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Nancy Yeaton, '66  
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Barbara Zimany, '65

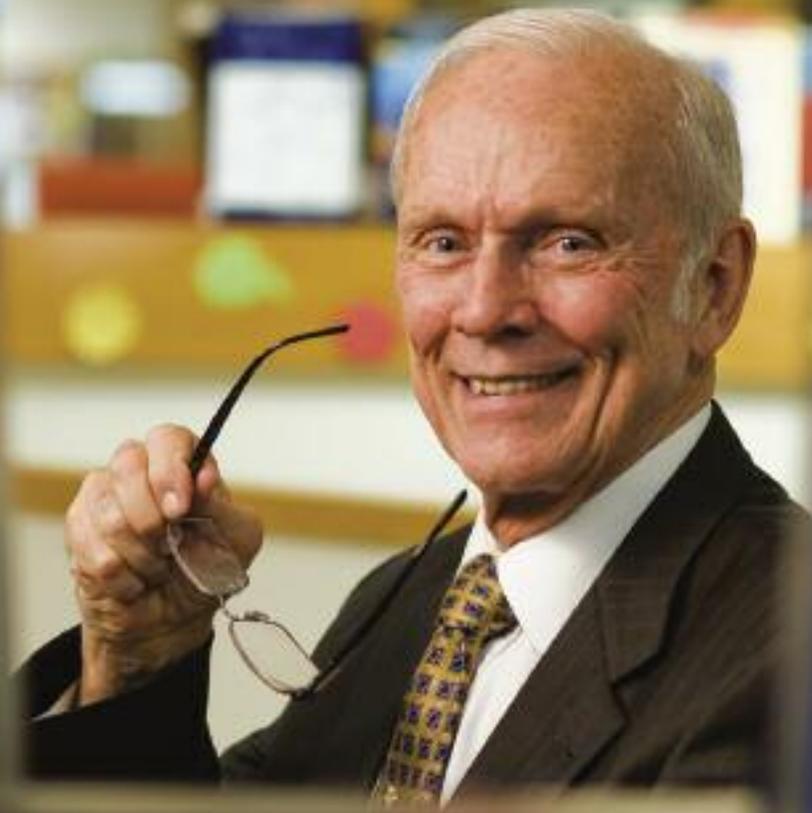


# update

RENAME YOUR SCHOOL'S NEWSLETTER! (SEE INSIDE) ►

## A<sup>+</sup> Legend RETIREES

ASSOCIATE DEAN BOYD DEWEY



### Also Inside:

- Don't fear the beaker
- Teaching a tough tongue
- Too young to be sexy

# update

Dear Alumni and Friends,

We who have dedicated our lives to education already know what others are now beginning to understand. Without a quality teacher in every classroom, we cannot create and maintain a society that is innovative and just. The School of Education is dedicated to training teachers who are prepared to improve the lives of children locally and around the world. That will remain the organizing principle of this School.

Yet a persistent theme this past year, nationally, has been change. As we all watched the inauguration of our 44th president, thoughts turned to how much our country has changed in the nearly five decades since another young president took the oath of office and advocated service. That message resonates as we prepare teachers for the next generation.

As our new president challenges us to think of how we can better serve all Americans, SED is focusing on how we can preserve what we do well, and how we can change to meet new conditions and demands of our students and alumni. We are working to boost our financial aid so we can lower the barriers to attending this School. We are actively recruiting students who are interested in math, science, and special education—areas of great need in all our schools. We remain deeply committed to early childhood education and to literacy. We recognize the importance of addressing the emotional challenges to learning. To add to this list, we remain committed to understanding the processes of education in the developing world.

In this issue of *Update*, we share stories about the quality of the student experience here at SED, the exciting capabilities of our graduates, the achievements of our faculty, the excellence of our staff, and the relationships we have with you, our alumni and friends. Also, we pay tribute to a man who represented the essence of SED for 40 years. Associate Dean Boyd Dewey retired in January, and we try to tell his story here. Those whom Dean Dewey served know that we cannot fully capture his impact on others. Our hope is that this summary will trigger your memories of this dedicated and thoughtful man.

The faculty and staff are devising a strategic plan for SED. Clearly, change will dominate some aspects of that plan. This very publication shows the tenor of that change. As you can see, our designer has cleverly captured our intention to erase "Update." (Frankly, nobody remembers where the name came from.) And we now ask you to help us rename the SED newsletter. What should that masthead say? Please e-mail your inspired suggestion to [sedalum@bu.edu](mailto:sedalum@bu.edu).

In addition to your title idea, we also want to hear how you think we should communicate with you. Do you want podcasts from us? Do you want to social network with your fellow alums? Do you like getting printed news from SED? Would you prefer e-mail or an RSS feed? Most importantly, how can we be most helpful to you in your professional endeavors? Drop us a line and let us know what you are thinking.

Good luck and best wishes,



Hardin Coleman  
Dean

▶ **P.S. Don't forget to send your suggestions to [sedalum@bu.edu](mailto:sedalum@bu.edu).**



# update

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**Dean**  
Hardin Coleman

**Development & Alumni  
Relations Officer**  
Ray Billings

**Editor**  
Patrick L. Kennedy (COM'04)

**Contributing Writers**  
Corinne Kator (COM'06),  
Andrew Thurston

**Graphic Designer**  
Garyfallia Pagonis

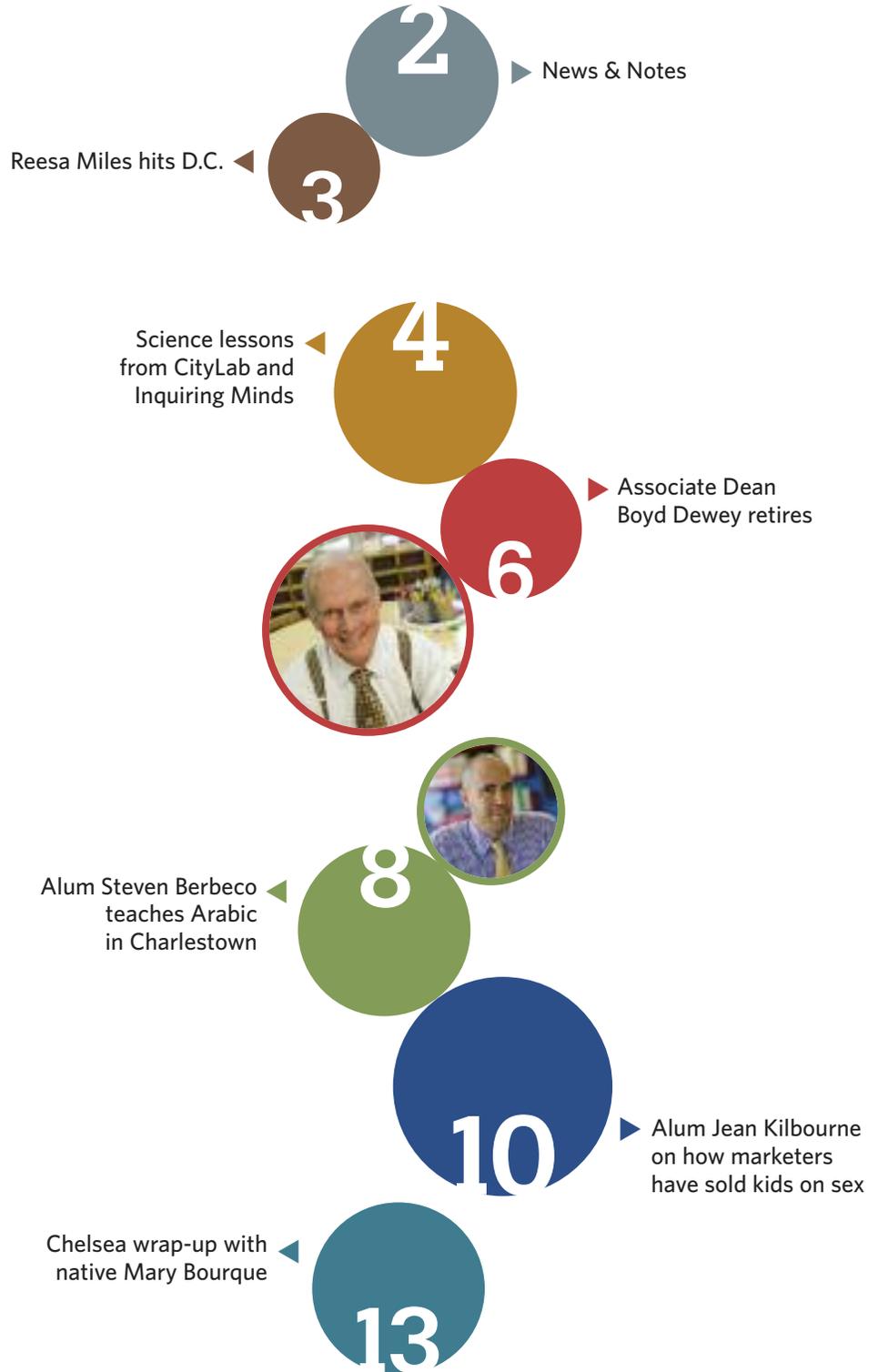
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## What are we doing here?

Read about Boston University's successes in 2008—in and out of the classroom and lab, in the city, and around the globe—and view videos about campus life on BU's online Annual Report at [www.bu.edu/ar](http://www.bu.edu/ar).



## New energy in alumni relations at SED

Connecting SED alumni with the School's new dean and raising money for student scholarships are the top priorities for Ray Billings, who joined SED last summer as director of development and alumni relations.

"The new dean, Hardin Coleman, is intent on making sure alumni know exactly what's going on here at SED," says Billings. "He's looking for feedback from them, and he wants to engage them in new ways." To get communication flowing between Hardin and SED alums, Billings is arranging meetings, luncheons, and other small gatherings around the country, so the dean can meet face-to-face with alumni and hear their thoughts about the School.

On the fundraising front, Billings is focused on helping future teachers afford a BU education. "When students come to SED, they know they're paying \$50,000 a year to go to school, and then they're going to leave here to get a job that pays about half that," he says. "So our concentration from a funding standpoint will be on undergraduate financial aid."



Billings brings considerable experience as a fundraiser to SED, having spent the last several years working in that capacity for the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Before making the leap to the nonprofit world, he worked in the private sector as a communications consultant.

Using his fundraising and communication talents to strengthen SED is particularly rewarding for Billings, he says, because he understands and respects the needs and concerns of educators. "My father taught in a public high school for 35 years. My wife is a public school teacher. My brother and my sister teach public school," he says. "I'm very comfortable talking to teachers."

—Corinne Kator

## Jump in Jumpstart membership

This year, participation nearly doubled in SED's partnership with Jumpstart, the national organization of volunteers devoted to school-readiness tutoring. Marina Peterson, BU's Jumpstart site manager, says 40 undergraduate students joined the Jumpstart Corps and currently serve 40 preschoolers in one-on-one partnerships in Boston. The children at Higginson Elementary in Roxbury, Ellis Memorial and Escuelita Borikén in the South End, and the Eliot School in the North End already showed tremendous progress after only five weeks of reading stories, assembling puzzles, singing songs, painting, drawing, and writing with the Jumpstart Corps members.

"Their success is a testament to Dr. Judith Schickedanz's dynamic service-learning course, Working with At-Risk Preschoolers," says Peterson. "The course lays the foundation for teaching young children, responds to the corps members' experiences with the preschoolers, and ultimately deepens their knowledge and strengthens their service. It is this combination of academic study and service that allows our corps members to deliver



high-quality education in Boston's underserved communities—an education that all children deserve."

Jumpstart's avowed mission is to see that some day every child in America enters school prepared to succeed. To get involved, visit [www.jstart.org](http://www.jstart.org).

—Ray Billings



## Growing greener

He may be on the faculty at the College of Arts & Sciences rather than SED, but over the past year, Nathan Phillips has been a vital part of sedGreen, the School's environmental task force. An environmental science professor at CAS, he has collaborated with sedGreen leader Doug Zook, a science education prof and sustainability expert, most notably on the laptop-powering exercycle stationed in the science-ed lobby. Now, Phillips has been tapped to head BU's carbon footprint research program, Zook announced recently.

Taking its cue partly from the energy audit sedGreen performed at SED last year, "This project will directly show the specific contributions of carbon dioxide gas to the atmosphere by the Boston University campus community and facilities," says Zook. The hope is that by measuring the University's impact on the environment, Phillips and company can suggest specific ways to limit it.

Since the last time *Update* spoke with Zook, BU has improved from a C to an above-average B- in the very tough (emphatically not inflated) College Sustainability Report Card.

—Patrick Kennedy

# Ms. Miles Goes to **Washington**

**It wasn't exactly overseas, but Reesa Miles's ('09, CAS'09) "study abroad" program last spring took her to the nation's capital and a gig with the U.S. Senate's Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. With her eye on a career in education law and policy, she spent spring 2008 interning for Edward Kennedy, the senior Democratic senator from Massachusetts, on education legislation.**

Rubbing elbows with Ted Kennedy and the brass at the Department of Education, Miles gained coveted access to lawmakers and the lawmaking process. Beyond her daily administrative duties—answering phones and delivering mail—Miles was tasked with a significant amount of research. She waded into lightning-rod educational issues such as the No Child Left Behind Act, studied and wrote briefs on early childhood education initiatives, and helped codify the priorities of senators and special interest groups on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. She also attended hearings in both the House and the Senate on education policy and reform.

"These opportunities allowed me to broaden my knowledge of education issues and to delve into areas of high political importance," says Miles, a triple major—social studies education, history, and political science—who graduates in May.

The semester went by in a blink as the workload and "awe" factor combined to prevent her from "smelling the cherry blossoms," she says, but it's safe to say that her pursuit of an education law and policy career is off to a promising start. ●





# SCIENCE:

## Get in the Game

**SED professors help local school kids—and their teachers—discover the scientific method for themselves.**

**The future is in drugs and computer chips.** According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, most of today's fastest-growing professional occupations are in health care and technology—fields that require a solid background in science. Successful science curriculum, then, is crucial to preparing students for the twenty-first-century economy.

But memorizing every fact in a science textbook won't give students the edge they need, says Clinical Assistant Professor Donald DeRosa ('91, '01). Learning science, he says, is a bit like learning a sport: A coach can teach his players the rules of baseball, but if he

never gives them a bat and ball and lets them onto the field to play, then he hasn't truly taught them the game. Gaining a true understanding of science requires similar hands-on experience.

"Science is knowing what to do when you don't have an answer. It's seeking explanations," DeRosa says. "So let's really teach people the inquiry process." And the best way to learn that process, he says, is to experience it for yourself.

DeRosa is one of several SED professors devoting their time to programs that give teachers and students critical opportunities to experience the scientific inquiry

process firsthand—in some of the very fields of science that are fueling today's economy. A new program called Inquiring Minds, for example, gets elementary school teachers to experiment with alternative energy sources, while a long-running BU program known as CityLab lets middle school and high school students try their hands at biotechnology.

### **Students as investigators**

Detectives have narrowed the list of suspects in a recent jewel heist to four people, and they've gathered DNA samples from each suspect. Those samples have been sent to the lab along with a few



drops of blood found on a shard of glass at the crime scene. Now, scientists at the lab are using DNA restriction to analyze all the samples. They're looking to see if any of the suspects has a DNA fingerprint that matches that of the blood on the broken glass.

This isn't an episode of *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*. This is CityLab. The BU School of Medicine launched CityLab in 1992 as a regional resource for science teachers whose schools couldn't afford to buy and maintain sophisticated biotech equipment for their classrooms. Each year, thousands of middle school and high school students from Massachusetts and neighboring states visit CityLab on BU's Medical Campus, where they solve problems—including fictional crimes—by applying the same techniques and concepts of genetics and molecular biology used in modern research labs. DeRosa helped launch CityLab and now serves as its director, in addition to doing his own research and teaching.

In the seventeen years since its inception, CityLab has grown tremendously. The CityLab facilities in Boston's South End have expanded from one laboratory to two, and they're both full year-round. In addition to the original half-day CityLab sessions, DeRosa and his staff now also offer weeklong SummerLab sessions and an advanced after-school program called CityLab Scholars. In addition, they've



CityLab, a fully equipped biotechnology laboratory on the BU Medical Campus, gives high school students the opportunity to practice their problem-solving skills using sophisticated biotech equipment.

added a MobileLab—a bus that's been transformed into a forty-foot traveling laboratory—to take the CityLab experience to students who can't travel to Boston.

No matter which of these programs students participate in, says DeRosa, the goal is to provide them with an authentic laboratory experience. That means they're using lab equipment not just for the sake of learning how to use it, but to solve a larger problem. "We want CityLab to be an opportunity for students to not only think, but to learn how to think," says DeRosa, "how to navigate their way when faced with an unknown."

Bringing students to CityLab is often as enlightening for teachers as it is for their students, he adds. "When teachers come in here and see our educators teaching, they not only learn the content but they see how it unfolds in a real classroom situation," he says. This provides teachers a model they can use for teaching inquiry-based curriculum in their own classrooms.

CityLab is also a great place for training teachers-to-be: The School of Education often sends students to teach at the lab as part of a course on teaching methods. These developing teachers get the invaluable opportunity to work with a variety of students from all over the region. In addition, says DeRosa, they get to know the content so well that they can start refining the way they react to different classroom situations and practicing strategies for thinking on their feet.

### Teachers with inquiring minds

Homemade wind turbines. Water wheels made from plastic spoons and a piece of cork. This may sound like a school science fair, but it's actually the result of a two-week Immersion in Green Energy course for K-8 teachers taught last summer by DeRosa, Clinical Associate Professor Peter Garik, and their valued colleagues in the physics department in the College of Arts & Sciences.

The course is part of a new BU program called Inquiring Minds that offers science immersion clinics for elementary and middle school teachers. While CityLab gives teachers a model for presenting inquiry-based lessons to their students, Inquiring Minds aims to immerse teachers themselves in the scientific process.

## ( Memorizing the textbook doesn't cut it. )

BU offered the Immersion in Green Energy course for the first time last summer. "The teachers came to us and learned about generators and motors, and then learned how to capture energy—solar energy or wind energy or hydropower—by designing and building projects," says Garik.

"And they're not just making them," adds DeRosa. "They're also taking a look at the dynamics of the energy flow through that system. What's the voltage going through there? Can we optimize that? What are the pros and cons of this on a large scale?"

Inquiring Minds also offers immersion courses in geometric optics—the study of light traveling in straight lines—in which teachers explore lenses, rainbows, mirrors, and the like. For both immersion courses, the teachers meet in a series of Monday- or Friday-night sessions to learn basic science content prior to taking the actual course, allowing them to focus on their experimentation during the two-week institute.

And while two weeks of lab work won't turn fifth-grade teachers into professional research scientists, DeRosa and Garik believe it's invaluable experience that can boost teachers' confidence level in the classroom. After all, says DeRosa, you don't have to be a major-league slugger to be a good coach, but you have to have at least played the game. ●

For more on CityLab and Inquiring Minds, visit [www.bu.edu/today/derosa](http://www.bu.edu/today/derosa).

# Everybody Loves DEAN DEWEY

Associate dean retires after 40 years of listening and fixing

"Everyone says it's like a love story," Boyd Dewey says, and pauses. "It really kind of is."

Is he referring to his warm 40-year-long relationship with the School of Education? He could be. As associate dean for student support (among myriad other titles), he's been the School's ombudsman, problem-solver, and "grandpa," as his assistant puts it. Dewey ('74, '79) has advised generations of students, and he is responsible for some of the School's most cherished traditions and most successful academic programs. He even cooks the turkey at the SED Thanksgiving dinner. The students, alumni, faculty, and staff are family to him.

Or maybe Dewey is talking about his literal family? For all his time spent on campus, he's also raised three sons and now boasts nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

But no, right now, Dewey is really referring to a *love story*, the kind you'd expect to see on the silver screen. This is the reason he's finally leaving SED.

About a year ago, the widower was in his Oregon hometown visiting an aunt when he suddenly wondered what his old high school sweetheart was up to. "I hadn't seen her for 60-some years, but I picked up the phone and called her," he recounts.

"Come to find out, her husband passed away about the same time as my wife did. Come to find out, we had a *lot* of things in common. So, we started dating, and then became engaged."

The 78-year-old is moving back to Oregon to remarry and begin a "third career called 'retirement,'" he says.



Dewey served in the Air Force for 20 years, including occupation duty in Japan and tours in the Korean and Vietnam wars. In 1968, he came to Boston, where SED hired him as director of administrative services. With his staff he handled registration, fee collection, human resources, budget, facilities, and other operations.

Having taught at Air University, Dewey now availed himself of the courses at SED, earning a master's and doctorate. The education is *one* reason he kept working here, he says, citing "the fantastic faculty. I've found them stimulating, and they've helped me to grow a lot."

But even more importantly, he stayed for the students. Early on, Dewey would notice when a student was "wandering around, so to speak, in need of help," he says. "And it wasn't always an academic advisor's type help they needed. They just needed to talk to someone. So I started working with students," unofficially, on top of his regular administrative duties.

"Every now and then the dean in those days [the late Robert Dentler] would say, 'You know, Boyd, we have academic advisors. You were hired to do other things.' But I kept it up anyway. Eventually, it got to be a little tiresome for the dean, so he appointed me ombudsman for the School.

"And that was with the condition I'd keep on doing everything else I did!" In fact, Dewey carried on with his budget and other operational responsibilities until 2006, three decades later. But most alumni remember him for his student support role.

"Watching him work with students has just been amazing," says his assistant, student services coordinator Jackie Boyle ('09, MET'07). "He *listens*."

On top of routine academic advising, "We deal with a lot of sensitive issues," Boyle notes. "Students come in here who are having academic difficulties, family emergencies, health crises, financial crises—

they'll come in here because they need help. They need his advice or guidance. What's great is that in a place like BU, which seems so large and at times tough to navigate, he's the one-stop shop."

And Dewey helps students solve their problems, Boyle says, often "on the fly, with limited tools. He's like the *MacGyver* of deans."

"Our motto here is that when someone comes in unhappy," says Dewey, "we want them smiling when they leave this office. And we've found that it's amazing how often that can happen."

"Everybody loves Dean Dewey," Boyle says before opening a file drawer and extracting a manila folder three inches thick. It's headed *Everybody Loves Dean Dewey*. Personal letters, thank-you notes, photos—"all the alumni send pictures of their kids to him"—and this is merely the latest batch. "There are four boxes across the hall filled with this stuff," says Boyle.

Of the testimonials Dewey has received, one of the cutest must be a poster from the tykes in SED's Early Childhood Learning Lab, downstairs. A woodworker in his spare time, Dewey occasionally visits the preschool and gives woodworking lessons (or at least demonstrations). In gratitude, the teacher will have her charges fill a giant thank-you card with their drawings and (dictated) messages. One poster features a rendering of salt-and-pepper shakers, with the message, "Thank you. Here's some salt and pepper for your lunch."

Dewey has made an indelible mark on the School, and on BU. He helped found the dual-degree Boston University Collaborative Degree Program (BUCOP). Over the years, Dewey has earned accolades including the BU Faculty Council's John S. Perkins Distinguished Service Award, the SED Alumni Board's Ida M. Johnston Alumni Award, and the SED Undergraduate Student Council's Golden Key Award.

One of Dewey's best-known creations is the annual Pinning and Affirmation Ceremony for juniors about to begin student teaching. After a student suggested SED emulate the capping ceremonies of nursing schools, Dewey launched the program in 1989. Juniors at the pinning ceremony declare their dedication to the profession by reciting the *Boston University Educator's Affirmation*, written for the occasion by former faculty member Steven Tigner on the model of the Hippocratic Oath.

## ( The MacGyver of deans )

They also hear a stirring speech from a veteran teacher. "We put in a lot of effort to get the right kind of guest speaker, someone who'll inspire them," Dewey says. "Some of them have been outstanding," e.g., Barbara Henry, the desegregationist featured in the Disney TV movie *Ruby Bridges*, and Diane Nutting ('93, CFA'93), a BUCOP grad and onetime company manager for the National Theater of the Deaf.

Along with his longtime associate-dean colleague, Dewey is also known for the Joan Dee & Boyd Dewey Book Awards. The two administrators have overseen the invaluable Dean's Hosts, and "We've worked together extremely well over the years," Dewey says. The book awards program, conceived in part by Dewey in 2006 and funded by alumni through SED's development office, grants 20 distinguished students a much-welcome credit at BU's bookstore, the Barnes & Noble on Kenmore Square.

The road ahead for SED will be tougher without Dewey, although the School has plenty going for it and is only growing more competitive and more rigorous. "We do things a little differently here," Dewey points out. "The programs here are not easy.

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# Getting Arabic



**It can pay to learn Arabic these days. Steven Berbeco would know: He turned down six-figure offers from military contractors for translator work. Instead, he teaches one of the world's toughest languages to kids in one of Boston's toughest high schools.**

I feel a bit of a fraud wearing the dark green wristband Steven Berbeco ('03, '10) hands me as I leave his classroom in Charlestown High School. It tells the world, "Yeah, I got Arabic."

I haven't, and I'm not alone. Berbeco cuts something of a solitary figure in the teaching world. He's not just the only Arabic language teacher at this Boston public school; he's the only one active in Massachusetts. Things aren't much better nationally—the Arabic K-12 Teachers Network at the National Capital Language Resource Center says it knows of only 57 public high schools in the U.S. that are teaching Arabic.

On the flip side, deepening U.S. involvement in the Middle East has prompted the State Department to

classify Arabic as a critical-need foreign language. It's backing Berbeco with a grant to develop a high school Arabic curriculum that could roll out nationwide.

The language's newfound status in Washington isn't lost on Berbeco. Before he joined the staff at Charlestown, he was flooded with big money offers from the CIA, FBI, and contractors in Iraq and beyond.

"I would not trade," he says. "I'm effecting positive change in my community and I'm engaging myself in an intellectual challenge. I've no interest in just making money to pocket it."





## ► The Student's View



"My mother's from Lebanon, but I don't know Arabic, so I decided to take it. I like to think if I go to college maybe I'll continue learning it—you never know, it might be useful. It's my favorite class—it really is. It's interesting; it's different; it's not just a class to get a credit, you know? You have Spanish for that."

*Vladimir, junior and first-year Arabic student, Charlestown High School, Boston*

Berbeco should know an intellectual challenge when he sees one. A student of more than 30 languages, holder of three graduate degrees, and soon to complete a doctorate at SED, he took a circuitous route to the front of a classroom. But the dream was always to be a high school teacher, he insists, and "there's nothing that has challenged me more."

That's not surprising—the Army Defense Language Institute considers Arabic the toughest language for English speakers to learn. "I drive that home to the kids," says Berbeco. "They are engaged in a really challenging task, so they get a feeling of real accomplishment."

It's also difficult enough that Berbeco estimates "Every year, 20 Arabic programs start at the high school level, and 19 and a half of them fail." He's hoping the curriculum he's building at Charlestown High will reverse that trend and allow other teachers to learn from his mistakes.

"I'm embarrassed by how little we offered in the first year," he says. "We cover about as much in a term and a half now as we did in the whole year when we started out."

"Everyone has preconceptions about what an inner city high school is like, but by and large the students here are extraordinary—they're hard workers and damn clever. I have behavior problems almost

only when I set expectations for them that are too low."

He now has around 100 students signed up for Arabic classes. As we talk, some flit in and out of the top-floor classroom—the Arabic alphabet scattered across one window and Arabic posters for Pepsi and 7-Up dotting another wall—with either a bright *marhaba!* ("hi!") or a mumbled *ma'a salama* ("goodbye"). Berbeco says the lessons are having a broader reach too.

"Students write their names on quizzes in other classes in Arabic, and other teachers say to me, 'Well, I can't read Arabic, what am I supposed to do with this?'"

"The students are also taking what they've learned and trying to expand it to express themselves or start conversations with strangers outside the class."

It's easy to detect Berbeco's influence in his newly-confident charges. He's adamant that teachers can engage more positively in their profession, particularly beyond the classroom door. It's why he responded to a call from the federal Department of Education for teaching ambassadors. With 25 other teachers across the country, he has regular conference calls with the Secretary of Education to "influence, or at least inform, federal education policy—what is on our minds

## ( "The students here are extraordinary" )

goes straight into [Arne Duncan's] ear; there is no intermediary."

Right now, though, the government will have to wait. Teaching comes first, and Berbeco's classroom is slowly filling up with students determined to conquer the toughest language arts class around. Yeah, they got Arabic.

*BU is getting Arabic, too. Berbeco has joined with SED Professor Stephan Ellenwood, chair of the curriculum and teaching department, to develop the nation's first program devoted to training Arabic language teachers. Look for updates on [www.bu.edu/today](http://www.bu.edu/today).*



# So Sexy

## Second-Graders?

How today's sexualized culture affects young children

During playtime, your kindergartners begin acting out teen-targeted music videos, complete with sexy poses and gyrating hips. Girls arrive at your second-grade Halloween party wearing risqué costumes. A boy in your fifth-grade sex education class tells you sex doesn't have to involve love—he knows because he's seen sex on the Internet.

What's happening here, and what can teachers and parents do about it? To help answer those questions, award-winning documentarian and author Jean Kilbourne ('72, '80) teamed up with Diane Levin, a specialist in early childhood education, to write *So Sexy So Soon: The New Sexualized Childhood and What Parents Can Do to Protect Their Kids*. Since the book was published last summer, Kilbourne has appeared on the *Today* show and *Good Morning America*. She also recently spoke with *Update*.

► **Update: Your book is about the sexualization of childhood. What harm do you think this sexualization is doing?**

**Jean Kilbourne:** It does a wide range of harm, and that's not just my opinion. There's a lot of research that shows it's harmful, particularly to girls, but also to boys. The American Psychological Association came out with a report in 2007 specifically about the harmful consequences of the sexualization of girls, and the research links the sexualization of girls—which is girls being turned into sex objects and learning to think of themselves as sex objects—with a range of consequences from eating disorders to self-mutilation, depression, and low self-esteem.

Sexualization also harms boys. My hypothesis is that boys who learn to look upon girls this way—to see girls as objects—find it very difficult to have successful intimate relationships, and that's a pretty high price to pay.

► **The book makes a distinction between sexuality and sexualization. Why is this distinction important?**

Sexualization is always about turning a person into a thing, into an object, saying that the person is valued only because of his or



her appearance and sex appeal—how “hot” they are. *Sexuality* is, of course, something we all have from birth, and that's to be celebrated; it's something that's fundamentally good. But sexualization is always bad, and so there's a world of difference between them, and it's very important to make that distinction.

► **Who is responsible for the sexualization of today's children?**

I would say that a huge amount of the blame lies at the feet of marketers. And I say “marketers” rather than “the media” because it's truly all about marketing. The reason that our kids are sexualized is because it's a good way to sell them stuff. It's not to sell them on sex; it's to sell them on shopping. If you can get kids to believe early on that their sex appeal is all about what they buy and how their jeans look, then you've got them lined up at the mall for the rest of their lives. So it's a deliberate effort on the part of marketers to link sex with shopping and to target children at ever younger ages.

► **Is that a trend that we can reverse?**

There's actually a date when it started to happen, and that was 1984. Children's television was deregulated, and for the first time ever, the characters in the programs were allowed to be in com-

mercials, were allowed to sell. That totally changed the world of children’s television so that it became all about marketing and all about selling stuff to kids. So it goes back to that time of the FCC deregulating children’s television, which means it can be undone. In fact, there are several countries in the world that have totally banned all advertising aimed at children. Some countries have determined that children are way too vulnerable—they can’t possibly process this stuff—so therefore it’s not fair to allow marketers to target them.

► **How does sexualization of children impact the classroom?**

Teachers of very young children report that they’re seeing an awful lot of sexual play and sexual acting out, and in most cases the kids don’t have any idea what they’re doing. There’s a story in the book about a five-year-old boy saying to a girl, “I want to have sex with you.” Of course, the adults go nuts, but what he means when they finally ask him is that he wanted to kiss her. He liked her. The children don’t really understand what they’re doing, but they’re acting out in a way that’s very disturbing to adults and not good for the children either.

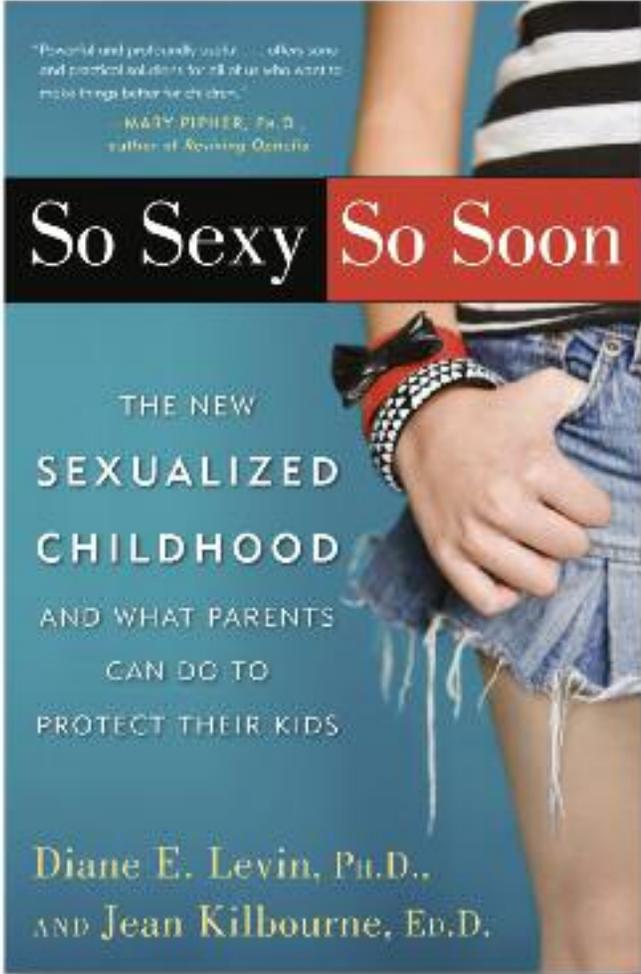
There was a group of elementary school kids in Boston who were disciplined because they were playing something called “the rape game.” We’re hearing more and more of this sort of thing. It’s really taking up a lot of teachers’ time and energy, and a lot of teachers don’t know how to deal with it because it’s different from what they’ve had to deal with in the past.

► **What can teachers do?**

Diane and I feel the same about teachers as we do about parents, that there’s a lot that individual teachers can do and a lot that parents can do, but we say over and over again that it should not be entirely up to the individual teacher and parent. This is a public health problem, basically. So we need to change the environment to make it a healthier one for children and to make our jobs easier as teachers and parents.

In an ideal world, teachers would be supported with a curriculum that taught accurate, honest, age-appropriate sex education, starting in kindergarten—not just about sex, but about relationships. Another huge thing would be to teach media literacy in the schools and have a media literacy curriculum that was nationwide and that, again, started in kindergarten.

What we also suggest for teachers and parents is a lot of communication, a lot of talking about what’s going on, and letting the children lead, so we don’t automatically interpret everything from an adult perspective, but rather really hear what the child



means. What often happens is that adults overreact, and then kids are silenced, and they learn not to talk to adults, and therefore they get their information from all the wrong sources.

Another thing that we argue for, of course, is better communication between parents and teachers. Now, I think, parents and teachers feel overwhelmed, they feel powerless, and they have the tendency to blame each other. It’s better to say, “Hey, we’re all in this together, so what can we do to make a better world for our kids?”

*Read the introduction to So Sexy So Soon and find a list of other helpful resources at [www.sosexysosoon.com](http://www.sosexysosoon.com).* ●

"I tend never to get upset at a student—it's not in my nature—but the closest I'll come is if a student walks in here and asks me to help them find an easy course. I tell them at Boston University, I hope there's no such thing as an easy course!"

One strength of the School community is the legacy of Dewey himself. It's present in the many alumni who learned from him—not only in the courses he's taught as an assistant professor in the curriculum & teaching department—but from his example. As an advisor extraordinaire, "I certainly never, ever try to make a decision for a student," says Dewey. "I try to prepare them to collect information to help them make a good decision and then live with it.

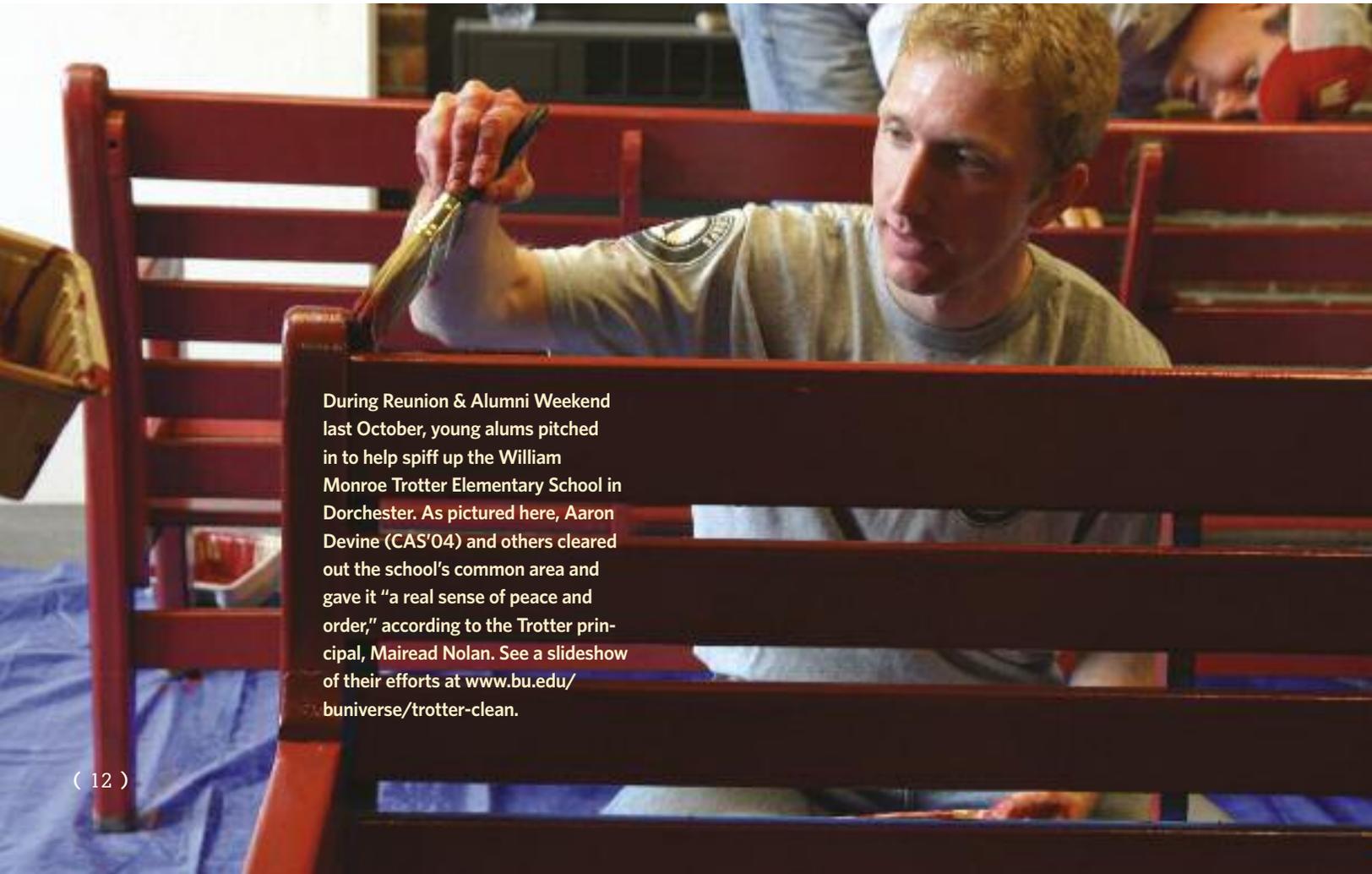
"These young people are going to be out working with our children and our grandchildren, and we want them to have good interactions, not just with the kids but with the parents and the administrators and other teachers. So we try to prepare them for that kind of dialogue, to get them into problem-solving mode."

Boyle explains Dewey's method this way: "If you show that you care, people will step up and be the best they can be." That means Boyle as well as the students. "I've really worked hard for him because of the amount of confidence he's invested in me; I couldn't let him down." In fact, Boyle has learned from her boss's example more

than perhaps anybody: She now wants to fill the associate dean's shoes some day. Thanks to his mentorship, she says, "I'll make sure this stays the one-stop shop."

If Dewey's experience is any indication, Boyle won't regret her choice.

"I always tell my students," Dewey says, "if you have to kick yourself in the behind to leave for work every day, you're in the wrong occupation. And I honestly can tell you, in 40 years I've enjoyed leaving the house every morning to come here, because I loved this place, still do. I think it's a great School, a great University, and I've enjoyed every minute of it." ●



During Reunion & Alumni Weekend last October, young alums pitched in to help spiff up the William Monroe Trotter Elementary School in Dorchester. As pictured here, Aaron Devine (CAS'04) and others cleared out the school's common area and gave it "a real sense of peace and order," according to the Trotter principal, Mairead Nolan. See a slideshow of their efforts at [www.bu.edu/buniverse/trotter-clean](http://www.bu.edu/buniverse/trotter-clean).

# The (W)rap on Chelsea

At Reunion & Alumni Weekend in October, alumni gathered for a panel discussion on the 20-year-long BU/Chelsea Partnership, which concluded last June. Mary Bourque ('99, '08) is a deputy superintendent, former teacher, and alumna of the Chelsea Public Schools. Her excerpted remarks follow.

**Like George Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life*,** I never left my hometown. I have lived my entire life in Chelsea. Not unlike many of our students in Chelsea today, I grew up in a three-decker. There were seven of us living in a five-room, second-floor apartment—my mother, father, three brothers, and one sister. My siblings and I are the first generation to go to college. I haven't moved far—I now live around the corner from where I grew up—and I am the mother of four children, ranging in age from 17 to 26. My 17-year-old will graduate from Chelsea High School this June—thirty-two years after I graduated from there (1977) and seventy-one years after my father did (1938).

Chelsea is, and has always been, a gateway community for so many. Our student population today is 79.8 percent Hispanic, 82.5 percent nonnative English speakers. In the Chelsea Public Schools, we welcome refugees, immigrants, and urban migrants. We welcome those who are in greatest need. This is our richness and our calling.

The education system in Chelsea was a dismal failure prior to 1988. Chelsea educators were good people with good intentions—we were dedicated to the profession of teaching and we fervently believed we were doing our best—but the system was not there to support us.

We were nine schools without a common purpose. We were not held accountable or responsible for student learning. The system failed us as educators, but most importantly it failed our families: the parents and the students.

The partnership was not perfect and mistakes were made on both sides in the beginning. But six areas of improvement stand out: new buildings, vision, leadership, cur-

riculum, professional development, and pride . . .

With stable leadership we started to believe that BU was in it with us for the long haul. We started to have honest conversations about our strengths and weaknesses. And it was the professional development opportunities provided to all of us that really pushed us forward. It gave us pride in our work, and it empowered us.

Today, our students stand tall among their peers. They compete and excel. They succeed. Stating that you are from Chelsea today does not elicit the same reaction as it did in 1977. Chelsea is no longer the punch line in a joke.

From the partnership we now know that understanding who you are as a school district—your demography—is critical; having and holding a vision is important; stable leadership is essential; and a coherent articulation of the curriculum, instruction, and professional development plan is paramount to instilling pride and a hunger for success.

Today I can state definitively that the BU/Chelsea Partnership was a success. BU kept its promise to the community of Chelsea, to reform and improve the school system. I state this as a student, parent, teacher, and administrator. Of those students who stay with us in the Chelsea schools, we know their performance increases with time.

The bottom line of the partnership story is that BU did something. While others talked about urban education reform—and may have engaged in some activities on a small scale—BU did something. The BU leadership went into the trenches and worked to try to reform a failing school system. Some



of the lessons are transferable to urban education and some will remain unique to the Chelsea experience. But the investment in Chelsea will not be wasted. The history and stories must be told and analyzed. We must carry the work and the lessons learned to the next urban school. That is the responsibility of the next generation of BU leaders, and from someone in the trenches, I leave you with the following challenges:

First, continue to research what works in urban education reform.

Second, recognize that true education reform is a community affair, engaging and collaborating with all stakeholders—including our neighbors in higher education—in order to close the achievement gap.

Third, inspire students in your schools of education to teach in urban centers. We need the most dedicated and committed. Suburban school districts never seem to have a problem receiving résumés. We do.

Fourth, engage the media in deeper and broader understanding of urban education reform. We need them to be less critical and judgmental.

Finally, advocate and hold legislatures accountable for failing to prioritize—in action, deed, and finances—public education. ●

*To hear and see Mary Bourque, BU Associate Provost Doug Sears, and others talk about the Chelsea Partnership, visit [www.bu.edu/buniverse/chelsea-wrap](http://www.bu.edu/buniverse/chelsea-wrap).*