COE students.

Boone was one of those first students.

DIVERSIFYING THE TEACHING WORKFORCE

“There is a need to diversify the teaching workforce because studies have found that minority educators are better positioned to teach and help minority students succeed,” says Stanley Ebede, who coordinated the program at UNI through its first full year of implementation.

Originally from Nigeria, Ebede earned both his master’s and doctoral degrees from UNI. “I have been fully committed to diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice. Based on my experience as a student at UNI, I didn’t have many here who looked like me, so the idea behind this excited me,” he says.

“This program will not only increase the number of minority teachers in the near future, but it also increases the number of minority students here at the College of Education. The more we support diversity initiatives like the Teach Waterloo program, the more we are helping to change perspectives in the school environment, too,” he says.

A SECOND CHANCE

“I’ve often felt like I’m playing the role of a teacher. I was a para for 11 years, so I always wanted to be a teacher,” Boone says. “I feel like Teach Waterloo is a great choice, there is no turning back.”

Though familiar with the classroom setting, she had a new perspective when she participated in her Level 2 field experience at Lou Henry Elementary in Waterloo in May.

“It was still new for me. Although a lot of paras do a lot of what they consider to be teaching, you now look at it in a totally different way. Now you’re assessing the kids, you have objectives and goals. Before, we got worksheets and it was just helping get it done. Now, behind the scenes, you know the student needs to be proficient,” she says.

“It’s really exciting to be positioned to support people that look like me, in a professional way,” adds Ebede, who moved on to a new position in Pennsylvania as the program entered its second year. “I know what it took me to be where I am today, so to be here and see them grow as an individual and as a professional, that means a lot.”

Boone looks forward to working at the elementary level and already knows her classroom “is going to be very movement oriented and arts integrated, that’s where learners are going.”

She says she feels more comfortable and prepared for her second chance at getting her teaching degree. “I wouldn’t dare want to mess this up. I appreciate it and that’s why I work hard and do my best,” says Boone, among the recipients of a Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society scholarship this year. “When you have your mind made up, and you’re dedicated to something, it’s always rewarding.”

Dawn Boone, right, meets with Stanley Ebede to review next steps in the Teach Waterloo program.
Since its beginnings in 2013 as an initiative of the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, the Center for Educational Transformation (CET), coordinated through the University of Northern Iowa, has built a foundation of educational research to inform educational practices, policies and preparation.

An initial $2 million grant from the Carver Charitable Trust helped launch the CET. In those first years, that funding supported 19 research studies, which touched approximately 58 school districts, 1,500 teachers and 5,600 students.

“I was struck by the diversity of research studies, the topics, and, importantly, the impact and the reach of the center,” says Lisa Hooper, who joined the College of Education as CET director and Richard O. Jacobson Endowed Chair for Research in 2018. An educator, scholar and researcher with an emphasis in psychology and education research, Hooper was drawn to the transdisciplinary nature of the CET and its specific opportunities for engagement with schools, universities and community members at local, state, and national levels.

MOVING FORWARD

However, with the Carver Charitable Trust funding ending in 2017, Hooper’s charge is to move the CET forward. Shortly after her arrival, she met with a newly formed National Advisory Council (NAC). “Their work will help inform the future of the CET,” she says. “The NAC’s responsibility is to inform the Center’s focus while evaluating the extent to which we are doing beneficial, effective, efficacious work.”

With the NAC’s input and an extensive listening tour both on and off campus, she and her team are gaining an understanding of the critical issues both unique to Iowa and similar to those found across the nation, and how the CET can facilitate successful partnerships and research.

“We are finding that we need to broaden our focus to include the whole individual with a focus on the intersection of education, health, and culture and the systems in which individuals are embedded,” says Hooper. “I have had numerous interviews and conversations; during each of those conversations, the implications of health on education were mentioned.” Culture, broadly defined, has been a seminal topic as well.

Based on input received thus far and through the next semester, Hooper expects a revised CET mission and vision to be more inclusive of the whole individual and the systems in which she or he are embedded. That emphasis translates to future opportunities to engage, study, learn, improve practice and inform policy that is culturally responsive and ecologically valid, Hooper contends.

A BROADER APPROACH

Research continues as a core thrust of the CET. The original 19 research studies were pilot studies. The CET is now working to clarify the resulting publications and grants. In addition, it is considering what previously funded projects to scale up.

Reflective of its emerging role as a facilitator, the CET has hosted meetings on research practice and policy for educator preparation for the UNI President’s Office, which several NAC members attended, as well as three unique workshops focused on equity with the Black Hawk County Department of Public Health. In November, the CET will host the 2019 Education Summit. The focus this year will be on culturally responsive pedagogy and practices.

“We plan to invite and include diverse stakeholders: for example, school leaders, health administrators and practitioners, teachers, parents, policymakers, spiritual leaders, emerging adult students, and faculty,” Hooper says. “Complex problems demand solutions derived from diversity of thought, discipline and background.”

These activities reflect a broadened role and philosophy for the CET regarding the criticality of and link among systems, diversity, equity and flourishing.

“The CET leads and conducts original empirical research. But we also are a connector, facilitator and partner,” adds Hooper. “Those are different ways of operating for the CET.”

For more about the Center for Educational Transformation, visit the newly launched CET website at cet.uni.edu.
In September 2017, Sarah Hanson (B.A. ’16) was on a plane to South Africa.

She needed to experience firsthand the story she would tell as part of her new role as director of US development for Blessman International, a nonprofit organization with three campuses in the Limpopo province northeast of Johannesburg, which supports programs and services for children and families.

“I came into it thinking I want to see all the animals, go on a safari,” she recalls. “I did all that, but what I really enjoyed was seeing all the kids. What hit home for me: They’re just normal kids,” she says. Living conditions are poor, she notes, with the economic aftermath of apartheid and the AIDS epidemic evident in what she calls a first-world country with third-world poverty. “They just need love, and they gave me more than I gave them. That left me wanting to move there immediately!”

She hasn’t... yet. But she believes she’s found her calling, just three years after graduation from UNI.

Hanson enrolled as a public relations major, but soon switched to tourism and nonprofit management. Active in her church in West Des Moines, she thought church ministry might be her future. Then she served on the UNI Dance Marathon executive committee. “In one of my roles, I was in charge of philanthropy; that really started my thought that I could have a career in the nonprofit sector.”

Out of college, Hanson became special events coordinator for Children’s Cancer Connection, a large nonprofit serving children and families throughout cancer diagnosis and treatment. She worked on fundraising efforts and events, raising $800,000 one year.

In fall 2016, she started looking ahead while working on her master’s degree at Drake University. “The first few years out of college are really formative—figuring out if what you got your degree in is what you actually want to do. The nonprofit sector for me was what I wanted, but I wanted a more global impact and more programming experience.”

**LIFE-CHANGING MOMENT**

Enter Blessman International. In a whirlwind 24 hours, her life changed.

Hanson saw a posting on a Des Moines community website and applied. That evening her future boss connected via Facebook and asked if she could make a 7 a.m. interview. “By 1 p.m., I was offered the job. When I accepted, I was asked if I could go to Africa a week later,” she says.

Dr. Jim Blessman started Blessman International in 2001, selling his medical practice in Des Moines to become, with his wife, full-time missionaries. After traveling three years to 82 countries, they settled in Limpopo. Blessman now impacts thousands yearly through services such as providing reusable feminine hygiene kits; helping drill wells and build waterless toilets; supporting an orphanage, two churches and boarding schools; partnering on rice packet distributions; and operating an 18-acre educational working farm.

“The idea is we give the people a hand up, instead of just a hand out. We want to help them be sustainable and get their lives on track,” Hanson says.

She runs the mission trips, which create awareness, revenue and fundraising support to help sustain Blessman’s many ventures, serving as the go-to person for everything from checking in with principals on outreach to nightly debriefs after a full day.

More recently, Hanson began leading mission trips, including a group of 20 Grand View University nursing students. “Six of them had never been on a plane before, so South Africa was their first trip. It was really cool to see how they grew just by being with us for two weeks.”

**A NEW PERSPECTIVE**

Hanson now views the world differently herself. “It’s made me expand my cultural perspective and opened my eyes to a perspective that I didn’t know I was missing,” she says. “We’re not trying to change the people in South Africa, but to help them have better lives. It’s really been a rewarding experience.”

Her advice to students: Study abroad. “Working for a global nonprofit has made me regret not going on a study abroad program,” she says. “I just lived in this bubble, and a lot of people do that. I was comfortable. Sometimes in South Africa, I’m not comfortable, but it pushes my perspective and horizons and gets me out of my comfort zone.”

In March 2019, her fiancé, family and friends joined Hanson on a mission trip. “It’s my favorite place in the world, with my favorite people in the world,” she says. “It was like a puzzle piece that all fit together.”

Hanson foresees a long career in global nonprofit management—and, perhaps, a move to South Africa.

“This opportunity really fell into my lap,” she says. “I’m fortunate to have a good education and the experiences at UNI to build on, so it worked out for me.”
Becky Wolfe always wanted to be a teacher. And with the University of Northern Iowa’s reputation, she says, “Why go anywhere else?”

And so she did, enrolling in elementary education. Through courses in teaching math and inquiry to physical science, she found her niche. “I did field experience in fifth grade, then first grade and then back to fifth grade. I loved it!”

As graduation neared, her family moved from Marion, Iowa, to Kentucky. Wolfe followed them there, completing her student teaching in Louisville. She landed her first job as a fifth grade math and science teacher in Louisville. Now married, she started a master’s program in science education at University of Louisville. She soon discovered the emerging field of informal education.

A DIFFERENT TYPE OF EDUCATION

“We had courses in planetariums, working with kids at the zoo. I thought, I might want to do that someday (when I retire),” Wolfe says. Then came a move to Indianapolis where she encountered a tight job market — and an opening at The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis.

“I had never been to a children’s museum. I was a science teacher, getting my master’s,” she says. But she applied and was hired at the museum, where 89,000 school kids pass through yearly. Twelve years later, Wolfe is now director of school programs and educational resources, developing field trip programs, curriculum and teacher professional development offerings.

“I’m the science education voice on exhibit teams. For example, I worked with NASA on our space exhibit, leading the team to provide that vision, what does it look like,” she says. “This takes me back to my foundations. What does the quality of education look like in this space? Lesson plans, assessment – all that holds true in the museum environment as well.

“It’s all interactive. I like walking into the time of dinosaurs, or being put on a space station, or an archeology dig, but also understanding how kids learn. Our challenge is to look at how we can bring the experience into pieces and do that in 20 minutes!” she says.

LEARNING WHILE PREPARING

Wolfe oversees an in-depth science lab, and her team develops the curriculum for the museum. Often, that requires research. Less than a year into her job, she was going on a dinosaur dig in South Dakota. She returned six times, and uses such experiential learning to continue to hone the educational experiences at the museum.

The UNI alumna is most proud of the “Beyond Spaceship Earth” exhibit, a re-creation of the International Space Station that opened in 2016. “We helped them unpack their experiences. I learned about engineering and science for that project,” says Wolfe, who has been heavily involved in state and national STEM education organizations, including a leadership position with the National Science Teachers. The best response to the space exhibit? “Our astronaut advisor declared: ‘I feel like I’m home.’ “

Future projects include an exhibit that will promote dialogue about race, segregation and understanding differences, and another tying science education to health and the issue of childhood obesity. Behind each effort is an appreciation for her alma mater.

A FOUNDATION IN EDUCATION

“UNI is absolutely my foundation. It was a quality education and a quality experience rooted in sound educational practices. One course really challenged us to think critically about education, to keep learning, always be learning,” Wolfe says. “I valued the field experiences so much, and I’m now creating so many experiences – experiences which connect back to learning.

Wolfe has found a home in informal education. “Museums allow for children and families to have free choice in what they learn and see and experience outside of what they do everyday. Museums make you aware of what else is out there, and can be just plain fun. I don’t have my group of classroom students, but I get to go on field trips, to planetariums and zoos, and learn in a completely different setting.

“I hope to continue to expand how we use the museum to address cultural issues and to have dialogue and conversation. I would also love to do more research and codify some of this informal education,” she says. “And I always want to keep learning and tackling new projects and building up educators coming behind me.”

I valued the field experiences so much, and I’m now creating so many experiences – experiences which connect back to learning."
Class Notes are compiled from information sent in personally by alumni and from news releases. If you would like to share your news, go to uni alumni.org/submit-class-notes or mail to UNI Alumni Association, 304 Commons, Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0284.

Have you moved and need to update your mailing address? Send an email to alumni@uni.edu or call 319-273-2355 to update your information.

1970s
‘73 Roy Fielding, BA, MA ‘77, Charlotte, NC, retired as senior lecturer at the University of North Carolina after more than 40 years. The UNC chancellor is naming the Belk Gym Pool in his honor.

‘74 Mike Grady, BA, Edmond, OK, retired Nov. 15, 2017, after a 43-year career with the YMCA in Iowa, Illinois, Arizona and Oklahoma. He received numerous awards during his career, including the Stanley Draper Award for his contributions to community excellence in downtown Oklahoma City.

‘78 Holly (Meier) Lester, BA, Ames, retired at the end of the 2018-2019 school year after teaching middle school math for 41 years.

1980s
‘81 Steve Langerud, BA, MA ‘86, Grinnell, is executive director of the Mayflower Community, a healthcare provider in Poweshiek County.

‘83 Waterloo, retired from the Volunteer Center of the Cedar Valley after 20 years as communications coordinator.

‘85 Lisa (Andersen) Chizek, BA, MA ‘92, Toledos, was named a science finalist for the 2019 Iowa Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

‘87 Deb (Zeimet) Little, BA, MA ‘96, Tripoli, was first named a finalist and then a winner of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching.

1990s
‘90 Stacey Snyder, MA, ASC ‘13, Tripoli, received the 2019 Black Hawk County Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching.

‘94 Ann (Bliesman) Thomas, BA, Cedar Falls, received the 2019 Black Hawk County Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching.

‘94 Erin (Niemeyer) Wittenburg, BA, Readlyn, received the 2019 Black Hawk County Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching.

2000s
‘01 Becky (Overfield) Wolfe, BA, Greenwood, IN, is the director of school programs and educational resources for the Children’s Museum of Indianapolis.

‘02 Cari (Poskin) Johnson, BA, MA ‘05, Davenport, teaches psychology, economics and AP macroeconomics at Davenport Central High School. She also serves as president of the local teachers’ union and is a teacher leader with the TLCS program.

‘05 Ashley (Huinker) Flatebo, BA, Garner, received the 2018 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. She is currently an instructional coach in the Mason City School District.

2010s
‘10 Lamont Muhammad, MA, ASC ‘17, Waterloo, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2018. He is currently a fifth grade teacher at Irving Elementary.

‘11 Matthew Tobin, BA, ASC ‘16, Waterloo, received the 2019 Black Hawk County Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching.

‘13 Justin Decker, BA, MA ‘14, Waterloo, received the 2019 Black Hawk County Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching.

‘15 Christopher Burke, MA, ASC ‘16, Dubuque, was named the Iowa Teacher of the Year for 2019. He is currently a math teacher at Roosevelt Middle School.

‘15 Alyssa Turcsak, BA, East Lansing, MI, is the assistant director of development for Wharton Center for Performing Arts at Michigan State University.

‘16 Sarah Kemp, BA, Ames, earned her Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from the University of Iowa in 2018 and is a physical therapist for Mary Greeley Medical Center in Story City.

‘17 Brittney Luth, BA, Jesup, is the director of Neuro RehabCare, LLC.

‘09 Jed Batterson, MA, Cedar Falls, was named to the first Iowa Governor’s Teachers Cabinet in December 2018.

‘09 Sara McIntosh, BA, Dunkerton, received the 2019 Black Hawk County Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching.

That describes the spirit within a College of Education Office of Academic Advising undergoing a transition in the past year that resulted in:

- a first-ever position of director, with the hiring of Robert Welch.
- broadened job descriptions and expectations that reinforce the COE academic advising staff as a front line in building educational relationships with prospective and current students.
- a full staff of advisers, with the addition of three new advisers in the past year.
- greater integration among the education, health and human services advising team members.

“The work of our advisers is now multi-faceted, and goes well beyond ‘here’s your schedule.’ We’re more integrated as a team, which is being reflected in the experience of our current and prospective students,” says Colleen Mulholland, current interim dean and previously associate dean of undergraduate studies and student support services. “The advisers’ job descriptions were updated to reflect the critical role our COE advisers play in the areas of recruitment, retention, advising, student development and school/community college partnerships.”

Welch joined the college in December 2018. He brings 15 years of experience in higher education, working in federal and state grant-funded programs, student support services, athletics and multicultural affairs.

“Looking forward, we want to build on what we have, who we are,” Welch says, noting he and the team of advisers connect with more than 2,200 undergraduates annually. “We know the reputation of the College of Education stands out. We want to continue and broaden it so we can attract more students and a more diverse population of students.”

He and Mulholland are working with the team to craft a vision statement that brings the office together for excellence in student support. They’re also taking steps to create shared experiences for students, whether they are visiting advising centers in Schindler Education Center or the Wellness and Recreation Center. At WRC, the college renovated space to create a new center with a lobby area and student space similar in look and feel to the SEC center.

The role of academic advisers has evolved since its emergence in the late 1970s. They have become a critical part of the educational experience as they help guide prospective and enrolled students on their path to and through college, complementing faculty advisers who help mentor and support the academic growth of COE students.

“We try to reach students holistically. That encompasses academics, the professional and personal for student success. The role of today’s academic adviser will continue to grow as the changing needs of our students do, too,” says Welch.

“We now have more cohesion and momentum to ensure students have the information they need,” Mulholland says. “It’s been a concerted effort to build the capacity for student support across the entire college. We are more customer service-oriented, and are committed to putting resources in place to support student success.”

“We want our academic advisers to be the best at what they do. It’s about sharing, teamwork and loving what they do.”

 Adds Welch: “We want our academic advisers to be the best at what they do. It’s about sharing, teamwork and loving what they do. We’re embedding best practices and working to make advising everything it can be.”

Welch and Mulholland are working with the team to craft a vision statement that brings the office together for excellence in student support. They’re also taking steps to create shared experiences for students, whether they are visiting advising centers in Schindler Education Center or the Wellness and Recreation Center. At WRC, the college renovated space to create a new center with a lobby area and student space similar in look and feel to the SEC center.
FACULTY HONORED BY PEERS
It was a stellar spring for College of Education faculty, as Nicole Skaar was named Iowa School Psychologist of the Year by the Iowa School Psychologists Association, while Sue Etscheidt was the recipient of ISPA’s Distinguished Service Award. Tricia Schrage was announced as Educator of the Year by the Iowa Athletic Trainers’ Society, and Mike Waggoner was recognized by his peers with the American Educational Research Association Distinguished Achievement Award from AERA’s Religion and Education Special Interest Group.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AWARDS
Teaching: Danielle Cowley, Special education
Scholarship/Research: Sarah Montgomery, Curriculum and instruction
Professional Service: Linda Fitzgerald, Curriculum and instruction
Diversity and Equity: Shuaib Meacham, Curriculum and instruction

UNIVERSITY AWARDS AND RECOGNITION
UNI Outstanding Teaching Award: Sohyun Meacham, Curriculum and instruction
Class of 1943 Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching: Lyn Countryman, Teaching
Ross A. Nielsen Professional Service Award: Amy Petersen, Teaching

2019 FACULTY SUMMER SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS
Windee Weiss, Kinesiology
Mark Hecimovch, Health, recreation and community services
Sarah Montgomery, Curriculum and instruction
Wu-Ying Hsieh, Special education
Jody Stone, Teaching

IOWA TEACHER OF THE YEAR AMONG ALUMNI EDUCATOR HONORS
UNI alums receiving recognition from Gov. Kim Reynolds and the Iowa Department of Education this past year included:

Iowa Teacher of the Year: Christopher Burke (ASC, ’16, principalship, and M.A., ’15, educational leadership and postsecondary education), a math teacher at Dubuque’s Eleanor Roosevelt Middle School.

Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching: Deb Little (B.A., ’87, elementary education; M.A., ’96, reading), teaches fourth grade at Denver Elementary School, Denver, Iowa.

Iowa Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching finalist – Math: Natalie Franke (B.A., ’96, elementary education; ’03, principalship), is a second grade teacher at Brookview Elementary in Waukee.


LATHAM RECEIVES LEGACY AWARD
Jo Ellen Latham, director of curriculum and instruction for the Southeast Polk Community School District, was named the UNI Educational Leadership Legacy Award recipient for 2019.

Latham received her Bachelor of Arts in elementary education and her master’s in reading and language arts from UNI. She later returned to complete her doctorate of education degree as well as her K-12 administrative certificate. She was with the Heartland Area Education Agency in Johnston prior to becoming director of curriculum and instruction for Des Moines Public Schools. She joined Southeast Polk in the same position in 2011.

Noted a colleague from Southeast Polk: “Jo Ellen is a visionary leader who is talented in leading educators through the challenges of teaching and learning to a place of self-efficacy. She is humble, inspirational, brilliant and kind. She is honest, yet eloquent, and always values people over programs. Her love of continuous learning and professional growth is contagious to everyone who meets her.”

This award is given annually to an alum of the UNI principalship, superintendency or doctoral programs who has demonstrated exemplary educational leadership as a leader of learning, service and/or change, core values of educational leadership at the College of Education.

HALL OF EXCELLENCE INDUCTEES RISE TO 130
Five new inductees into the Hall of Excellence were honored at the 16th annual induction ceremonies during UNI Homecoming weekend in October. They include: Emily Jones (B.A. ’04, M.A. ’06); Rochel Rittgers, (B.A. ’81); Jianyu E. Wang, (M.A. ’00); and Leland Wise (B.A. ’67, M.A., ’70). Chris Edginton, who retired after many years of service at UNI, including 19 years as director of the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services, received an honorary award.

These five inductees follow the five honorees at the 2018 ceremonies: Theodore Blaesing, (B.A. ’71, M.A. ’74); Chris Bucknam (M.A., ’82); Alex Garn (B.A. ’86); Jennifer Hall, (B.A. ’01, M.A. ’06, Ed.D. ’10); and Lori Smith (M.A. ’95).

The awards are given annually to honor the professional contributions of graduates of what is now the departments of Kinesiology and Health, Recreation and Community Services.
ALUMNI RETURN FOR ALUMNI-IN-RESIDENCE

Students and faculty welcomed three alumni as part of the ongoing Alumni-in-Residence series in the past year.

In 2019, Jason Klingensmith, principal at Sergeant Bluff-Luton High School, spent time with educational leadership faculty as part of a day, which also included fellow UNI alumni educators from his district.

In 2018, Simona Florentina Boroianu, an English language development instructional coach for the Waterloo Community School District, and Annette Hyde, director of special education for Keystone Area Education Agency, shared their experiences by visiting classes and speaking with students, faculty and administrators.

MINDFULNESS IS KEY FOCUS OF CARLTON-MELLICHAMP LECTURE SERIES

Professor Natalie Tran, chair of secondary education at California State University, Fullerton, was the guest lecturer for the third annual Carlton-Mellichamp Lecture in Education series in April 2019. Her keynote session focused on “Cultivating Social Emotional Awareness through the Practice of Mindfulness.” Tran worked with graduate students to lead a workshop on mindfulness and, as a heritage speaker of Vietnamese, also discussed advancing biliteracy for less commonly taught languages with faculty and area education leaders.

The lecture series began in 2018 with support from a gift to the UNI Foundation from Suzanne and Duncan Mellichamp.

ON TO MARS!

Assistant professor Ron Rinehart and preservice students Tori Wells and Tyler Brown took a group of UNI elementary, middle level and secondary education teachers through an exercise in interactive space exploration education this spring. In the hands-on workshop, complete with robots, Rinehart, Wells and Brown used what they learned as part of a trip to the NASA Space Center in Houston in February to attend the 25th annual Space Exploration Conference. Their trip was supported by a $5,000 grant from the Iowa Space Grant Consortium.

ALUMNA BECKY WOLFE SHARES INSIGHTS AS PART OF TEACHING CONNECTIONS

Becky Wolfe (B.A., ‘01), director of school programs and educational resources for The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis, served as guest speaker for the Bill and Linda Tubbs Teaching Connections at the College of Education in February 2019.

Wolfe focused on non-traditional delivery of educational programming, education in the nonprofit setting, youth development and STEM education. The professional development series, begun in 2017, was renamed to reflect a UNI Foundation gift from Bill and Linda Tubbs.

NONPROFIT STUDENTS EXCEL AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

College of Education leisure, youth and human services students Mikaela Heikens and Josie Riedell were among a group of five UNI students awarded first place for a presentation on fundraising at the Alliance Management Institute’s national conference in January 2019. As a chapter, the UNI Nonprofit Leadership Alliance was honored for its fundraising excellence and best practices as a student association.

COE UNDERGRADS AND GRAD STUDENTS HONORED WITH UNI STUDENT AWARDS

College of Education undergraduate and graduate students were well represented in UNI awards conferred in spring 2019. Awards included:

2019 Student Leadership Awards

Dr. Sue Follon Scholarship for Women in Leadership: Shaylyn Trenkamp, elementary education

Dr. Charlotte West Scholar-Athlete West Award: Crystal Florman, a leisure, youth and human services student on the women’s swimming and diving team; and Isaac Holtz, a
movement and exercise science major on the men’s track and field team.

**Diversity Matters Award:** Nadir Khan, public health and education

**Servant Leader Award:** Emily Meier, leisure, youth and human services; Trevor Fletcher, elementary education.

**Graduate College Awards for Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation**

**First Place:** Allan Nelson, Ed.D., educational leadership and postsecondary education

“Exploring the Experiences of Adolescent Students Attending a Virtual School

**Second Place:** Junu Shrestha, Ed.D., allied health, recreation and community services

“Study of Low Dose Nitrite Stress on Human Mononuclear Cells: An In-Vitro Case-Control Study on Osteoarthritis”

**Third Place:** Stanley Ebede, Ed.D., allied health, recreation and community services

“Student Engagement in Higher Education: Measuring the Differences in Community Engagement”

**2019 Graduate Student Symposium**

**Poster Presentations**

**Honorable Mention:** Kylie Wilson, physical education: kinesiology (M.A.), “The Effectiveness of Using a Podcast to Teach Person-First Language.”

**Oral Presentations:** Three doctoral students in the curriculum and instruction independent study area earned first place awards:

Mahjabeen Hussain, “Understanding ESL Undergraduate Students’ Beliefs About Learner-Centered Instruction;”

Shehreen Iqtaad, “If It Wasn’t My Race, It Was Other Things Like Being a Woman, or My Disability: A Qualitative Research Synthesis of Students of Color with Disabilities in Education;”

Abby Weiland, “Teacher Well-Being: Voices in the Field.”

**NEW LEADERS AT COE**

In addition to Colleen Mulholland’s appointment as interim dean, the following faculty assumed new leadership positions at the start of the FY 2019-20 school year:

**Susan Etscheidt,** head, special education (previously, interim head)

**Benjamin Forsyth,** head, educational psychology, foundations and leadership studies (EPFLS)

**Timothy Gilson,** assistant department head, EPFLS

**Stephanie Schmitz,** interim associate dean, graduate studies

**Deborah Tidwell,** interim director, Jacobson Center for Literacy and Learning and program coordinator, doctorate in education program.

Robin Dada previously joined the COE as head of curriculum and instruction, while Mary Donegan-Ritter stepped in as interim head for the teaching department.

**NEW PROGRAM COORDINATOR FOR RAPIL**

Amy Mayer, M.A.E., is the new program coordinator of the Regents Alternate Pathway to Iowa Licensure (RAPIL) program. Ms. Mayer succeeds Susan Fischer, who retired May 30.

**RECENT RETIREMENTS**

The UNI College of Education said good-bye and wished a happy retirement to the following faculty who retired during or at the end of the 2018-19 school year.

**Susan Alborn-Yilek,** Educational psychology, foundations and leadership studies

**Tom Davis,** Health, recreation and community services

**Chris Edginton,** Health, recreation and community services

**Linda Fitzgerald,** Curriculum and instruction

**Salli Forbes,** Curriculum and instruction

**Frank Kohler,** Special education

**Terri Lasswell,** Teaching

**Jane Toerner,** Kinesiology

**AMERICAN READ-IN**

Despite snowy, cold conditions that disrupted schedules and forced the cancellation of the 13th annual African-American Read-In, the 8th annual African-American Childrens and Families Conference brought together guest speakers, educators, students, staff and community members once again. The conference, entitled “The Power of Our People, Strength Through History, Culture, Hope, Experience and Collective Stories,” kicked off with an energetic drum and step performance by the Union Steppers Drill Team.
Thank you to all who made generous gifts to support students, programs and faculty within the College of Education this past year. You are making a difference and impacting student success through your gifts!

Over the past nine months, I have heard over and over from alumni that the University of Northern Iowa was the right fit. It was the right size, it was the right community, and their time here set them up for every career and life step they have had since. I feel the exact same way. Almost 20 years ago, I also chose UNI because it was the right fit and the right school for me.

College of Education students become educators, health professionals, coaches, nonprofit directors and community leaders. They are able to succeed in and out of the classroom through the support of UNI alumni and friends, who make a difference through their financial support to COE programs, scholarships, the Dean’s Fund for Excellence and more.

The Power of One. One donor can make a huge impact on student success. This past year, new scholarships have been created, lecture series have been funded and programs have been supported. By living purple and giving gold, our alumni and supporters impact the next generation of UNI students by providing incredible speakers and classroom experiences.

Since I joined the UNI Foundation in late September 2018, I have met incredible UNI alumni and friends, both in Iowa and throughout the country. For many of them, scholarships made UNI a possibility, and now they are excited to give back to create that opportunity for students today.

To give UNI students the highest-quality learning environment and ensure a UNI education continues to be affordable, donor support has taken on an even greater significance. I invite you to join us in taking the necessary steps to ensure a UNI education remains accessible and affordable for all. With your investment in scholarships, students can focus on their studies, enjoy all that a university education offers and contribute to our society and economy.

Please consider making a gift to support student scholarship or another area of passion. For more information or to discuss, contact me at 800-782-9522, 319-273-7319, or kimberly.hanna@uni.edu.

Kim Hanna ’04
Director of Development, College of Education
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AT-A-GLANCE

**Faculty to Student Ratio**
16:1

**Student Teachers in 2019**
531

**Principals Endorsed**
52 (Summer 2019)

**Superintendents Endorsed**
13 (December 2019)

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**FALL 2019**

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**UNI COE UNDERGRAD ENROLLMENT**
- Elementary Education: 54%
- Physical Education: 16%
- Movement and Exercise Science: 10%
- Early Childhood Education: 8%
- Middle Level Education: 8%
- Leisure, Youth & Human Services: 5%
- Athletic Training & Rehab Studies: 4%
- Public Health: 7%
- Global Health: 2%
- Wellness & Fitness: 1%
- Women’s Health: 1%
- Environmental Health: 1%
- Community Nutrition: 1%
- Health Promotion: 1%

**UNI COE GRADUATE ENROLLMENT**
- Principalship: 15%
- School Library Studies: 12%
- ASC: Principalship: 9%
- Post-Sec Ed: Student Affairs: 9%
- ASC: Superintendency: 6%
- Kinesiology & Sport Performance: 6%
- Literacy Education: 5%
- School Psychology: 4%
- Leisure, Youth & Human Services: 4%
- Early Childhood Education: 4%
- Special Education: Consultant: 3%
- Education (Curriculum & Instruction): 3%
- Teacher Leadership International Education: 3%
- Ed Psych: Context & Techniques Assessment: 2%
- Physical Education Pedagogy: 2%
- Education (Leadership): 2%
- Health Education: Community Health: 2%
- Allied Health, Recreation & Community Services: 1%
- Special Education: Field Specialization: 1%
- Health Education: Health Promotion/Fitness Mgmt: 1%
- Masters of Athletic Training: 1%
- Leadership and Special Education: 1%
- Instructional Technology: 1%
- Public Health: Community Nutrition: 1%

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**FACULTY**
- Number of current COE faculty: 158
- Full Professor: 23
- Assistant Professor: 24
- Associate Professor: 33
- Instructor: 78

**COE UNDERGRAD PLACEMENT**
- 98% Employed or continuing education six months after graduation

**FUNDS RAISED**
- Funds raised for COE: $2,073,854
- Alumni/Friends: $1,527,939
- Corporations/Other: $545,915
- Planned gifts: $507,508