Inside This Issue…

♦ Welcome Robin Hands
♦ Scholarship Recipients
♦ 2009 Teacher Recognition Event
♦ Thank you Mr. and Mrs. Watson
♦ Spotlight on a Cooperating Teacher
♦ Teacher Preparatory Pathway
♦ Project FUERTE: Youth Action Research

Message from the Director…

Many TNE efforts have focused on the recruitment of students to the teaching profession in areas of high need such as mathematics, science, and world languages. Collaborative activities between the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Neag School of Education have resulted in better shared understandings about teacher preparation, meaningful revisions to courses of study in the content areas, the establishment of new guidelines that allow future teachers to more easily earn a bachelor’s degree in their content areas, and outreach to undergraduates who are majoring in the critical shortage content areas through surveys, class announcements, and most recently an open house. Dr. Chuck Vinsonhaler and Dr. Tom DeFranco submitted a Robert Noyce Scholarship Grant proposal in March that, if awarded, will provide significant financial aid to future science and math teachers.

I am pleased to announce that it appears our efforts are paying off! This year’s applicant pool for the IB/M Teacher Preparation Program includes more applicants to Secondary Mathematics, World Languages, and Secondary Sciences including Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, than I have seen in the five years since I became the Director of Teacher Education in 2004! In Fall 2009 we will be welcoming fourteen secondary math majors, eight World Languages majors, and eleven Secondary Science majors to the program. Thank you to the many people who have worked to bring the Neag School and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences closer together and have developed ways to attract more bright and dedicated students to teaching in critical shortage areas. A special thanks to the TNE Curriculum Committee members for their steadfast commitment to making positive changes in teacher preparation at UConn.

Marijke Kehrhahn
Director of Teacher Education/Teachers for New Era

Congratulations to The Neag School of Education’s New Dean, Dr. Thomas DeFranco!

“Over the past few years TNE has provided an opportunity for administrators and faculty across the UConn campus to work together to enhance our nationally recognized teacher preparation programs. We expect that we will reap many more benefits from TNE in the years to come.”

-Dr. Thomas DeFranco

“A great education begins with great teachers.”

- Vartan Gregorian
Welcome Robin Hands, Neag’s New Director of School-University Partner-

Robin Hands has joined the Neag Faculty from the University of Massachusetts where she is about to complete her doctorate in education in Teacher Education and School Improvement. Her dissertation focuses on the phenomenon of underachievement in the “twice exceptional” student population. Robin has 27 years of experience in the field of education as a teacher, administrator, and program coordinator and has utilized her master’s degree in gifted education in a variety of settings. She looks forward to being part of the UCONN and Neag communities as we welcome her to our program.

Robin.Hands@uconn.edu
Telephone: 860-486-0212

Second Annual Teacher Recognition Event

To express gratitude to the cooperating teachers who provide guidance and wisdom to student teachers, the second annual Teacher Recognition Event was held on Friday, April 3, 2009. The event was sponsored by The Neag School of Education, Teachers for a New Era, and Pi Lambda Theta, a national honor society of educators. Rome Ballroom hosted over 60 cooperating and student teachers who enjoyed appetizers and beverages while opening remarks were given by Neag School of Education’s Associate Dean, Thomas Defranco and Pi Lambda Theta’s President, Ann Marie Mulready.

Keynote speaker, Regina Barreca, an English Professor in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, was “honored to be asked to speak at the Neag School’s Teacher Recognition Event. To celebrate the successful working partnership of seasoned classroom professionals and newly-emerging teachers is what this program was all about…it was a treat!” The event closed with a raffle for cooperating teachers and remarks from the Director of Teacher Education, Marijke Kehrhahn.

TNE would like to thank all who helped make this event possible and looks forward to continuing to acknowledge the contributions that cooperating teachers make to the future of education.

A Special Thanks to Michael and Monique

Their pledge of $25,000 will go to the establishment of the Ora Lee Morrison Scholarship Fund. This fund will support TNE by providing scholarships to UCONN students enrolled in The Neag School of Education or The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in memory of Ora Lee Morrison. Thank you for supporting our students in their journey to become educators!

Teachers for a New Era 2009 Scholarship Recipients!

The Lodewick TNE Alumni Scholarship
Meghan McNichol
Secondary Science

The Lodewick TNE Alumni Scholarship
Zuleyka Torres-Morales
Secondary Science

The Herbert and Sarah M. Gibor Charitable Foundation Scholarship
Yurah Robidas
Elementary Education

The Herbert and Sarah M. Gibor Charitable Foundation Scholarship
Aikaterini Skarvelas
Secondary History

Friends & Colleagues of Francis X. Archambault, Jr. Fellowship
Karen Rambo
Measurement, Evaluation and Assessment

Armino Effron Scholarship for Academic Achievement
Danielle Oliver
Music Education

TNE commends these student’s dedication and success in the field of education!
For more information about this program and others recently developed in Hartford Schools visit:
http://www.hartfordschools.org/about-your-choice/New-School-Designs.php

Teacher Preparatory Pathway

In August 2009, Bulkeley High School will open a new door for high school students interested in careers in education. Hartford’s Teacher Preparatory Pathway will enroll up to 200 students from all over the city in Grades 11 and 12. Key features of the Teacher Preparatory Pathway include: A high level of academic rigor and multiple teaching experiences for students through a curriculum focused on preparing students for a career in the field of education; Affiliation with universities that will provide opportunities for dual credit courses, college credit in advanced coursework and partnership activities to heighten awareness for teaching careers; Affiliations with the State of Connecticut’s Young Educator’s Society, sponsored by the Connecticut Region Education Council (CREC) and the Future Educators Association (FEA), and Community service-learning programs aligned with the mission of the school to prepare students for a teaching profession. UConn’s Neag School of Education is a leading partner in the project.

Rene Roselle, NSOE Clinical Faculty and proponent of the program is, “hopeful and confident that the Teacher Preparation Academy will create a supportive environment allowing teachers to model nurturing pedagogy, provide and discuss equal access to knowledge, prepare students as future teachers to teach in a democracy, and demonstrate how to be stewards of the schools they serve.”

We hope that the success of the academy in recruiting and training students interested in teaching will bring more students of color into Connecticut’s teacher preparation programs and fill critical teacher shortages. We congratulate the Bulkeley redesign team for their innovative thinking and coordinated effort to build this exciting option for Hartford’s high school students.
On March 26th a group of seven Windham High School students reported their research findings on teachers’ perceptions of Latino students to the UCONN community entitled “Books, Budget Cuts, and Blancos: Latino/a Youth Researchers Respond to Structural Inequality.” After months of conducting surveys, interviews and extensive writing, these students will continue to present these findings and use this research to collectively publish a book. Jason Irizarry, Assistant Professor in Curriculum and Instruction, is in his second year conducting Project FUERTE (Future Urban Educators conducting Research to Transform Teacher Education.) The goal of the project is to engage students in action research and social change, contribute research on the schooling experiences of urban students of color and to put a voice to students in order to improve the education of pre-service and in-service teachers. In this multi-year program students serve as researchers in order to develop collegiate skills and consider becoming urban educators upon college graduation.

According to one of the student researchers, “Project FUERTE has done a lot for me. The one big thing that means the most is that we can make a difference with the hard work and determination that we have been putting into project FUERTE.” These students have been inspired and are engaged in transforming the way we educate our teachers. We can only hope these same students someday become members of the field they are actively trying to change.

For more information about Project FUERTE, contact Jason Irizarry at: Jason.Irizarry@uconn.edu