Aligning Arts and Academia

Talena Mara began her career in the public school system as a music teacher and principal. Later, while serving as a teacher and administrator for artistic institutions like Julliard School, the New York City Opera, and the Manhattan School of Music, she recognized the disparity of arts education in the public school environment. This sparked her personal mission to increase the impact of the arts in every classroom.

The doors opened for Mara to pursue this mission when she accepted her current job as vice president of education at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, a center for artistic performance and educational programs in Costa Mesa. She began looking for a partner to help her bring arts into the classroom.

“Students should be exposed to the arts every day, and not just in music and visual arts classrooms,” says Mara. “My brilliant staff at Segerstrom and I wanted to partner with the people who shared our vision for this unique endeavor and with an organization that had the staffing and financial resources to put together an entrepreneurial program.”

When Mara and her team first met with CSUF faculty members Kristine Quinn, lecturer of elementary and bilingual education, and Teresa Crawford, professor of elementary and bilingual education and director of the SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union Center for Creativity and Critical Thinking, they knew they’d found the perfect partner in Cal State Fullerton’s College of Education.

The college was already infusing arts experiences into its teacher preparation curriculum through its multiple subject credential program, featuring arts-rich cohort blocks. As a sponsor of that program, the SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union Center for Creativity and Critical Thinking was seeking additional arts-centered opportunities that would enrich teacher candidates’ educational experience.

“From the first meeting, it was an incredibly organic and energetic process,” says Mara, describing how the team developed ideas to integrate the arts into both student teacher preparation and professional development for experienced educators. “Through this partnership, we can connect master teachers in schools to student teachers in the college and university system to our arts organization. We’re all very passionate about this connection.”

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Crawford says everyone at the college — and the SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union Center for Creativity and Critical Thinking — was excited to work with Segerstrom.

“Participating teachers are more open to exploring arts-based instruction in their classrooms with their student teachers,” explains Crawford. “This supportive environment is a win-win for all: student teachers practice teaching the arts, teachers receive professional development and implementation support, and — most importantly — classroom students get opportunities to develop their skills as artists, creative thinkers, and learners.”

Quinn says it’s not enough to emphasize the importance of classroom arts among student teachers. Often, master teachers in the field are often reluctant to incorporate the arts if they haven’t done so in the past.

“We’ve reintroduced it in our teacher credential program, but we have generations of adults and children for whom it was not part of their learning experience,” she explains. “They think of it more as an extracurricular activity. The nice thing about the new Common Core State Standards is that they encourage creative thinking, problem solving, and collaboration — things inherent in the arts.”

Since visual literacy is one of the new Common Core State Standards, Quinn says many educators hope to see a change in curriculum across all levels.

“There has to be a paradigm shift,” adds Quinn. “The arts need to become a focus not just for universities and arts centers, but throughout general education.”

In moving toward this goal, Guillaume reiterates the importance of bringing student teachers and cooperating teachers together for professional development.

“They can co-plan to apply what they learned during the session in their own classrooms,” says Guillaume. “We view this as a unique experience, as cooperating teachers and student teachers don’t often have the opportunity to participate in professional development together. The fact that they attend as a cohort allows us to better articulate the Segerstrom experience, the university course experience, and the student teaching experience so that each mutually supports the others.”

Reactions from student teachers and master teachers who’ve attended Segerstrom’s workshops have been positive across the board.

“Many of them go back to their classrooms and immediately implement the strategies they’ve learned,” says Quinn. “They’re really excited about it. Arts integration benefits students of all ages. The processes you go through to create art — making critical decisions, challenging yourself, pushing past your level of comfort — all teach important lessons about persistence and determination.”

Inspiring Integrated Instruction

For the last eight years, the College of Education has offered two arts-focused cohort blocks within the credential program — one led by Quinn and the other by Guillaume.

“I teach mathematics and science methods and integrate many arts-based activities into my courses,” explains Guillaume. “One example of this is mixed media journaling. All credential candidates keep journals throughout the program to capture their learning and experiences using different media and techniques. We’ve also recently completed a sculpture garden as part of an engineering design project. Students in both arts blocks made sculptures of animals they studied from either the rainforest or the savanna.”

She says her student teachers highly value the happiness that comes with arts-integrated instruction.

“Perhaps the biggest change I notice in my students is the change in their mindsets from a fixed perspective — ‘People are either good at art, or they are not; I am not creative; I am not an artist’ — to a growth mindset when they realize that everyone can learn to create art. It’s teachable,” Guillaume explains.

Guillaume says participating in arts-rich education requires student teachers to learn things that are new, and sometimes difficult, and to reflect on their own learning and growth. The effects of both the arts-rich curriculum and the opportunities afforded by the Segerstrom partnership have been dramatic.

“Student teachers surprise themselves by growing as artists,” she adds. “This experience enables them to expect children to learn and grow in the arts and in every discipline.”
Creative Collaborators Convene at Arts Conference

The College of Education recently held its first-ever “Arts at the Center of 21st Century Education” conference to promote arts infusion in the preK-12 curriculum. The conference gathered a community of people committed to arts education for children of all ages, through school and beyond.

In many ways, the event was a celebration of the dynamic collaboration between the College of Education and Segerstrom Center for the Arts, and a celebration of the college’s growing initiatives to encourage teachers to employ the arts in their classrooms.

“The conference recognized that the arts should not be peripheral school subjects,” explains Andrea Guillaume, professor of elementary and bilingual education and coordinator for the SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union Center for Creativity and Critical Thinking. “Arts are at the core of the human experience and should play a central role in 21st century education.”

The event was sponsored by the SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union Center for Creativity and Critical Thinking and Segerstrom Center for the Arts. The Center for Creativity and Critical Thinking, located in the College of Education, provides professional development services to current and future teachers and promotes art, science, and technology within preK-12 education. In 2012, Cal State Fullerton partnered with Segerstrom in Costa Mesa, a center for artistic performance and educational programs, to help integrate the arts into student teaching classrooms.

“The SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union Center for Creativity and Critical Thinking is committed to the active and meaningful integration of the arts in learning as a way to increase academic achievement,” explains Teresa Crawford, professor of elementary and bilingual education and director of the Center. “This conference promoted that message to a wide audience of teachers, administrators, artists, and students. The sheer joy on participants’ faces as they danced, painted, sang, and drew their way through the day was energizing. Tying these experiences to educational advances was the piece that made the difference.”

The January 24 conference drew more than 200 attendees and featured a keynote speech by Talena Mara, vice president of education at Segerstrom Center for the Arts. Mara shared stories of how the arts empower individual development and success and discussed the power of the arts to connect people through the act of creation. She described Segerstrom’s programs and educational outreach and shared her own story of artistic development — about taking a writing class to fulfill her dream of authoring a book.

A diverse assortment of presenters — including CSUF faculty members and education graduate students, Segerstrom artist educators, and teachers and community artists from across California — offered workshops on the importance of arts integration for Common Core State Standards; STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics); community and family partnerships; civic engagement; and just, equitable, and inclusive education.

“It was an incredible experience,” says Guillaume. “Participants created art throughout the conference, from a graffiti wall mural with our own tags to instrumental and vocal music, dance, printmaking, sketch-noting, and more within the sessions.”

The conference’s lunch session featured a short film by 18-year-old Cypress resident Kayla Briët about the importance of technology in the classroom. Briët produced the film as a high school senior, and it was one of 16 official selections shown at the inaugural White House Student Film Festival. After the film, Briët shared how she taught herself video production and found her voice through the arts.

Participants also enjoyed a performance by the dance team No Limits, which features children with autism spectrum disorders performing alongside their peer mentors.

“After a full day, people left the conference grinning, which is hardly typical for a conference,” says Guillaume. “I think their smiles said it all. We hope to host it every January, and we already have the date for the second conference — January 30, 2016!”

College of Education students and faculty, district teachers, and artist educators from Segerstrom Center for the Arts participate in the college’s first “Arts at the Center of 21st Century Education” conference, sponsored by the SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union Center for Creativity and Critical Thinking and Segerstrom Center for the Arts.
Jacquelyn Gonzalez always assumed she’d teach in an elementary or secondary school classroom. She began working in classrooms and after-school programs when she was just 16 years old and pursued a bachelor’s degree in child and adolescent studies at Cal State Fullerton, on the education track.

But while she was studying at CSUF in 2010, Gonzalez began to wonder if there was a way to stay in the education field while working outside the classroom. She noticed a posting at the career center inviting students to apply to the Center for Research on Educational Access and Leadership (C-REAL).

“I had no idea what I was signing up for. I just saw the word education,” says Gonzalez. “I had no background in this type of research. But, Dr. (Dawn) Person and Michelle (Garcia) took a chance on me.”

C-REAL, a data-driven, solution-focused interdisciplinary research center, opened in 2008 as a partnership among preK-12 educational institutions in Orange and Los Angeles Counties and the College of Education at CSUF. C-REAL seeks to eliminate achievement gaps in local schools through program assessment, evaluation, educational interventions, and other policies to support the success of all learners.

Directed by Dawn Person, C-REAL intentionally recruits and hires a diverse set of students in order to create a strong community of student researchers.

“We are dedicated to the holistic development of our student assistants,” says C-REAL program coordinator Michelle Garcia. “We are invested not only in reaching our strategic program goals, but in helping them reach their personal goals. We ask questions about what they want to achieve, both as students and paraprofessionals, and work with them to craft learning outcomes that combine their goals with those of the center.”

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Jacquelyn Gonzalez says the research background and social awareness she gained through C-REAL opened doors to her current role as a legislative assistant for U.S. Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-46th) in Washington, D.C.

“Because of my experience at C-REAL, I can advise the congresswoman to prioritize higher education in her agenda, and she’s been able to do a lot more for undocumented students and students in debt,” says Gonzalez. “My time with C-REAL was a pivotal point that allowed me to get where I am today. The program taught me that education beyond the classroom requires community coalitions, working together, and taking risks. You can’t impact social change unless you work as a team.”

Collaboration Over Competition

Michelle Garcia herself started out in a student role within the center. She says that Person’s leadership style inspires a sense of responsibility among students to show up every day ready to deliver work that is stronger than what they produced the day before.

“When she gave me my first solo project, I was full of self-doubt,” admits Garcia. “I walked into her office and tried to give the work back! She assured me that I was capable and told me to make it happen. That is just what I did, and I have never looked back.”

Person says she believes this collaboration between students and faculty, along with students’ personal development plans and mentoring and coaching – provided by herself, Garcia, and peers – have contributed most to C-REAL’s success.

“This is a great educational opportunity for students at all levels, as well as faculty,” says Person.

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Initially, Yvonne Garcia was just looking for an on-campus job that would pay the bills and fit into her school schedule. But through C-REAL, she found opportunities to produce high-quality work while feeling supported by peers and leadership in the center.

In her time at C-REAL, Garcia – now a research and communications specialist in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, highlights C-REAL as a major influence in her educational and professional development.

“Because of my C-REAL research skills, I was confident to apply to graduate school,” she says. “And I was also eager to apply what I learned in C-REAL about leadership, assessment, and social justice to the professional world.”

Gonzalez began thinking about her role of educator outside the classroom. When she saw an opportunity for a summer internship in Washington, D.C., with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, she applied and was selected to work there during her last semester of college.

As an intern, Gonzalez loved working on educational issues with U.S. Representative Grace Napolitano (D-32nd). She also realized diversity was lacking in the federal offices.

“Not many folks out here looked like me or had my background,” she explains. “There weren’t many Latinos, women, or first-generation Americans from working-class immigrant families. I started to realize that my voice, and the voice of my community, deserved a place at the table.”

So Gonzalez decided to stay in Washington, D.C., where she now serves as a legislative assistant for U.S. Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-46th), who represents Gonzalez home district in northern Orange County. Gonzalez analyzes domestic policy dealing with education, healthcare, transportation, water, labor rights, and energy. She regularly uses the skills she learned during her time at C-REAL: research, program evaluation, and stakeholder communication.
Jennifer Ponder, associate professor of elementary and bilingual education, serves as co-PI for Titan PRIDE – an innovative project designed to strengthen teacher preparation.

Taking PRIDE in Teacher Candidates

The landscape of K-12 education is being transformed through new curriculum standards; an increased demand for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) proficiency; and a greater emphasis on college and career readiness. School districts and institutions of higher education must adequately prepare teachers to meet these challenges and help students build strong academic foundations.

Cal State Fullerton has been awarded a $230,000 California State University grant over the next 18 months to develop Titan PRIDE—an innovative project designed to strengthen teacher preparation. Fullerton is one of eight CSU campuses to receive funding as part of the “Preparing a New Generation of Educators for California” initiative, made possible by a $3 million S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation award to the CSU system.

The CSUF College of Education has three teacher-preparation programs in elementary education, secondary education, and special education.

“This project brings together all of our programs, our district partners, and faculty from the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics to uncover common threads we consider essential for teacher preparation,” says Kristin Stang, professor of special education and co-PI (principal investigator) of the Titan PRIDE Project. “It is an opportunity to expand the amazing efforts already under way in each program.”

Stang and Jennifer Ponder, chair, associate professor of elementary and bilingual education, and co-PI for Titan PRIDE, previously worked on a federal grant proposal together. During that project, they realized some teacher preparation techniques – like co-teaching – were highly valued in each of the college’s programs.

“This grant has allowed us to identify these key strategies we share and take them to the next level through collaboration,” says Ponder.

According to Beverly Young, assistant vice chancellor of academic affairs for CSU, nearly every CSU campus applied for this funding, and the proposals were rigorously reviewed by a group of faculty, deans, and K-12 partners from around the state.

“The competition was intense, and only the ideas for the very best work were among the eight that received funding,” explains Young. “The CSU Fullerton College of Education showed great vision and commitment for this important work and should be proud of receiving this grant award.”
Engaging Strategic Support

The “PRIDE” in Titan PRIDE stands for “Preparation through co-teaching in a Residency-based Integrated model at professional Development sites to provide exemplary clinical Experiences.” Funding started in January, and representatives from the College of Education, the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NSM), and partner school districts have been meeting weekly to develop guidelines for the resources and activities they plan to implement over the next 18 months.

“One of the key features we’re talking about is a residency model, in which student teachers work with the same district through an entire academic year,” explains Stang. “We piloted this feature with secondary education last year, so we’re now looking at elementary and special education. We are planning to start with cohorts in two of our partner districts this fall.”

The project team is also exploring the idea of embedding college faculty members in each partner district as “clinical coaches” for teacher candidates.

“In the co-teaching model, a district teacher shares classroom responsibility with a student teacher and mentors that candidate,” says Ponder. “Exploring this, we realized the university supervisor’s responsibility should be to maximize the partnership between candidates and co-teachers, and that could be accomplished by embedding a clinical coach within the district staff.”

Similar to a medical rotation model, a clinical coach (from the college) would move from building to building within a district, during regular school hours – making the “rounds” through classrooms with and without student teachers to take note of how various educators deliver the curriculum.

The clinical coach would be responsible for implementing an observation learning cycle for student teachers, including a pre-observation meeting; a video-recorded observation; a post-observation discussion among the candidate, district teacher, and clinical coach; and an opportunity for the candidate to view the recorded observation and provide his or her own feedback.

“Candidates have always received feedback; this longer process just ensures it’s ongoing,” says Stang. “For effective professional development, we need more faculty and staff from the University to serve as direct partners, as mentors and coaches.”

Stang says the project team is also identifying professional development facilitators from the University, who will coordinate unique development opportunities for teacher candidates as well as partner district faculty – implementing new methods courses for teacher candidates, enhancing teacher training, and offering opportunities for those teachers to present at the college.

“It’s important that we have that reciprocal piece,” explains Ponder. “We want to work with the districts and ask, ‘What do your teachers have, what do new candidates have, and what do each of them need?’ The landscape changes year to year in education, as in society. Beyond the demand for increased technology skills, success depends on working together, asking questions, and finding ways to share expertise.”

Minerva Chavez, assistant professor of secondary education, will serve as one of these professional development facilitators.

“My new role will be to develop and strengthen purposeful partnerships at the district level to serve as a pipeline for future candidates and co-teachers, and that could be to maximize the partnership between teachers, and college professors.”

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When he was 18 years old, Nabil Abu-Ghazaleh (Ed.D. ’15) arrived in the United States with a 30-day visa, hoping to be accepted into a California college. Three decades later, he’s the president of one of those colleges, with a doctoral degree in education from Cal State Fullerton and 26 years of community college teaching and leadership experience behind him.

“I earned my bachelor’s and master’s degrees in engineering sciences from UC San Diego. I also met my wife there, so really I earned three degrees,” says Abu-Ghazaleh with a laugh, of his early educational experience.

“I then spent about 21 months as a transportation engineer for Caltrans. This experience included an opportunity to retrain engineers in computer-aided engineering and design, which made me fall in love with teaching. I then applied for a tenure-track position at Pasadena City College that I’d found in the Los Angeles Times, purely by coincidence.”

Hired by Pasadena City College as a drafting and design instructor, Abu-Ghazaleh taught for 10 years before becoming interim dean of engineering and technology. His next role was as dean of fine, performing, and media arts at Moorpark College in Ventura County.

“I really did become the ‘dancing dean,’” he says. “I put on ballet slippers and tights and performed in their recitals.”

Abu-Ghazaleh finished his six years at Moorpark as dean of arts and sciences before serving four years as vice president of academic affairs at Pierce College in Los Angeles.

He then served as vice president of educational services and technology for the Coast Community College District. “That wasn’t a good fit for me,” he explains, “I found myself missing the campus environment, especially being around students and the innovations in teaching, learning, and social justice.”

He adds, “While teaching, I’d also worked for six or seven years on a Ph.D. but new administrative roles distracted me from finishing my dissertation. I walked away with a second master’s in higher education and organizational change from UCLA and a clear understanding of my attachment to practice over pure research. The chancellor of Coast Community College District, Dr. (Ding-Jo) Currie, was retiring and planning to teach in Cal State Fullerton’s doctor of education program. She encouraged me to apply.”

Inspired, Abu-Ghazaleh decided to pursue his Ed.D.

A Dissertation on Determination

“I was one of the last in my cohort to finish, but it speaks well for the program that just about everyone does finish,” says Abu-Ghazaleh. “There’s a lot to be said for the support and encouragement the instructors and cohort provide. In fairness, I also had the support of my wife and her permission to do no yard work for three years. I really did compartmentalize my life, studying all weekend and spending long weekday hours on the job. But I found it really helpful to be in the practice while completing my studies.”

He credits the community college leadership group, Cohort 4 (“The Fantastic 4!”), to which he belonged, as a strong source of support as he moved through the program.

Hoffman recalls a “watershed moment” when Abu-Ghazaleh was working on the final chapter of his doctoral dissertation, which examined the effects of demographics in urban community colleges on student experiences and interactions.
“My experience in the Ed.D. program allows me to participate authoritatively in the conversation, to share what I’ve learned and shift my focus to students’ experiences,” he says. “I can now identify some critical elements in the way we should approach our students – from the environment we create, to how the faculty engages and encourages students, to how the entire system can support students with diverse backgrounds. I had findings in those areas that were very significant.”

Abu-Ghazaleh adds that it’s ironic that his dissertation focused on persistence, since he began his own doctoral studies more than 20 years ago. Many of his students face life, education, and economic challenges while struggling to complete their degrees, and he feels he’s gained a new perspective on what’s critically important within the student experience.

Thankful for these insights, he continues to partner with Cal State Fullerton in educational outreach. In February, he served as a panelist for the annual research symposium, “From Theory to Practice: Implications for Leadership, Access, and Diversity,” hosted by the College of Education’s Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership Program (Ed.D.), and the college’s Center for Research on Educational Access and Leadership (C-CREAL). He also presented with Hoffman at the American Association of Community Colleges annual convention in April. And he’ll be walking in Cal State Fullerton’s commencement this May.

“I am a first-generation college student,” says Abu-Ghazaleh. “The message of hope is this: my family members were Palestinian war refugees. I have more years of university studies than my parents and grandparents, put together, had of any formal education. On the other hand, my big brother had his Ph.D. in chemical engineering at 26 – half my age!”

“It really says something about this program that, even after spending half my life in academia, I still felt challenged and deeply enriched by the coursework,” he continues. “It really is a fabulous program – helping us to grow as practitioners.”

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hiring in target districts,” says Chavez. “We will use the co-teaching model to facilitate innovative cross-department and partner school collaborations to make bolder connections between content and pedagogy.”

Promoting Productive Partnerships

As the team observes the effectiveness of the residency model in two partner districts—Anaheim Union High School District and the Fullerton School District – team members will design guidelines for implementing the model with elementary, secondary, and special education teacher candidates at other school sites and districts in the region this fall.

They will also focus on designing teacher preparation that meets the demands of new curriculum standards – specifically the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards.

Additionally, the teams will investigate ways to integrate the arts into teacher training and professional development, so that teachers can provide all students with a well-rounded education rich in science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (STEAM).

“Our job is to test initiatives and adjust guidelines and protocols based on our observations and the changing educational standards while staying true to what we originally proposed,” says Stang. “We’re already seeing a deep collaborative effort, and that collaboration is translating into more meaningful partnerships for teacher candidates. Things are really starting to unfold.”

Ponder says the grant also includes support for faculty and district partners, which will allow them to co-teach courses in their areas of expertise. This means a College of Education or College of NSM professor may spend some time in a district classroom, while a classroom teacher is guest-lecturing in a teacher credential course.

“By tapping into the strengths of our faculty here on campus and those of our teachers, we can model this collaborative approach for our candidates while learning and becoming better teachers ourselves,” Ponder explains.

“We not only want to provide our districts with high-quality teacher candidates; we want to put forward high-quality teachers those districts will want to hire,” adds Stang.

On May 8, the college hosted a kickoff event as the first public unveiling of the Titan PRIDE project: Common Core/Next Generation Science Standards Day. Here, district partners and campus faculty showcased some of their innovative teaching methods.

“Funding to support this transition is critical – especially at a time when CSU as a whole has had so many years of declining state funding,” says Young. “It will be very exciting to see the endeavors this allows faculty to engage in. Even more exciting will be seeing program graduates who are the products of the revised system of preparation. CSU, as a whole, has always been an outstanding preparer of educators for the State of California, and this work will allow our campuses to reach the next level of world-class program quality.”
Scholarship & Service Define This Year’s Carr Fellows

Our 2015 Edwin Carr Fellows, selected by their departments for exemplary scholarship and service, have already made significant contributions to the education profession. Congratulations to the 2015 College of Education Carr Fellows:

Diana K. Escalante, Department of Educational Leadership, concentration in PreK-12

To increase parent involvement at Ontario Montclair School District, Diana Escalante has trained teachers in Common Core, served as an administrator designee, and hosted parent workshops. Through the district’s Aspiring Administrators Group, she also helped organize and manage the district’s summer program for students in grades five through eight. She’s currently working with the San Bernardino Mexican Consulate’s Plaza Comunitaria program to help parents finish their primary and secondary education. Escalante intends to earn her doctorate and serve as a school administrator in the future.

Raul Mendoza, Department of Educational Leadership, concentration in Higher Education

Raul Mendoza’s accomplishments demonstrate his commitment to underserved communities. He has served as co-lead for the Maywood Educational Fair and presented at the National Critical Questions in Education Conference. Mendoza also worked as a graduate assistant with the Office of First Year Programs, completed fieldwork at the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance, and served as treasurer of the Higher Education Leadership Organization.

Madeline R. Maradiegue, Department of Elementary and Bilingual Education, concentration in Educational Technology

Madeline Maradiegue serves as director of online education for Children of the Night: Without Walls, a program that provides critical social and educational services to people living in shelters or on the streets, throughout the United States, at no charge. Maradiegue collaborates with an accredited online K-12 program to prepare shelter students to attend four-year universities, straight out of high school, without leaving the safety of the shelter.
Jessica Fraser, Department of Elementary and Bilingual Education, concentration in Educational Technology

Jessica Fraser is a digital learning coach for the Anaheim City School District (ACSD). As a classroom teacher, she was involved in innovative school and district activities, like coaching winning Science Olympic teams in district competitions and recording English language development lessons for district professional development. Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)-certified, Fraser serves on a number of curriculum committees and contributes to a website that provides resources to ACSD teachers. Fraser has developed schoolwide technology integration plans with principals and provides teachers with model lessons and resources on technology integration.

Vincent Piro, Department of Reading Education

Vincent Piro is an English instructor at Merced College and a leader on his campus, having served as academic senate president, curriculum chair, faculty lead, and coordinator and director of many programs, including the Puente Project. He also served as president of the California Association of Teachers of English (CATE). Piro has published articles in several journals, including *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, *inside english (i.e.)*, and *California English* and has published a textbook, *Visions across the Americas*.

David L. Rhodes, Department of Secondary Education

For the past nine years, David Rhodes has taught mathematics at Lathrop Intermediate in the Santa Ana Unified School District. He serves as president of Lathrop’s School Site Council and is a master teacher for Cal State Fullerton’s Foundational Level Mathematics Credential Program. Working in a high-need urban intermediate school, Rhodes has developed strategies that engage students and strengthen their knowledge of foundational principles. He recently presented a session on de-tracking seventh-grade mathematics classes at the annual National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) conference.

Desha Marino, Department of Special Education

Desha Marino was selected for the I:DREEAM program, a federal grant-funded personnel preparation program for highly qualified Early Childhood Special Education credential candidates. Serving as an early childhood special education teacher in the Westminster School District, she now promotes inclusion practices she learned in her credential program and through the I:DREEAM experience. Her special education students participate in joint activities with the general education preschool children, and she has accepted a leadership role in a new inclusion task force in her district.

Thru students involved in C-REAL may be working on several critical studies at once, Garcia says the center does not foster competition among student researchers.

“We want to make sure they understand that if their center partners are thriving in success and development, so are they,” she explains. “We make them responsible for and accountable to each other, as peers and colleagues. Not only does this strengthen their support network, but it also fosters a culture of authentic community.”

Vita Jones, assistant professor of special education, is a C-REAL board member and has led several research projects for C-REAL. She considers C-REAL a “place of acceptance and growth” and says she’s inspired by watching C-REAL students grow into confident professionals. She says Person and her staff have an excellent rapport with students and prepare them well for the rigors of higher education.

“Students are complimented on what they uniquely bring to the research team and encouraged to grow in their respective fields,” explains Jones. “And I absolutely love the concept that no student in C-REAL works alone in a silo. The C-REAL team creed is an exemplary model that supports student success in not only academics but also social adjustment.”
Thank You for Celebrating Our 10th Anniversary with Us!

The College of Education has enjoyed celebrating its 10th anniversary with you throughout this 2014–2015 academic year. We thank our future teachers, CSUF faculty and staff, alumni, and all supporters for advancing the College toward a promising future.

Follow Us on Social Media.
Stay up to date and in touch with the College of Education online at ed.fullerton.edu. And connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Flickr, where you’ll find the latest news and program updates, as well as information about upcoming events, inspiring awards, and professional development opportunities. While you’re there, share your own photos, comments, and insights to celebrate with us, connect with us, and assist us in making the college an even better place!

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