@SED
Boston University School of Education
SUMMER 2013

POVERTY. DISABILITY. LACK OF OPPORTUNITY.

For so many reasons, students can fall through the cracks. Here's what two SED programs are doing about it.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

DEAN'S MESSAGE

Dear Alumni and Friends,

THERE'S A RADICAL CHANGE coming to education in the next 10 years. In every grade from prekindergarten to graduate school, classrooms will become project-based, be organized around the student's acquisition of knowledge *and* skills, and use a wide variety of technology to facilitate learning. To use the current language, education will become student centered. We must use these improvements to ensure that all students have access to a high-quality education.

At SED, we are deeply engaged in developing the effective educational practices of the future, and in preparing the next generation of educators to use these practices and close the achievement gap.

In this issue, you will learn how we are addressing the national need for highly effective STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) educators who can meet the needs of diverse learners. You will read about the new faculty we are recruiting to further our missions of preparing outstanding educators, producing research that refines the practice of education, and providing professional development for our partners in practice. Just one example presented in this issue is the work of new Assistant Professor Nathan Jones to help prevent 1 in 10 special education teachers from quitting after just one year.

To complete these missions, we need your help. You can help us by taking part in recruiting, mentoring, teaching, and finding jobs for outstanding students. You can also support us with your financial contributions. Many of our students can afford to come to BU because of the scholarships we provide. Much of the programming we offer students—from the Alumni Speakers Series to our work to help Trotter Elementary School in Dorchester, Massachusetts, reach the goals of the No Child Left Behind Act—is possible due to your support. We invite you to consider ways in which you can help us continue to serve the field of education.

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LEFT: VERNON DOUCETTE; TOP: HXDBZXY/SHUTTERSTOCK

NEWS & NOTES

READY FOR ANYTHING

SED helps alums succeed at one of the best high schools in the nation.

It was a job applicant's nightmare. **Emily Shapero ('11)** was a finalist for a social studies teaching job at Wellesley High School (WHS), ranked 7th in Massachusetts and 163rd in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*. Now she had to teach a class attended by the assistant principal and department head. But Shapero was having difficulty working the projector. Determined not to crack under the pressure, she faced the class and quipped, "And how's *your* day going so far?"

Shapero then proceeded to present an excellent lesson, with rewarding results: she got the job. She isn't the only one: 35 percent of WHS's 17-person social studies department, including Department Head **Mike Reidy ('94)**, are SED alums.

Having WHS student teaching on your résumé, as some applicants do, doesn't guarantee a job. **Gerry Murphy ('57, '68)**, an SED student-teaching supervisor and former WHS teacher, credits students' talent, SED, and the late Professor **Daniel Davis** with graduates' success.

"I think he was a major source in preparing students, especially for the unexpected," says Murphy. "You have to learn to improvise quickly."

BU alums' success at Wellesley should come as no surprise: in the 2012 Global Employability Survey, international companies rated BU as the seventh-likeliest US school to produce ideal employees, after only Harvard, Yale, Stanford, MIT, Columbia, and Princeton.

—Julie Rattey

THE DIFFERENCE CULTURE MAKES

An SED alum emphasizes cultural competency as the first Latina president of her institution.

When she was 12, **Patricia Arredondo ('78)** volunteered at a church for Puerto Rican migrants in her hometown of Lorain, Ohio. As the child of Mexican immigrants, she already knew about negative judgments that "people make based on religion and ethnicity," and how even people within immigrant communities can look down on those who don't speak English well. Arredondo was struck by the immensity of the challenges the migrants faced in adjusting to life in the United States.

This experience sparked Arredondo's interest in psychology, and she focused her scholarly work on immigrants and other groups often marginalized in the counseling field.

As the first Latina president of The Chicago School of Professional Psychology's Chicago campus, Arredondo ensures that students and faculty are proficient in multicultural competencies—understanding cultural differences and one's own worldview—in order to serve individuals from a range of cultures and life circumstances. Students perform more than 700,000 hours of pro bono service annually for at-risk youth, veterans, homeless people, and other "populations they may not have previously engaged with. As counselors-and psychologists-in-training," Arredondo says, "they need to understand how our cultural experiences shape who we are."

—Lara Ehrlich

HALL OF FAMER

A longtime educator gets the ultimate recognition.

Billie Jean King (Hon.'08) is in one. Tom Brady isn't—yet. Simon *and* Garfunkel are in one. And now **Laura J. Albanese ('03)** has joined the hallowed ranks of those who can say, "I'm a hall of famer."

In late 2012, the city of Cranston, Rhode Island, inducted the former teacher, elementary school principal, and district executive director into its Hall of Fame. The *Cranston Herald* announced Albanese's inclusion by praising her "exemplary leadership and service to all aspects of education, her humanitarian efforts, and solid character." The paper also noted her fundraising support for various cancer organizations.

An educator since the early eighties, Albanese taught kids from almost every age and ability bracket, but says fourth and fifth graders were her favorites—ready to learn, but not completely blank slates. She spent much of her time in the classroom teaching languages—a position she'd dreamed of since second grade after discovering an affinity for Spanish.

Albanese admits her Hall of Fame induction was an emotional surprise that still moves her to tears—an unsought recognition and a "bittersweet" reminder of what she's missing after retirement through ill health. The tears put her in good company: Michael Jordan also cried when he was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame. @

—Andrew Thurston

LEFT TO RIGHT: COURTESY OF EMILY SHAPERO; PAUL BEATY; COURTESY OF CRANSTON HALL OF FAME

Etienne LeGrand receives a proclamation in honor of the W. E. B. Du Bois Scholars Program from the Atlanta City Council, presented by council member Aaron Watson (left) in 2011.

Alan Oliff speaking at a Combined Jewish Philanthropies event

EDUCATION FOR ALL

Meet the winners of the 2012 SED Distinguished Alumni Awards

BY LARA EHRLICH

EACH YEAR, SED GIVES THE IDA M. JOHNSTON AWARD, NAMED FOR A FORMER SED PROFESSOR AND ALUM ('42, '43), AND THE DEAN ARTHUR HERBERT WILDE SOCIETY AWARD, NAMED FOR THE BU ALUM (1891, 1897) WHO BECAME SED'S FIRST DEAN. RECIPIENTS DEMONSTRATE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO SED, THE FIELD OF EDUCATION, AND/OR THE COMMUNITY.

IDA M. JOHNSTON AWARD

Etienne LeGrand's son was king of the court. His high school basketball games were recapped on radio and television, **LeGrand ('78)** recalls, "and when he walked down the hallway the next morning, it was like Moses parting the Red Sea." Atypical among his peers in the Atlanta public school system, he scored as high on the SATs as he did on the court, says LeGrand, but when it came to celebrating his scholarly achievements, the halls were "silent."

To LeGrand and her husband, Hal Logan, the disparity between how society recognizes athletic and scholarly achievements was sending a dangerous signal to their son. "African American boys don't hear enough that they can be both scholarly and athletic," LeGrand says. "I don't think athletics are a *bad* thing. It's just that their undue influence makes it difficult for any other message to break through. There's the occasional spelling bee on ESPN, but there's very little else that communicates to kids that education is important in society." LeGrand says this lack of reinforcement is a contributing factor in "the disproportionate number of black kids who have proficiency gaps. They believe they don't need to excel in school to do well in life."

LeGrand and Logan decided to change the way African American students perceive academic success, starting in their home city, Atlanta. In 2004, they founded the W. E. B. Du Bois Society, named after the African American civil rights activist who cofounded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The society works with the Atlanta public school system to "offer a countermessage about what's important." It also highlights students' academic accomplishments through programs like Team UP, which helps students form study groups ("Kids become stronger when they're around other kids who propel them," LeGrand says), and the W. E. B. Du Bois Scholars Program, which honors Atlanta's most distinguished African American high school students. Scholar and rising Boston University junior **Kevin Smith (ENG'15)** says the program "let me know that all the hard work I was doing wasn't going unnoticed, and it pushed me to better not only myself, but also my community."

> **"AFRICAN AMERICAN BOYS DON'T HEAR ENOUGH THAT THEY CAN BE BOTH SCHOLARLY AND ATHLETIC."**
>
> —ETIENNE LEGRAND

The society fosters students' relationships with their community by introducing them to influential leaders, including journalist and foreign correspondent Charlayne Hunter-Gault and Atlanta's mayor, Kasim Reed, who gave the scholars a private tour of his office. "He shared with us some of the struggles he went through to get where he is today," Smith says.

The community's involvement, which reinforces the value of scholarship, must take place on a national level, LeGrand says. She points to the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans as a good start, though "we have more work to do. So far, all the strategies have been deficit oriented, where we go to the bottom and try to push kids to the top. But kids need to know that the top actually is a happening place."

DEAN ARTHUR HERBERT WILDE SOCIETY AWARD

A Jewish day school education is about more than just math, spelling, and the Torah—it's about community. Not every Jewish child has access to a Jewish education, however; day schools are often ill-equipped to serve students with special learning needs. For these students and their families, exclusion from day school can feel like exclusion from the wider Jewish community, and this can sometimes lead them to reject the community in turn. Since approximately 200,000 Jewish children in the United States have learning disabilities, this has the potential to be a significant loss.

Jewish day schools are under no legal obligation to be inclusive—unlike public schools, which are mandated to provide federally funded special education. Because Jewish day schools are privately funded, they often find special education to be prohibitively expensive. "Sometimes you end up not accepting," says Arlene Remz, executive director of Gateways: Access to Jewish Education, "as opposed to accepting and figuring out how to make it work."

Boston's Jewish community is committed to making it work. In the midst of a national push for Jewish education reform, Boston is setting the standard, thanks to the work of individuals like **Alan Oliff ('76, '84)** of Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) in Boston. Oliff's experience working with children with special needs as a 12-year-old camp volunteer inspired him to pursue a career in education, and his positions over the course of 37 years in Massachusetts public schools range from superintendent (Weston) to director of special education (Wayland). He's now CJP's director for the Initiative for Jewish Day School Excellence.

In this role at CJP, Oliff fosters collaboration and excellence across Boston's Jewish day schools, and spearheads the $1.89 million B'Yadenu grant, funded by the Jim Joseph Foundation and the Ruderman Family Foundation. B'Yadenu ("It's in our hands"), a partnership between the initiative, Gateways, and Yeshiva University's Institute for University-School Partnership, helps day schools reach the goal of serving all students by executing a thorough needs assessment and working with teachers through their professional development. "We want all Jewish children whose families want them to go to a Jewish day school to have the opportunity," Oliff says.

Three pioneer day schools implemented B'Yadenu in 2012; three additional schools will participate this year. Eventually the grant will incorporate all 14 of Boston's Jewish day schools and serve as a national model.

"Essentially what you're talking about is societal change," says Jay Ruderman, president of the Ruderman Family Foundation. "Inclusion doesn't have to be fostered simply through philanthropic grants—it is a central tenet to education and the community. And I can see that happening." @

▶ **To nominate someone** for an SED Alumni Award, visit **www.bu.edu/sed/alumni/awards/nominations**. Nominations are due July 30, 2013.

web extra: To read an op-ed by Etienne LeGrand about what schools nationwide can learn from Atlanta's successful Drew Charter School, visit **http://blogs.bu.edu/sed**.

LEFT: KEITH HADLEY; RIGHT: JIM WALKER

CLOSING THE GAP

POVERTY. DISABILITY. LACK OF OPPORTUNITY. FOR SO MANY REASONS, STUDENTS CAN FALL THROUGH THE CRACKS. HERE'S WHAT TWO SED PROGRAMS ARE DOING ABOUT IT.

BY JULIE RATTEY

The crown jewels have been stolen! Detective Joe Friday and his assistant, Dee Enae, are on the scene at the City Museum. They've found a clue: blood on the sill of the window where the thief broke in. Was it Pockets Peterson, the notorious crime chief? Cruella "the Cat" Blanchard, private jewel collector and former ninja? Or is Professor Angstrom, the ousted museum curator, out for revenge? Using genetic principles, lab equipment, and their own smarts, students at Boston University's MobileLab will crack the case.

MobileLab, a traveling biotechnology learning lab for grades 7 through 12, is one way that SED uses creative math and science programs to engage underprivileged students, tap into their potential, and help close the achievement gap. Boston University's Noyce Scholars Program in Mathematics is another. While achieving their goals, MobileLab and Noyce provide SED students with valuable training and inspire educators nationwide. Here's how these programs work and why students and teachers need them.

Imagine trying to do any of the following: pay attention in class when you haven't had a decent meal in days; prioritize school when you work to support your siblings; aspire to a science career in a town where top employers include fast-food restaurants and the nearby prison; value academic success when all your school cheers about are your sports achievements; or keep up with classmates when you have a disability, or when English isn't your first language, or when you have no support at home.

Too often, for all these reasons and more, many US students find themselves on the wrong side of the achievement gap. "The largest source of variation in student learning is attributable to differences in what students bring to school—their abilities and attitudes, and family and community background," says the 2005 report *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers* by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Minorities, the poor, and other disadvantaged groups are the hardest hit.

In 2011, for example, US schools reported statistically significant gaps in math scores between fourth-grade whites, Hispanics, and blacks.[1] Hispanics scored approximately 8 percent lower than whites (with average scale scores of 229 versus 249); blacks, approximately 10 percent lower than whites. And while the black-white achievement gap has narrowed over the past 50 years, the gap between rich and poor has widened to take its place. In a study published in 2011, Stanford University Professor of Education Sean F. Reardon revealed that the achievement gap between affluent and low-income families is now almost twice as large as the gap between blacks and whites. It doesn't help that among 35 economically advanced nations examined by UNICEF in 2012's *Measuring Child Poverty*, the United States has the highest percentage of children living in relative poverty (23.1 percent), after Romania (25.5 percent).

Programs like Noyce and MobileLab help educators in their efforts to close these gaps.

MYSTERY SOLVING AT MOBILELAB

Trying to learn molecular biology with only books and paper models, says CityLab Director and SED Clinical Assistant Professor **Don DeRosa ('91, '01)**, is like trying to learn soccer without picking up the ball.

DeRosa is quoting **Carl Franzblau**, the acclaimed biochemist and BU School of Medicine (BUSM) professor who cofounded MobileLab's parent lab—CityLab—with Research Assistant Professor **Constance Phillips (SPH'91)** at BUSM in 1991. DeRosa says students falling "between the cracks"—like those using paper models—were the inspiration for CityLab and its curricula. The Case of the Crown Jewels is one of several mystery-format lab investigations DeRosa and former BUSM Instructor **Leslie Wolfe (CAS'84, GRS'90)** developed. Today, CityLab

OPPOSITE: CYDNEY SCOTT; THIS PAGE: KALMAN ZABARSKY

Students working in CityLab. Opposite: Professor Don DeRosa (center) with students in the MobileLab. Booking for these popular programs opens the first week of May each year. According to DeRosa, 80 percent of the spots, some of which are reserved for Boston public schools, fill up within two days.

[1] Source: US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2011 *Mathematics Assessment*.

Students board MobileLab in Dedham, Massachusetts.

and MobileLab are partnerships between SED and BUSM.

Getting students in the lab for a hands-on experience with science, says DeRosa, can help level the field for disadvantaged students and even inspire them to consider a science career that previously seemed out of reach. "We want to not only give people an equal opportunity," he says, "but respect that all these students have the same potential."

Funded by BUSM and federal sources (primarily the National Institutes of Health, Science Education Partnership Award), CityLab provides access to state-of-the-art facilities and curricula that are unavailable to most schools. Approximately 24 percent of the students who attend (though mostly from the greater Massachusetts area) are from underserved populations. The lab also travels to nearby schools via the MobileLab bus, which can accommodate about 24 students. DeRosa and CityLab staff supervise the lab investigations, and SED students assist some CityLab sessions. There is no charge for the program. Museums, schools, and enrichment programs nationwide adapt CityLab's curricula for their own use.

Though students only spend a few hours in CityLab at a time, the program makes a positive impact. An attitudinal survey of high school students in one city that had incorporated CityLab into its program, says DeRosa, showed that CityLab had contributed twice as much as students' classroom experiences to their attitudes about biotechnology. And comments from students and teachers nationwide speak for themselves:

"It's opened my eyes to something new."

"She's really getting interested in biotechnology, whereas she didn't even think that science was an option for her before."

And, as one former CityLab student who's now a biomedical postdoctoral student told DeRosa: "If it weren't for [CityLab], I probably wouldn't be doing this."

web extra: To learn more, visit **www.bumc.bu.edu/citylab**, **www.bu.edu/education/noyce**, and **www.bu.edu/sed/community-outreach**.

TRAINING TEACHERS FOR HIGH-NEED SCHOOLS WITH NOYCE

There's usually one every year. Someone shy. Someone who won't say they're struggling. They simply say, "I didn't do my homework." Maybe they have a learning disability. Maybe they forgot what they learned the year before. Or perhaps they have no help at home. But for whatever reason, they just can't do the math.

At some schools, these students might slip through the cracks. But in Roxbury, Massachusetts, they have teachers like **Karen Levin ('09)** and **Ryan Casey ('13)**. Levin and Casey have implemented programs that put struggling students on a path to success. And they credit Boston University's Noyce Scholars Program in Mathematics with helping them make that happen.

SED owes its Noyce connection to Professor **Suzanne Chapin ('85, '87)**, whose longtime involvement with Chelsea Public Schools inspired her to continue to find ways to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds. She obtained three grants from the Noyce Foundation, an organization created in memory of Dr. Robert Noyce, cofounder of Intel and inventor of the integrated circuit. The foundation's goals include improving math and science teaching in public schools and developing leadership to support student achievement. Through two of the grants, SED provides professional development for master teachers in high-need Boston-area schools; for others, enrollment in a 12-month Master of Arts in Teaching program. Students in that program commit to teaching for a fixed period in a high-need urban school—which SED prepares them for via courses like Teaching Math in Urban Schools. Scholars meet regularly to discuss math, pedagogy, and classroom challenges.

Levin says that Noyce's belief that all students can learn, and Levin's contacts with colleagues in other schools through the program, helped her brainstorm, develop, and implement a diagnostic exam and pre-algebra track for students at Boston's City on a Hill Charter School that took effect this year. Students take the test as freshmen, and those who need extra help are placed in a pre-algebra course and put on a five-year track to graduation. The extended schooling gives them a chance to earn better grades—and, perhaps, take some Advanced Placement courses—to better prepare them to apply to college. In the end, she says, it helps students feel more successful.

"THE BROAD CONSENSUS IS THAT 'TEACHER QUALITY' IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT SCHOOL VARIABLE INFLUENCING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT."

—TEACHERS MATTER

"We work to meet them where they are and try to get them as far forward as possible," she says.

At the K–8 school Orchard Gardens, Noyce master teacher Casey is trying to help turn around one of Boston's lowest-performing schools. "How do you take students who are so far behind where they should be and catch them up?" he asks. One answer, he learned from Noyce at SED, is to get kids talking about math.

Instead of only giving students problems to solve (the "drill and kill" method), teachers can spur discussion through questions such as, "How did you reach that conclusion?" "Do you see a pattern here?" or, "What would happen if…?" A discourse-oriented program can help both teachers and students understand the math at hand, says Casey. As a result, "teachers are able to more effectively engage students in critical thinking, so [the students] become owners of the mathematical ideas." It can also help those who respond well to language-based teaching.

Casey and several other colleagues approached their principal about creating and implementing a discourse-oriented math program (using a curriculum Chapin had developed) that he says benefits students and teachers. He recalls one struggling math student whose disability made memorizing procedures a challenge. Because the student enjoyed language, Casey tried approaching equation-solving by talking with the student about math properties. Something clicked, says Casey, and this student became one of the grade's top students in solving equations.

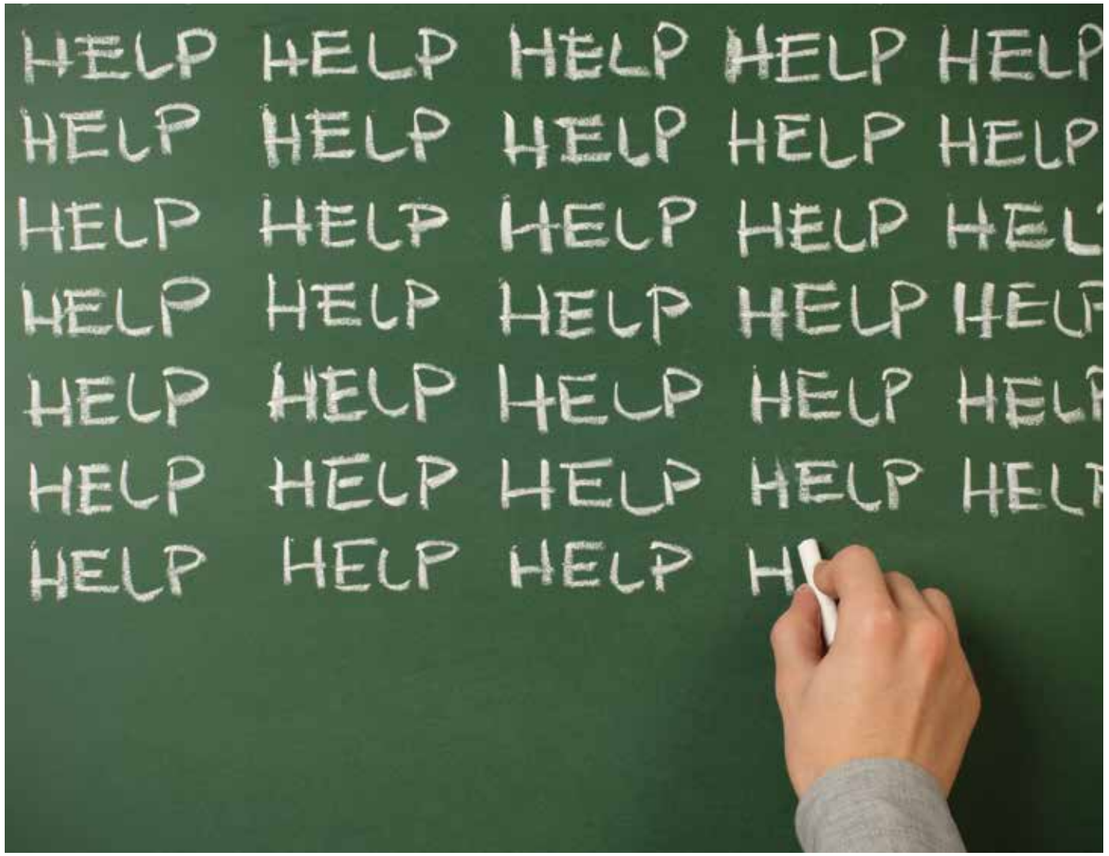
Noyce and CityLab show how a highly trained and leadership-oriented math or science teacher can have a crucial and positive impact on student success. "The broad consensus," asserts the *Teachers Matter* report, "is that 'teacher quality' is the single most important school variable influencing student achievement." Studies show, notes the Aspen Institute's Commission on No Child Left Behind, that "good teachers can improve student achievement by as much as a grade level more than less-effective teachers over the course of a year."

High-quality teachers are therefore all the more important in high-need districts, which Chapin notes face poverty, high teacher turnover, and the necessity of teachers teaching outside their disciplines. "Let's train some of the best and the brightest," says Chapin, summarizing one of Noyce's goals, "and then let's support them so we can get them to go into these districts, where in many cases they don't end up teaching."

Schools are making some strides forward. "All students' math scores have risen over the last decade, so we are doing a better job of helping students in general learn mathematics," says Chapin. But for as long as achievement gaps exist, Chapin and DeRosa will keep working on ways to close them. @

OPPOSITE: CYDNEY SCOTT; THIS PAGE: VERNON DOUCETTE


From left: Professor Suzanne Chapin with Noyce Scholars Ryan Casey and Karen Levin at a Noyce gathering at SED.



ISTOCKPHOTO

BEATING THE BLUES

STRESSED, ISOLATED, AND EXHAUSTED. LITTLE WONDER 1 IN 10 SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS QUITS AFTER JUST ONE YEAR. AN SED RESEARCHER WANTS TO STOP THE EXODUS. BY ANDREW THURSTON

He knew three things about the Mississippi Delta: it had given birth to the blues, allowed segregation to fester, and had been—still was—comparatively poor. Four months into his first classroom assignment, teaching special education in Phillips County, Arkansas, **Nathan Jones** learned something else that would define his time in the region called "the most Southern place on Earth." The native New Yorker would be on his own. During their first phone call, his supposed mentor announced she had retired—months ago.

Jones had just taken a job that nationally had a 10 percent first-year attrition rate. And he'd done so in one of the poorest counties in the United States. Of course, he should've had a mentor: it was mandated by the government. Just as the teachers he worked with *should've* completed customized Individualized Education Plans for every student instead of resorting to photocopies and correction fluid.

"At the local level, you had these well-intentioned state policies breaking down," says Jones. "And no recourse."

After three years of making do, Jones decided to take action. He went to grad school and became a specialist in the implementation of education policy. Now an assistant professor of special education at SED, Jones focuses his research on the development of guidance and mandates, particularly in special education, that don't break apart on entry into the classroom.

TRACKING TROUBLES

One area where regulators really need some help, says Jones, is teacher evaluation. Some states do a good job of grading teachers, others don't. North Carolina, for example, has long had a relatively consistent approach to collecting performance data, and is therefore well placed to track educators year after year. Michigan, notes Jones in contrast, has been riven by political disagreements and therefore hampered by a "hodgepodge system."

When it comes to quantifying the performance of those teaching students with disabilities, things get even messier. There's been "very little guidance" for administrators from states or the feds, says Jones. And that leads to frustration: good special education teachers don't get credit for their work; struggling ones don't get the help they need.

Figuring out the best way to evaluate special education students—and, therefore, the professionals teaching them—isn't simple, so that lack of guidance means very few schools are in a position to quantify how their kids and staff are performing. While 12 percent of K–12 students are given special education services, 58 percent of those children spend more than three-quarters of their time in general education classrooms. If you're tracking a teacher's performance based on test scores (the value-added model of assessment), how can you be sure which teacher's impact you're measuring? Besides, adds Jones, students with disabilities don't, on average, do as well on state tests, and the lower (or higher) an exam score, the greater the chance for "measurement error." Even watching teachers at work (the observation model) might not tell you very much about their effectiveness: the rater will probably work from a general checklist that won't help separate teachers who go the extra mile for students with disabilities from those who don't.

It's a muddled situation Jones is working to repair. In a paper published in *Educational Researcher*, Jones and colleagues from the research nonprofit Educational Testing Service propose some fixes. Their suggestions range from new observation protocols with a "subset of items specific to teaching" students with disabilities to a "roster validation system" that ditches complicated labor division calculations so "both the general education and special education teachers receive 100% responsibility [for the value-added scores] of their shared students."

Bearing in mind his mentoring experience (or lack thereof) in the Delta, Jones is keen to ensure his recommendations remain rooted in the experiences of frontline teachers. He's just undertaken a new project to study what happens when a state takes an "observation system thoughtfully developed in a research context and suddenly says to principals, 'You need to do this.'" Over a three-year period, Jones will follow principals in Los Angeles as they implement an updated version of the *Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument*, an observation system currently used in around half of all US states. The study team will watch, survey, and interview principals—and test their abilities as raters.

"I think a lot of people are looking to L.A. to see what happens when you put principals through this training and what happens to these observation systems when they get implemented in a high-stakes context," says Jones. "L.A. is serving as the bellwether for what happens across the country."

MORE LESSONS FROM THE DELTA

Before taking on the L.A. project, there was one other problem Jones had to solve. He didn't want rookie special education teachers to be thrown into the classroom, as he was in the Delta, without the right support. "Beginning special ed teachers really crave social relationships in their schools," he says, "but they infrequently have access to them." The job is demanding and, adds Jones, "you see high rates of stress and burnout among special ed teachers," even among those with a personal motivation—a family member with a disability, for instance—for trying to tough it out.

It's a state of affairs that leads many to quit. Jones says that when he joined the field, some studies showed beginning special ed teachers leaving at twice the rate of their general ed counterparts. Today, more sophisticated research has moved the rates closer together. Either way, notes Jones, with 1 in 10 teachers resigning after just one year, the attrition level in special education is "alarming."

In a study of teachers in eight districts in Michigan and Indiana, Jones found that improved relationships could be tied directly to retention: "For special education teachers in particular," he and two colleagues wrote in *Exceptional Children*, "perception of colleague support was a strong predictor of retention plans." The researchers recommended that schools "facilitate productive relationships between general and special education faculty" and "differentiate special induction support for beginning special educators." And, Jones might have added, it helps if mentors aren't already in retirement. @

HOW TO RETAIN SPECIAL ED TEACHERS

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR NATHAN JONES TAUGHT SPECIAL EDUCATION AT A MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR THREE YEARS, BUT 10 PERCENT OF NEW RECRUITS DON'T EVEN LAST A YEAR. HERE'S HIS ADVICE FOR HANGING ON TO YOUR BEST SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS—OLD AND NEW.

1. **INVOLVE THE PRINCIPAL.** "There is increasing evidence," says Jones, "that for beginning teachers, the quality of one's relationship with the principal is a key factor in making plans to stay in teaching."

2. **TAILOR THE INDUCTION.** Give new special education teachers a separate and customized induction. Be clear about your institution's curricular expectations of special education teachers.

3. **PRESS THE ISSUE.** In a 2011 study, Jones found that special education teachers benefited when administrators and principals took a public lead in promoting inclusive and productive relationships between general and special education teachers.

4. **SHARE RESPONSIBILITY.** Writing in *Exceptional Children*, Jones and his colleagues concluded that relationships between special and general education faculty could be improved by giving teachers more opportunities to work together and also by encouraging them to share responsibility for students.

BREAKING GROUND IN MUMBAI

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF BOMBAY RUNS ONE OF THE WORLD'S PREMIER 1-TO-1 LAPTOP PROGRAMS. HERE'S HOW SED'S SHABBI LUTHRA KEEPS HER SCHOOL AHEAD OF THE CURVE.

BY JULIE RATTEY

Students use technology in studying everything from reading to science at the American School of Bombay.

COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF BOMBAY

TWELVE SERVERS. Two high-speed fiber links for Internet with a wireless backup link. More than 800 tablets and laptops. It's not the setup for a large business, but for the American School of Bombay (ASB). This international school, which serves approximately 750 students from preschool to grade 12, is the home of one of the world's premier 1-to-1 laptop programs. As the school's director of technology as well as its director of research and development, SED Adjunct Professor **Shabbi Luthra ('02)** plays a critical role in keeping ASB in the vanguard of twenty-first century education.

THE WORLD IS HOOKED on mobile technology, and over the last two decades, schools like ASB have been leading the trend in education by adopting "Anytime Anywhere Learning" or "1-to-1 learning." The goal, according to the Anytime Anywhere Learning Foundation (AALF), is "to ensure that all children have access to unlimited opportunities to learn anytime and anywhere and that they have the tools that make this possible." In 1-to-1 schools, each student has access to a portable computer to enhance learning opportunities in the classroom. ASB made a commitment to Anytime Anywhere Learning in 2001. In August 2012 it moved from a school-prescribed tablet PC program to a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy that requires students in grades 6 through 12 to bring their own laptops. Luthra says the school is now moving toward a "1-to-many" model, in which each student (and staff member) works with multiple devices.

Providing 1-to-1 access, Luthra stresses, is just the starting point: "It's not going to magically transform learning." The important thing is how schools use this access to enhance students' learning.

Leading the study, prototyping, and researching of new designs for teaching and learning at ASB is a key part of Luthra's job. With the support of her department, ASB finds and adopts creative ways to strengthen learning in the classroom. As early as grade 3, for instance, students use Google Docs and Presentations to collaborate on projects. They use email and word processors, display their work in ePortfolios, and research online with child-friendly search engines. In a foreign language class, they might use the recording software Audacity to help improve their skills. With social networking tools like Edmodo, they collaborate with students in other countries. ASB teachers even created and delivered online distance learning for their students when avian flu temporarily closed the school.

By keeping her eye on new technology trends in education, Luthra makes sure ASB stays current. What will transform education in the following couple of years, she says, citing the *New Media Consortium Horizon Report: 2012 K–12 Edition*, are gamification (adding game elements to something that isn't a game) and game-based learning (using games to learn). ASB is already experimenting: some teachers have gamified quizzes and tests. One, says Luthra, gamified the process of turning in assignments. "That has his kids so completely engaged all the time," she says, "because they collect badges; they've got their own avatars; they have experience points that they can trade in." Luthra has even hired the services of a game designer and programmer to gamify ASB's professional development.

All this sounds exciting, but can it actually improve student performance? ASB teachers like Waciuma Wanjohi have stories that strongly suggest it does. In *Evolutions: Tech Integration Stories from the American School of Bombay*, Wanjohi, a third-grade teacher, talks about Kallisto, who is well above grade level in reading and writing; Juro, who struggles with narrative writing; and quiet Stephen.

From Stephen's writings, Wanjohi learned that he loves water parks and that at lunchtime, he "silently tells his pizza that it's going to be devoured." But Stephen is quiet and rarely raises his hand; Wanjohi wanted to get him more involved. When Wanjohi introduced his class to the backchannel tool www.TodaysMeet.com, something exciting happened. Wanjohi gave students the option of using the site to post comments or questions in temporary chat rooms while Wanjohi read aloud or showed videos. "Suddenly," says Wanjohi, "Stephen was chiming in mid-story." Wanjohi was also able to give Stephen feedback on his thoughts during whole-class instruction, he says, "because there was an avenue he felt comfortable using."

As for Juro, Wanjohi says his storytelling skills began to improve after he collaborated with a fellow student via Google Docs on a writing assignment. Establishing blogging literature circles for advanced readers on www.Kidblog.org was one means Wanjohi found to further advance Kallisto.

These success stories aren't just happening at ASB. In *Laptop Initiatives: Summary of Research Across Six States* from 2011, US teachers and students reported positive effects from 1-to-1 programs on student engagement, motivation, and achievement. In *Bring Your Own Device to School*, AALF's Bruce Dixon and Microsoft's Sean Tierney write, "1-to-1 learning has shifted the focus from teaching to learning. Rather than teachers controlling process and knowledge, students have become empowered learners and active proponents of their understanding and ability to connect ideas in new ways."

Luthra helps ASB teachers adjust to a technology-oriented learning environment, empowering them with advice and professional development. **Nitasha Crishna Chaudhuri ('12)** says she realized that integrating technology into the classroom isn't about replacing the traditional approach,

Continued on page 12

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Here are a few tips Shabbi Luthra shares with American School of Bombay teachers to help empower them and cultivate positive attitudes about technology:

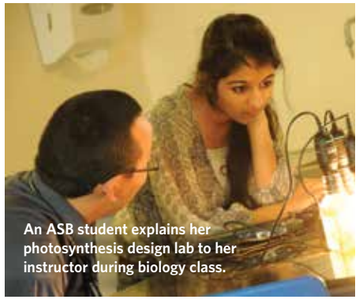
Take risks. You won't know if a technology will integrate well into the classroom until you try. If it fails, that's OK; it's part of the discovery process.

Be a lifelong learner. Just as technology never stops changing, we never stop learning.

See yourself as a "teacher-leader." You don't have to have a PhD.

Learn from students. They sometimes know more about technology than we do!

web extra: Looking for ideas on how to incorporate technology in your classroom? Read ASB's *Evolutions* online for free at **www.asbtechintegrationbook-digital.com**.



An ASB student explains her photosynthesis design lab to her instructor during biology class.

but enhancing it. "I began to appreciate that nothing could replace a child physically building a tower of 10 blocks to reinforce the concept of a group of 10 objects," she writes in *Evolutions*. "But there are some excellent interactive teaching programs and simulations that help to solidify and ground that concept further." As she recalls Luthra saying, "Technology integration is an opportunity to reimagine learning."

ASB helps students' families adjust as well. Initially the school's information portals and emails overwhelmed parent Debbie Grieve. But after accepting an invitation to join ASB's Technology Leadership Team, she worked with Luthra on a social network for streamlining school-parent communications and on creating Parent Tech Tutorials and online courses. The courses have increased student-parent engagement, parents' digital literacy, and the number of parents who access and respond to school information.

ASB shares its secrets to success with the rest of the world through programs that Luthra directs, including ASB Un-Plugged, an international 1-to-1 learning conference, and ASB Online Academy, a learning platform that offers courses for adults, students, and education professionals. Luthra also teaches online as an adjunct professor in SED's Educational Media & Technology program.

Integrating twenty-first century technology into schools doesn't happen overnight, says Luthra, but it's critical for students' success. "These are the skills our kids and our adults need," she stresses, "to survive and thrive in today's world and in the future." @

OP-ED

THE SECRET SOCIETY OF FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS

BY KELLY PROULX *(CAS'10; SED'10, '14)*

I'LL ADMIT IT. I am not a great teacher… yet. For the past few months, I have been fumbling through my first year, trying to make sure that I create a lesson, draft a handout, get grades posted, and, occasionally, teach something as best as I can.

To pilfer from Jane Austen: it is an undeniable truth that every first-year teacher is in want of a success. At every turn, we are looking for small victories, validation, support, and commendation.

During the past few months, I have found myself focusing on the one negative email, the class that took time to settle down, the project that I did not introduce correctly, and results I did not quite expect or desire. This is easy. The challenge is to find the small victory in each defeat, the note for next year, and the moment to grow as a professional.

"It is learning from our small failures that will make us great teachers."

I am lucky enough to teach with two colleagues who are also in their first year. Each of us is a cheerleader for the other two. While we share a planning period and commiserate on how we have too much to grade, too many lessons to plan, too much paper on our desks, and not enough free time, we also share each other's successes. These successes are the "Guess what I did today?" moments: when we had the right response to a question, crafted a perfect response to a parent email, picked the perfect classroom management play, or finished the Sisyphean task of grading 100 MCAS Open Response Essays. As a valued member of the Secret Society of First-Year Teachers, I can appreciate the "Aha!" moments of my peers, as they can appreciate mine.

Teaching is not a solitary profession. We must surround ourselves with teachers who have more and less experience than we have with whom to share our challenges and our triumphs. When my students studied the hero stories of ancient Egypt and Joseph Campbell's 12 stages of the hero's journey, they learned that stage four is "meeting with the mentor." All heroes in mythology have some individual who provides them with the tools to succeed in their tasks and ordeals. By definition, a mentor is someone who provides the hero with "supplies, knowledge, and confidence." As first-year teachers, we are given an older, wiser, and more experienced mentor to provide us with feedback, inside knowledge of our school, and resources.

The mentorship within the society can be defined in a similar manner. The most important tool we share, however, is confidence. Those small "You can do it!" moments to which we try to lead our students also apply to ourselves. A child's struggle to find the meaning of a poem, or to find the right word to use in a piece of writing, translates to the first-year teacher's struggle to find the right word, the right example, and the right response.

We don't always get it right. Sometimes we give the detention or grade without really thinking it through. Sometimes we respond to a parent without pondering the appropriate response.

For now, it is our small failures that define us. It is our small failures that end up on the list of "Notes for Next Year" or "Lessons to Edit Next Year." Thankfully, membership in the society includes a free pass to make mistakes and learn from them.

It is learning from our small failures that will make us great teachers. @

Submit your op-ed to ***www.bu.edu/sed/oped****.*

COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF BOMBAY

SNAPSHOT

Dean Hardin L. K. Coleman (left), faculty, and students participate in the 2012 robing ceremony. Below: Former Associate Dean and Professor Carole Greenes bring some levity to the 2003 robing.

20 YEARS OF SENIOR ROBING

A skillful educator can breathe fresh life into what has been done and taught thousands of times before. So it's no surprise that SED has injected new meaning—and a touch of good-natured humor—to the act of donning a graduation robe.

Former Associate Dean **Joan Dee ('59, '73)** established the Appreciation & Robing Ceremony in 1993. With the help of selected class speakers, seniors express appreciation to family members, teachers, and others who helped them earn their degree. Afterward, faculty help the seniors put on their academic regalia, symbolizing their mentoring relationship at SED and beyond. One senior also receives the Golden Key Award for outstanding contributions to the School during an academic career.

Students, faculty, and administrators also model different robes to explain the regalia for each degree. Clinical Associate Professor **Carol Findell ('88)** recalls humorous touches from past ceremonies, such as former Associate Dean **Boyd Dewey ('74, '79)** opening his robe to reveal German lederhosen, and former Associate Dean and Professor **Carole Greenes ('65, '70)** pulling a chain of 30 to 40 scarves out of one of the copious sleeves of her doctoral robe. One year, thanks to Greenes, SpongeBob SquarePants even made an appearance. @

TOP: MATT KALINOWSKI; BOTTOM: KALMAN ZABARSKY

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