

# The School of Education

A Legacy of Excellence.

## Buffalo State Selected to Host Master Teacher Program

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced in May that Buffalo State has been selected as a regional host campus for New York State's new Master Teacher Program, which will reward the state's highest performing teachers, encourage the best and the brightest to stay in education, and ensure that the state's best teachers share their expertise with peers.

Through the program, high-performing secondary science and mathematics teachers who make a commitment to mentor other teachers will receive \$15,000 annually over four years. Selected master teachers will engage in peer mentoring and will both attend and create intensive content-oriented professional development opportunities throughout the academic year. Master teachers will also work closely with preservice and early-career fellows in their regions to develop future world-class educators.

Buffalo State's efforts for this new partnership, which will be led by Wendy Paterson, dean of the School of Education, and Mark Severson, dean of the School of

Natural and Social Sciences, will be an important catalyst in enhancing the teaching profession throughout New York State.

"Incentivizing our best teachers in the STEM fields to stay and teach in New York and lend their expertise to others will build a strong foundation of student success

and ensure that our education system remains globally competitive," said State University of New York (SUNY) Chancellor Nancy Zimpher.

The program will be managed by SUNY with technical assistance provided throughout the first phase of implementation by Math for America, a successful program currently

operating in New York and other major cities. The Master Teacher Program will be based at and hosted by higher education institutions in each of the state's 10 economic development regions. An initial group of 250 teachers were selected from Mid-Hudson, North Country, Central New York, and Western New York in fall 2013; the program will launch in the remaining six regions in spring 2014.



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**BUFFALO STATE**  
The State University of New York

School of Education



“Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning.”

—Fred Rogers

## Learning the World through Play

At a time when schools and families are pushing children—at very young ages—to succeed academically, the vital role of play in fostering young children’s healthy development is often lost in mandated curricula, a singular focus on skills-based instruction and knowledge acquisition, and an overabundance of benchmark assessments and standardized tests.

Researchers and experts on child development agree, however, that play—free, unstructured activity that children choose to engage in—is essential in the development of cognition, intelligence, creativity, problem-solving, and communication skills.

School of Education members are contributing to the growing research and promotion of the

importance of play for healthy and appropriate child development. While observing pre-K classrooms, Reva Fish, assistant professor of social and psychological foundations of education, and Laura Klenk, assistant professor of elementary education and reading, noted that there is limited time for free play, and they share a concern: the importance of play is not fully understood by parents and educators.

“We are trying to find a way to talk about play that encourages people to take children’s play seriously,” said Klenk.

“We’re assessing reading and math skills at younger and younger ages,” Fish said. “We’re changing the activities, the lessons, the goals. But the problem is that children haven’t changed. Developmental milestones haven’t changed.”

## Global Outreach

Jennifer Westover, assistant professor of exceptional education, knows that students with significant disabilities are often left out of the discussion of social justice and equality in schools and communities, no matter where in the world they live.

Recently, Westover traveled to the National University of Malaysia (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia) to study issues of social justice and equality in education for students with significant disabilities. Read more about her experience at <http://socialjusticespecialeducation.tumblr.com>.



Jennifer Westover (top, center) with Malaysian families.





Judy L. Elliott, '82

## Elliott Addresses Graduate Symposium

Judy L. Elliott, '82, distinguished educator for the Buffalo Public Schools and former chief academic officer for the Los Angeles Unified School District, delivered the keynote address at the spring 2013 Dr. Horace Mann Graduate Research Symposium in May. The audience, including faculty, staff, students, and families, was inspired by Elliott's thoughts on curriculum, instruction, administration, and research.

The symposium is an opportunity for teacher candidates in special education to contribute to their field by presenting research studies that focus on academic and behavioral

outcomes for a wide range of students with disabilities from the preschool to high school levels. Nearly 50 graduate students presented their research at the spring symposium on topics ranging from mathematical problem-solving skills to reading comprehension to the power of parent involvement.

The symposium is named in honor of the late Dr. Horace "Hank" Mann, who guided the undergraduate and graduate exceptional education programs at Buffalo State to become one of the largest in the United States. Be sure to attend the winter 2013 symposium in December.



## Giving

Your gift to the School of Education provides direct educational assistance and advancement opportunities for current students who are focused on serving children and communities through teacher education careers.

For a list of School of Education funds and scholarships, visit <http://www.buffalostate.edu/schoolofeducation/x1046.xml>

Your support has the power to transform lives!  
Give online today at [giving.buffalostate.edu](http://giving.buffalostate.edu).

## Student Clubs Update

**ACEI.** The Buffalo State networking group of the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI), led by Dianne McCarthy, associate professor of elementary education and reading, recently developed the Greater Than Me Network, a Facebook page that promotes planned and random acts of kindness. Participants post their stories of acts given and received that improve individual lives and lead to strong communities.

**Best Buddies.** The Buffalo State student chapter of Best Buddies, led by Lisa Rafferty, assistant professor of exceptional education, pairs student members from all majors with individuals from community organizations such as People Inc. to promote one-to-one friendships and leadership opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Members participate in several activities every month, including social events and fundraisers. In 2012, the Buffalo State chapter was named the Outstanding College Chapter of the Year at Best Buddies' annual international leadership conference.

**CEC.** The Buffalo State chapter of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), led by Lisa Rafferty, assistant professor of exceptional education, is actively involved in providing professional development to its members and increasing awareness and advocacy of issues that have a direct impact on the lives of those with disabilities. Each year, 15 to 20 student members attend the fall New York State CEC conference.

## In-Demand Programming

The Career and Technical Education Department launched a bachelor of science degree in family and consumer sciences education (FACS) in 2012. The program provides graduates with initial certification to teach both the mandated middle school program and high school courses that are included in high school course sequences in early childhood and childhood development; fashion and textile programs; and culinary arts. Graduates are also able to teach personal financial management courses.

Although FACS education is mandated for all public school students who complete eighth grade, few programs in New York State offer related teaching degrees; therefore, Buffalo State's new program is in demand.

"Because there are so few FACS teacher-preparation programs in this field, there are no candidates to take the place of retiring family and consumer science teachers," explained Judith Davis, lecturer and student-teaching coordinator for CTE.

## Letter from the Dean



**Dr. Wendy A. Paterson, '75, '76**  
Dean, School of Education

As a career educator of more than 30 years and a proud alumna of Buffalo State, I have witnessed many fluctuations in the teaching profession, but I have rarely seen so much sadness in our teachers than

I have this past year. Why? In part, because poverty, ignorance, brutality, and inequality still exist in society and always seems to show up in our schools as low graduation rates, uneven access to resources, high truancy, slow progress, and achievement gaps. Enduring problems of injustice are present in schools *every* day and teachers rely on their professional skills to face down these impossible odds *each* day. That is what keeps us faithful to our mission and our passion.

We are not afraid of scrutiny, yet I ask that you do not trust special interest groups that assign us a “grade” to define how well we do our job. Instead, look at the results of our work to witness the undeniable ways our programs have significant, measurable, and enduring impact on the lives of children and adults at home and across the globe. Buffalo State education programs are held to the highest professional standards. We are not monolithic. Our diverse programs of study bring people to people in extraordinary ways to do extraordinary things.

As we boldly enter the *Year of the Teacher* (Buffalo State’s theme for 2013–2014 academic year), there is much to think about with regard to our profession. Beyond the horror of school shootings and environmental tragedies, there is a more subtle devastation of spirit taking root in our educational institutions. Yet, more than ever, teacher, leadership, and adult education candidates are emerging as smart, motivated citizens who contribute in astonishing ways to a brighter future for all people.

I think that the most poignant words I can use to explain “why teachers do what we do” come from a 16-year-old Pakistani girl whose courage and wisdom both humble and inspire us. Addressing the United Nations with no more trepidation than when she faced the guns of the Taliban, Malala Yousafzai reminded us what teaching means to the world: “One child, one teacher, one pen, and one book can change the world. Education is the only solution. Education first.”

This newsletter offers a brief glimpse at the ways Buffalo State steadily works to change the world for the better. Please enjoy reading about our efforts.



## International PDS

Buffalo State’s award-winning International Professional Development Schools (International PDS) initiative offers faculty members and teacher candidates at Buffalo State the opportunity to share best teaching practices with other educators around the globe. Students find this hands-on experience with international educational systems and cultures to be an invaluable part of their career development. During the past year, Buffalo State has sent contingents to these nations:

**Chile.** For three weeks in June, faculty members Nancy Chicola and Eric Krieg led a group of six students to Santiago, Chile. The group learned about the Chilean education system from faculty members at the Universidad Mayor, facilitated Global Book Hour activities at the local public School 25, and engaged in intensive Spanish language instruction. Read about their experiences at <http://chilepdsatbsedu.wordpress.com>.

**Zambia.** For three weeks in June, faculty members Hibajene Shandomo and Sherri Weber led a group of eight students to Lusaka, Zambia. The group observed Zambian teaching models and practices for science, math, and social studies at Libala Basic School, established a “pen pal” exchange with students at the school, and delivered donations of school supplies, clothing, and other items to Chikumbuso Orphanage. Read about their experiences at <http://zambiapdsatbsedu.wordpress.com>.

**Dominican Republic.** In January 2014, Tamara Horstman-Riphahn, executive assistant to the dean, and Wendy McLeish, lecturer, will lead a group of students in the program’s first trip to Cabarete, Dominican Republic. The students will teach and observe at 3 Mariposas Montessori, a unique early childhood development program that provides quality education for Dominican and Haitian children living in poverty. The experience will also include intensive Spanish language instruction.

## PDS Consortium Wins National Award

The Professional Development Schools (PDS) Consortium at Buffalo State received the 2013 Spirit of Partnership Award from the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) in February. NAPDS is the nation’s premier association for the promotion, creation, and sustenance of collaborative school-university partnerships. In 2011, Buffalo State won the NAPDS award for Exemplary Professional Development School Achievement.

The PDS Consortium is a collaboration between Buffalo State faculty members; teacher candidates studying at Buffalo State; and teachers, administrators, and pupils in the participating schools.





## Grant Expands Global Book Hour

On Saturday mornings, every fall and spring semester since 2010, Buffalo State teacher candidates have used the café at Wegmans on Amherst Street as a launching pad to literacy.

Through the college's innovative Global Book Hour (GBH), led by faculty members Kim Truesdell and Pixita del Prado Hill, teacher candidates connect Buffalo schoolchildren, many of them immigrants and refugees, with high-quality books. Along with reading aloud to the children, teacher candidates in elementary education, music, and art integrate geography, music, art, and food into the hour by focusing on a different part of the world each week. All children who attend GBH receive a copy of that week's book to take home.

The cost of the books alone is substantial, and the project depends on grants and donations to survive. Thanks to a recent \$2,500 grant from the Western New York Foundation, the project will not only continue but also expand to an additional location this fall. On Monday evenings beginning September 30, Buffalo State will host another GBH at the Westside Value Laundromat, 417 Massachusetts Avenue, as part of the Westside Art Strategy Happenings (WASH) Project. The book project will join other community-driven cultural activities at the Laundromat, where neighborhood residents gather to play music, create art, read books, and learn languages.



"This location is a nice fit for our project," said Truesdell. "Our goal is to promote family literacy and involve the parents."

While Buffalo State students are required to attend five out of the 10 Saturdays per semester, many come more frequently simply because they enjoy the project. GBH exposes the teacher candidates to literature they might not otherwise read and gives them a unique opportunity to work with parents, del Prado Hill noted. Students have told Truesdell that the GBH experience has changed their approach to teaching and made them look at social justice issues more closely. "Students are also more willing to go into urban schools," she added. "They don't have fear [of the unknown]."

## Adult Ed Offers Fully Online Degree

**Did you know that Buffalo State's adult education program provides prospective graduate students with three curricular options that can be completed entirely online?**

Through this convenient, flexible program, students may earn a 30-credit-hour master of science degree, a 12-credit adult education graduate certificate, or a 12-credit human resource development graduate certificate. Adult education teaches those who help adults improve the way they live and work through advanced working. The program has launched a redesigned website this year for easier use. For those who prefer the classroom experience, weekend programs are now offered on campus eight Saturdays a semester. For more information, visit [www.buffalostate.edu/adulteducation](http://www.buffalostate.edu/adulteducation).



## Social Media in the Classroom

In a unique experiment with teaching and learning in digital environments, Jevon Hunter, assistant professor of elementary education and reading, has designed and implemented curricular projects that blend social media and tablet-based technologies with K-12 classroom instruction.

As part of his ViBE (Voices in Buffalo Education) initiative, Hunter urges future and current classroom teachers to take to Twitter to participate in digital literature discussions and provide writing assistance to local high school students. He also advises teacher candidates to use student profiles when selecting useful iPad applications and designing lessons for English learners that can be implemented by bilingual classroom teachers.

As clinically rich experiences continue to serve as the foundation for teacher preparation in New York, digital technologies may provide opportunities to spur and extend interactions between students and their classroom teachers. In each instance, Buffalo State teacher candidates and teachers are engaging in an effort to evolve their teaching practices while receiving crucial and productive feedback from K-12 students and their classroom teachers.

# The School of Education

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## Coming This Fall: TLE TeachLive

New simulation technology for classroom teaching practice is coming to Buffalo State this fall. The TLE TeachLive Lab is a mixed-reality teaching environment that looks like a middle school classroom, including props, whiteboards, and children; however, unlike the brick-and-mortar setting, the lab is a virtual environment, and the students in the classroom are avatars.

Developed at the University of Central Florida, the lab allows teacher candidates to learn new skills and craft their practice on simulated students during the learning process. The system is currently being implemented at 22 campuses across the United States.

According to its developers, this lab is currently the only one in the country using a mixed-reality environment to prepare or retrain preservice and in-service teachers. The use of the lab has also been instrumental in developing transition skills for students with significant disabilities, providing immediate feedback through bug-in-ear technology to preservice teachers, developing trial skills in preservice and in-service teachers, and preparing teachers in the use of STEM-related (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) instructional strategies.



## Year of the Teacher

The 2013–2014 academic year theme at Buffalo State is the *Year of the Teacher*. The Buffalo State community will honor educators with a variety of programs and activities throughout the year.

More details will follow as plans move forward for the *Year of the Teacher*. Visit [www.buffalostate.edu](http://www.buffalostate.edu) for the latest information.

[www.buffalostate.edu/schoolofeducation](http://www.buffalostate.edu/schoolofeducation)