Letter from the Editor

Hello! I am pleased to say that this is the second Early Childhood Education Newsletter! And it is packed! We certainly had an exciting spring in ECE. From taking field trips to winning awards, our faculty, staff, and students were busy, busy, busy!

The articles on the following pages highlight some of our most exceptional happenings of the semester as reported by both students and faculty.

As always, I am so pleased to have the opportunity to share some of the many amazing things that have been happening in our Program and some of the great things ahead. Though it is always fun to reflect on accomplishments, it is also exciting to look ahead, and this newsletter does that, too. Check out the upcoming Early Childhood Speaker Series on page 4!

I look forward to sharing with you again soon, and I hope you enjoy what you read!

Estee Baldwin, editor

Lindsey Guccione: One of a Kind

By Megan Katz, student

She is a Montana girl, born to teach. Lindsey Guccione, born and raised in Billings, Montana, will begin her university career this fall as an early childhood professor. She did most of her undergraduate work at Montana State University-Bozeman. However, she did a semester exchange at Rhode Island College in Providence, and completed her student teaching in Las Vegas through UNLV. Her major was Elementary Education with an Early Childhood emphasis and certification. She knew from the time she was very young that she wanted to work with primary-age children.

While she enjoyed all levels of elementary, she was particularly drawn to early childhood. Because she wanted to make sure that she would be highly qualified to teach young children, she decided to select an emphasis and certification in early childhood.

When asked what her teaching philosophy was, she replied “My teaching philosophy embraces the whole child. I value diversity and believe that teaching goes beyond the scope of academic skill development. I take a constructivist approach to teaching in that I believe learners must be actively engaged in the learning process in order for the integration of new knowledge to take place. My philosophy supports an inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning. I think learning is a natural process that should focus on the importance of motivation, social interaction and collaboration, preparing students to support a democratic and active society, and helping students to learn through problem-solving.”

Here at UNC, the Early Childhood Education Program is proud to welcome Lindsey Guccione as a member of our full time staff. As part of the ECE program, Lindsey is sure to be an outstanding teacher who is eager to help educate the future teachers of America at UNC.

STE Faculty Visits Russia

Faculty from the College of Education spent two weeks in Russia involved in educational and tourist activities. The group rode the train from Moscow across Siberia to Novisibirsk where they participated in a conference focused on teacher education. Last fall, educators from Russia visited UNC, and the School of Teacher Education hosted a conference for them.

This photo shows the coordinator of the Early Childhood Program, Dr. Thompson, with her Russian host family. While in Novisibirsk, Dr. Thompson also visited schools, early childhood programs, a children’s camp, and an orphanage.
School SecretaryWins Prestigious Award

By Danielle Kim, student

Lynette Kerrigan is not only the woman behind the desk in the STE office, but she received The Most Influential Woman in Weld County award. This past semester, Kerrigan was nominated for this award by one of her co-workers, Roxanne Garcia, at St. Peter’s Catholic Church in Greeley, Colorado.

Kerrigan left her job at St. Peter’s in December and made the transition from school-aged children to college students. Kerrigan developed the curriculum for religious education and was the director of this program at St. Peter’s for five years. Now she is the administrative assistant to the School of Teacher Education at UNC. She said, “I changed positions because my kids are grown and gone now and the job at the church required me to be there 24-7. I am enjoying my husband again!”

Early Childhood Education Practicum

By Kristin Lundgren, student

Every Education major completes a practicum during Block I. The Early Childhood students go for ten full days over a two-week period.

The Early Childhood Block I students were able to connect with the children and mentor teachers on a personal and educational level. The six Early Childhood students were placed throughout Northern Colorado; three were placed in Fort Lupton, one in Boulder, one in Greeley, and one in Fort Collins. The ECE students were able to observe multiple lessons throughout the day, study classroom management strategies, view the implementation of curriculum, and observe many different teaching styles. The Block I students truly gained a valuable experience out in the teaching-world and they are looking forward to their future teaching experiences.

Irish Exchange Student Spend Semester at UNC

By Sarah McArdle, Exchange Student

My name is Sarah McArdle and I spent the spring semester of 2009 as an international exchange student at the University of Northern Colorado. In early January, I was welcomed with open arms into the life of the School of Education at UNC. Coming from a small teacher training college, of about 2,500 students in Dublin, Ireland, I was barely prepared for the large size of UNC, but the small, intimate Education Department made my stay much easier. I took courses in Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education along with spending two-days a week in a local elementary school. I have to say my time at UNC was wonderful. I am extremely grateful to have been given the chance not only to experience college classes in another country, but also to be given an insight into the school system of another country. I hope to bring home the different ideas in education, which I learned in Colorado, and hopeful, in a years time, be able to integrate them into my own teaching.

“A Woman’s Place”

By Allison Greenwood, student

Established in January of 1981, “A Woman’s Place” is the only domestic violence agency located in Weld County. The organization provides free and confidential services to women and children who have been affected by domestic violence. “A Woman’s Place” offers an emergency shelter, 24-hour crisis line, assistance in case management, children’s programs, in addition to education and outreach for victims’ and survivors’ family and friends. As a result of generous donations and countless fundraisers, “A Woman’s Place” was able to expand their location in 2003, doubling its size and making it possible to provide service to all women and children who come for help. Students and faculty of the Early Childhood Education program at UNC volunteered their time to the organization last semester, and help is always welcome. To volunteer for “A Woman’s Place”, go online to http://volunteer@awpdv.org or call (970) 351-0476. For more information on “A Woman’s Place” visit www.awpdv.org.

Lincoln Brought to Life

By Estee Baldwin, Editor

Those attending the Early Childhood Speakers Series on March 31st got a real treat when Dr. Rick Silverman presented his talk on President Lincoln.

Dr. Silverman provided a wealth of information about Lincoln through a variety of mediums, including some very engaging internet sites and books. More than materials, though, Dr. Silverman brought a personal knowledge that was intriguing. He revealed a side of Lincoln that was new to many of those in attendance. It was an exciting opportunity for all to learn more about an individual who is already so well-known.

Dr. Silverman also shared a variety of books that could be used in classrooms from pre-K through high school to expand student’s understandings of one of our most memorable U.S. presidents. All that attended walked away from Dr. Silverman’s talk with resources and information to use as a teacher.

The Early Childhood Speaker Series offers a variety of talks by experts like Dr. Silverman throughout the year. Please see page 4 for all the exciting speakers planned for the fall!
**FIELD TRIP for Creative Expression and Play in Early Childhood class**

Fieldtrips are a vital part of the learning process for students of all ages—college learners included! There were many exciting fieldtrips taken by UNC students during the spring semester. Students enjoyed a visit to a local Waldorf school as well as a joint field trip with kindergarten students to the Denver Children’s Museum.

By Kathy Hamblin, faculty

The ECEC 455 Creative Expression and Play in Early Childhood class emphasizes the value of high quality and meaningful play and creative arts experiences in ECE. In addition to play, the curriculum includes art, music and movement and creative dramatics. During spring semester, the EDEC 455 students had the opportunity to visit a class at the Union Colony Children’s Music Academy (UCCMA). The academy was established in 1989 and offers the Musikgarten comprehensive curricula for children from birth to age nine.

“Based on meeting the developmental needs of children as they grow, the academy provides a consistent and thoughtful music-learning plan for the first nine years of a child’s development.” Throughout the curriculum, favorite songs, stories and dances are revisited – building on what the child has learned and enjoyed. The academy’s program is based on the following developmental benefits for children:

- Music awakens and stimulates neural pathways in the brain that are associated with higher forms of intelligence, such as abstract thinking, empathy, mathematics and science.
- Music’s melodic and rhythmic patterns provide exercise for the brain and help develop memory. Remember singing the ABC song to learn your ABC’s?
- Studying music helps children establish good listening habits, which are essential for achievement in school.
- Overall, music activities are perfect for child development. Music immerses the child in language, evokes movement, stimulates the brain and fosters physical coordination – all in a group setting that builds community – a holistic experience.

Students were able to observe the UC-CMA Director, Amy Johnson as she skillfully led her 4 and 5 year olds through a typical 1 hour class consisting of a developmentally appropriate variety of music and movement experiences including: how children respond to visualization, playing instruments, creative movement, singing familiar songs, the effective use of music/singing to manage groups and the benefits of relating music to visual arts creative expression. The children started with a familiar routine of songs and finger plays followed by a creative movement experience within the circle. Next the children listened to a soundscape and acted on that with scarves, musical instruments, creative expression in movement, and used a giant drum to repeat rhythms. They also were offered the opportunity to draw a picture of the whale they visualized during the creative movement activity. All of this culminated when parents came into the room to pick up children, and they reenacted some of the activities to demonstrate their learning and give parents a chance to carry on the activities at home. Amy then gave a brief oral presentation based on a handout she had prepared and students had the chance to ask questions. One student commented, “Now I see the benefits of offering music and movement activities to young children.” Another student noted that she discovered she knew more about music and movement than she realized, adding “I think I can do this!”

Kathy Hamblin is a faculty adjunct for the program and Board member for Union Colony Children’s Music Academy
Early Childhood Speaker Series for Fall 2009 Announced

The Early Childhood Program is excited to announce the following lunchtime fall seminars:

**Socratic Seminars**
**Presented by Estee Baldwin**
Socratic Seminars are a fantastic way to promote higher-order thinking, questioning skills and accountability for students’ own learning. This talk will explain why and how to use Socratic Seminars in your classroom at any grade level!
**Wednesday, September 9 from noon-1:00 in McKee 425**

**Using Photo Essays with Children**
**Presented by Dr. Susan Thompson**
Participants will learn how to help children create photo-essays that communicate their feelings, ideas, and experiences.
**Wednesday, September 30 from noon-1:00 in McKee 425**

**Responding to Intervention:**
**Using a Problem-Solving RtI Model to Reach Readers**
**Presented by Dr. Michael Opitz**
This session focuses on background information related to RtI including two typical protocols. The problem-solving protocol will then be showcased to illustrate how it connects to meaningful and insightful reading diagnosis and how it can be used to provide instruction to reach readers.
**Wednesday, October 21 from noon-1:00 in McKee 425**

All seminars are open to and appropriate for all education students!

Please plan to attend these informative talks and feel free to bring your lunch along!

New Publications from ECE Faculty!

**Comprehension and English Language Learners by Michael Opitz and Lindsey Guccione**

Dr. Opitz will be a presenter in the Early Childhood Speaker Series on October 21!

This book is one of the few that focuses on oral language development, a crucial but often overlooked component of academic development for ELLs. It helps fill a gap in the professional resources teachers need to help their English language learners reach high levels of oral and written English proficiency.

—David and Yvonne Freeman
Authors of Teaching Reading in Multilingual Classrooms and Essential Linguistics

**Telling Stories with Photo Essays by Susan Conklin Thompson and Kayenta Williams**

This is Dr. Thompson’s 10th published book. She will be presenting in this Early Childhood Speaker Series on September 20!

"The authors offer a wealth of ways to engage children in expressing meaning and documenting experiences through photographs. They provide all the practical help teachers need to use this exciting medium to expand children’s ways of perceiving, representing, and thinking about their world." — Carol Copple, NAEYC Director of Publications and Initiatives in Educational Practice

Hosted by the Early Childhood Program, seminars are open to and appropriate for all education students!