Welcome to the first issue of Michigan Education, formerly titled Innovator. As you may have noticed, we ended publication of Innovator a few years ago. It was time to take a close and critical look at the purpose of the School of Education’s magazine. After some reflection and consultation with members of the SOE community, we decided to change the format, look, and direction of the magazine. The result is the magazine you are holding in your hands.

Michigan Education will tell the stories of our remarkable students, faculty, alumni, donors, and staff. We want you to meet the people who approach the work of teaching and educational improvement with deep passion and a commitment to social justice. We want you to understand how their work as educators addresses inequities and ensures the growth of a free, just, and diverse society. We want you to know how you, our alumni and friends, play a critical role in supporting this important work.

Michigan Education seeks to tell these stories in a way that moves you to become more deeply engaged with us. We want you to feel like you know the students we write about, that you understand the challenges facing our graduates as they enter the field, and that you recognize the important research and scholarship in which our faculty members are engaged.

This magazine is coming at an important juncture for the School of Education and the University of Michigan. In the past two years the university has welcomed a new president, Mark Schlissel, and has engaged in the largest capital campaign in the university’s history. It’s an exciting time, but there is much work to be done.

This summer, my time as dean will come to an end. It’s been a rewarding and challenging 11 years, and I’m confident that we—faculty, staff, and students—will continue to move forward confidently and with a continued commitment to improving the practice of education.

The work we do at the School of Education is transforming public education. Without your support, much of our groundbreaking research, fieldwork, and educational training would simply not be possible. I deeply appreciate your commitment, and look forward to building on our strong relationship in the years ahead.

Please let me know what you think of Michigan Education. This is your magazine, and it’s our goal to deliver stories that you will look forward to reading.

With gratitude,

[Signature]

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It Occurred to Me
The first annual ConnectED Festival was held on U-M’s Diag last September, giving students opportunities to meet, learn about, and join student organizations that are involved with education. Dean Deborah Loewenberg Ball spoke and was joined by Katie Robertson, a lecturer and research associate at SOE; Michael Johnson, principal of Carpenter Elementary in the Ann Arbor Public Schools; Joseph Evans, an undergraduate student and president of rEDesign; and Ashley Johnson, K-12 program manager for Excellent Schools Detroit.

Fourth- through eighth-grade students were proud to perform for their parents and teachers at the conclusion of the annual summer English as a Second Language program. Through poetry, video, and hip-hop, students told their stories of challenge and triumph. The program, led by professors Cathy Reischl and Debi Khasnabis (AB ’98, AM ’99, TeachCert ’99, AM ’06, PhD ’08) is part of the Mitchell-Scarlett Teaching and Learning Collaborative, a successful partnership with Ann Arbor Public Schools.

Students from the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education traveled to England in July 2015. Students learned firsthand about how education policies in the United Kingdom differ from those in the United States, especially in areas related to marginalized populations of learners. The group visited several universities to speak with colleagues and share challenges in their work.

Deborah Loewenberg Ball taught the 2015 Elementary Mathematics Laboratory, making it possible for educators to engage with public teaching while developing specific skills and closely studying the practice of teaching. Teachers came from around the world to participate in this annual opportunity.
Fall Re/Connection was the official welcome and orientation to the new academic year. A full day of special events was the perfect opportunity for faculty, staff, and returning students to greet incoming graduate students, and prepare for a successful year.

All The School of Education building recently underwent a four-phase, 18-month renovation. In addition to infrastructure improvements, the Office of Student Affairs and Teacher Education suite was renovated to provide a more visible and welcoming environment for students and visitors, and to increase staff collaboration.

Three existing classrooms were renovated to provide a teaching laboratory and an interactive classroom with four breakout rooms. A new community space—The Lounge—opened with a reception in October 2014. The Lounge was made possible by a gift from Judy (AEd ’62, TeachCert ’62) and Verne (AB ’62, MBA ’63) Istock. The Tribute Room renovation was made possible by a gift from Donna (AB ’56, TeachCert ’56) and Eugene (AB ’55, JD ’58) Hartwig.
For School of Education alumna and elementary teacher Mary Douglass (AB ’83, AM ’06, TeachCert ’06), it started with a simple conversation.

That conversation has so far led to the creation of four libraries—two in Bangladesh, one in Nepal, and one in Vietnam—from the efforts of her school’s students, and the generous citizens of Marshall, Michigan. A fifth library will be established in Africa this year; students will vote on the exact location.

“I was talking to a local woman with a daughter in third grade. She had lived abroad and we discussed the dearth of educational opportunities for girls and women worldwide,” said Douglass. “She mentioned an organization called Half the Sky, and one of its ideas is that if you can educate women, you will also educate their kids. She started a local chapter of Half the Sky in Marshall, and the group’s goals seemed like a perfect fit with our school. I loved the idea of our kids learning to be stewards to help others.”

Douglass herself has a history of advocacy through her work as an attorney and as chief of staff for a U.S. congressman. She began teaching after joining a master of arts with elementary teacher certification (ELMAC) program cohort in 2006 at the School of Education and, after graduation, taught for a year in the Lincoln Consolidated Schools near Ann Arbor. Last fall, she began her ninth year teaching fifth grade, the last four at Gordon Elementary School in Marshall.

“One thing I loved about the ELMAC program was that it respected my time. There was no ‘busy work,’ and I try to follow that model in my classroom. We want to make the most of our time together, and with fifth graders, there is a lot of potential energy that can be harnessed and put to positive use,” she said.

“Kids at Gordon are really active,” Douglass added. “They want to make a difference in the world. The idea of helping other kids is a good fit for them, and they discovered they were talented at raising money for a good cause.”

Four years ago, Douglass’s students decided to work with the local chapter of Half the Sky, and more specifically with a group within that organization called Room To Read, which provides literacy opportunities for children in countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, and Zambia. That is when the project became “Gordon Goes Global.” Students chose four countries for which they could potentially raise funds, and did research on all of them. Douglass’s students then made presentations on each country to younger students, and the K-5 school eventually voted to support Bangladesh, by funding a library.

The fundraising effort itself involved even more research. “We brainstormed an idea to sell maple syrup,” said Douglass, “but soon
found out that was beyond our capabilities, so we decided to sell just the maple sap.” That, in turn, became a series of math and science exercises for students. They did the research: what trees to tap, what time of the year to tap them, even what time of day to collect the sap. They made predictions and charted and plotted their data.

“We sold the sap to people along with instructions that the kids wrote on how to make syrup,” Douglass said. “We made more than $700.”

There were other fundraising ideas, including a spaghetti dinner, a concert, sales of handmade bookmarks and friendship bracelets (“hundreds and hundreds of them,” Douglass remembers), a used-book swap where one book could be traded for another for 50 cents, and sales of customized T-shirts (“We did several printings, they were so popular,” Douglass said). Many parents and teachers got involved, as well as Gordon students. “It was really exciting for the kids to see that they were making a difference,” Douglass said. “And, it was a nice way to build community at our school.”

The original goal was to be able to fund one library in Bangladesh, but the Gordon Goes Global project was so successful that enough money was raised to cover costs for two. The group then pushed ahead and raised enough money to open a third library in a remote region of Nepal. All three have been built and are now stocked with books.

Last year, the Gordon Goes Global project set its sights on funding yet another library, this time in Vietnam. Here, a different fundraising method came into play. The State Farm insurance company had initiated a competitive grant program, and the group submitted a proposal that landed Gordon Goes Global within the top 200 applicants. To make the final cut and receive a grant, Gordon students launched a Facebook campaign that impressed State Farm enough to award $25,000 to Gordon Goes Global.

In November 2015, a group of parents, a teacher, and supporters of Gordon Goes Global took an extended study trip to Vietnam and visited with the students and teachers who received the library. They toured the library, visited homes, and came back to Michigan, where they relayed details of their visit with students and families. In February, the group that toured Vietnam held a dinner at Gordon Elementary and showed photos, talked about the impact of the library, and shared a meal.

Douglass said her teaching career has been doubly rewarding: She has the satisfaction of helping to shape the lives of scores of students, and a sense of pride in seeing them help others as global citizens. “The kids learn a lot, and they’re making a difference,” she said. “They want to try to make a difference in a completely different continent, and I love that they are still motivated to make a difference after three years of working on this same project.”

So, what’s the project for next school year? Whatever it is, it’s certain that Gordon students will be helping the cause of literacy while they learn from Douglass.
Collaboration and Innovation
Deborah Loewenberg Ball reflects on 11 years as dean

Back in 2005, the video-sharing website YouTube was launched, President George W. Bush started his second term, Million Dollar Baby won the Best Picture Oscar, and the Chicago White Sox were World Series champions. The University of Michigan football team went 7-5 that year, and lost to the Nebraska Cornhuskers in the Alamo Bowl.

Also in that year, Deborah Loewenberg Ball became the 11th dean of the School of Education and began building an energetic and visionary leadership team dedicated to setting a course of distinction and accomplishment that few other schools of education could match. Now, as Ball completes the final months of her time as dean at the School of Education, she and the SOE community reflect on the past decade of progress, challenges, and triumphs.

Ball praised the success of her predecessors, Cecil Miskel and Karen Wixson, in recruiting top faculty members whose research set the standard in the field of education. “But by the time I became dean, several of these scholars were retiring. We felt the loss of these significant faculty members. As we faced the challenge of recruiting and hiring new scholars to take their place, we turned this into an opportunity for our development.”

Over the past decade, the school recruited 37 new faculty members. “They have a range of different training and perspectives. They bring experience with diverse contexts of practice and important expertise for our work. Together we are able to create new possibilities in our curriculum, our teaching, our community engagement, and our scholarship.” The changing composition of the faculty reflects the expanding reach of the field of education and the school’s dedication to education practice. This evolution has led to the addition of more clinical faculty members, joint appointments with other U-M schools and colleges, and faculty using diverse methodologies in their research (see diversity and equity article on page 12).

Halfway through her tenure as dean, the leadership team, faculty, staff, and students systematically took stock of the direction of the school and deliberately identified priorities. As a result, the school’s strategic plan was put into place. “We conducted a major appraisal of ourselves and tried to figure out what our strengths were and what we thought it would take to be the kind of school of education we would want to be at our centennial (2021). We articulated two core commitments of the school’s work. One was that this school is devoted to the study and improvement of education practice. The other was that we commit ourselves to advancing equity and inclusion, and to promoting diversity. We work to understand and improve education practice in ways that attend particularly to communities that have been historically marginalized.”

Establishing priorities brought with it a whole new set of challenges. “Defining our goals in 2010 gave us language for our work, but we still had a lot we needed to be working on and learning in order to act on those goals.” Although commitments to education practice and to diversity, equity, and inclusion have in many ways always been central to many faculty members’ work, those commitments were sharpened over the past several years and specific steps were taken to develop our capacity. “It has to do with the people—faculty, students, and staff—whom we recruit, what we teach and our pedagogies, our approaches to community engagement, and our everyday policies and practices. It has included attention to the culture and climate of the school as well as to our everyday practices and organizational policies.” In 2015, the school completed a specific strategic plan for advancing our work on diversity, equity, and inclusion, which provides structures and support for the development of our efforts.

Other changes marked the last 11 years. The school has been transformed visually and has undergone significant architectural and design renovations. From welcoming first floor hallways with images of the school’s work to the Brandon Center for the Study of Education Practice, the building is brighter and better equipped for the collaborative work and teaching in which faculty members and students engage.

This school has also expanded its community engagement efforts. “Thanks to the leadership of key faculty members, we partner with local school districts in new ways. In Ann Arbor, we have partnership schools in which we collaborate with educators to prepare teachers, develop new curricular approaches, and work with families. In Detroit, we have numerous projects across the city, involving youth, educators, and community leaders.”

The last decade has also been marked by major increases in philanthropic support for the school’s work. “Our donors have powered our work through generous gifts of money, as well as time and expertise.” With the ambitious goals that the school
seeks to accomplish, this support has been vital, and Ball is proud of this expansion of the school’s fundraising success.

One of Ball’s initiatives over her tenure as dean has been to support innovative new directions in the preparation of teachers. SOE faculty members worked to redesign the school’s teacher education programs, and in 2010 installed a new curriculum, including a renewed focus on preparing beginning teachers for practice. Particular attention is given to preparing novices with the commitments and skills to work effectively in settings where young people most need skillful teaching—under-resourced communities and schools with high concentrations of students of color and low-income students. Ball founded TeachingWorks, an organization dedicated to improving the quality of beginning teaching across the country. “TeachingWorks is an example of how we think about ways the important work done here can be used more broadly,” Ball said. “We had successfully redesigned our own teacher preparation programs but it seemed clear that if we were expecting to change a system in great need of improvement—the teacher preparation system—we would need something more than just having better programs at the University of Michigan.”

So, she said, “TeachingWorks was born out of the ambition to take things learned at the school and to make a difference beyond our own on-the-ground work.”

Another example is a more recent organization, the Center for Education Design, Evaluation, and Research (see CEDER story on page 10), which Associate Dean Elizabeth Moje has inaugurated. CEDER organizes a set of capacities that the school has and makes them more available to units on campus and to communities it serves. CEDER creates opportunities for students and faculty members to use their expertise with a broader range of sites. “I think we’ll see more of this going forward,” Ball said.

While emphasizing the important, groundbreaking work of the faculty, Ball said there are two other groups that make the School of Education a place of distinction: students and staff. “Across the last 11 years we’ve seen a huge contribution on the part of our students. Our students bring a lot of expertise. Many of them have been professionals elsewhere, and our undergraduates have experienced schooling in a variety of ways. As scholars, we publish or confer with people, and that’s one of the ways that the work travels.” But another way we make an impact, Ball explains, is by graduating students who continue doing things that they’ve done at the school—and that helps to spread the work. “In the end, it’s gratifying to see our graduates making an impact on those they serve and society at large. I’m proud of them all.”

The diverse expertise of SOE staff members has contributed significantly to the growth of the school. Staff members play vital roles in student recruitment, student affairs, fundraising, communications, information technology, financial and budget administration, project management, and research. The school’s investment in professional staff has led to a greater capacity to fundraise, better relationships with partner schools and organizations, and a more robust student support network, including career counseling.

The progress of the past 11 years has been distinguished by innovation, creativity, and collaboration. “I think the story of the school has to be about all the people: students, faculty, and staff,” Ball said. “They’ve all played a pivotal role in getting us to where we are today, and they’ll all have a part in taking us to new heights of innovation, achievement, and work that will transform society for generations to come.” She credits the entire School of Education community with helping to leverage the capabilities of the School of Education to be a powerful force for change, social justice, and quality education. ■
When you have valuable expertise and resources, it’s good to make them available to those who need them. That’s the idea behind the School of Education’s new Center for Education Design, Evaluation, and Research (CEDER), which is the result of rethinking how to make the school’s capabilities in research, evaluation, instructional design, and professional learning available to more people and organizations while simultaneously improving the school’s research infrastructure.

CEDER is a center devoted exclusively to offering high-quality designs, evaluations, and research on teaching, learning, leadership, and policy at multiple levels of education. That goal has implications all across U-M and beyond, said Elizabeth Moje, associate dean for research and community engagement and Arthur F. Thurnau Professor of Educational Studies. “We see ourselves as working in partnership with groups both on and off campus. Each strand within CEDER can provide something unique and, in the process, build new collaborations.”

The goals, Moje said, are threefold: to facilitate partnerships that will leverage the resources of SOE with other units across the university and with the broader educational community on various projects; to offer high-quality, research-based services at a low cost; and to advance the practice of equitable and socially just education across multiple domains. In the process, CEDER will generate and support new research initiatives proposed by SOE faculty members.

Nate Phipps, CEDER’s managing director, said each of the center’s “strands” can be a go-to source for expertise to add value to different projects. (For a sampling of projects currently underway in CEDER, see the accompanying sidebar.)

Professor Chris Quintana (MS ‘95, PhD ’01) leads the design strand, which includes Instructional and Design Coordinator Darin Stockdill (AB ’91, PhD ’11). They help develop and study the enactment of curricula, programs, and tools for research collaborators and for fee-for-service clients. Design team members can also act as an educational resource within a larger project. “For example, Taubman College has an architectural program for high-schoolers,” Phipps said. “They have the technical curriculum down, but they need to be able to engage younger students. CEDER is helping them with the challenges of what it’s like to teach a class of 11th-graders.”

The evaluation group is headed by Professor Stephen DesJardins and includes Evaluation Coordinator Vicki Bigelow (PhD ’13). The group offers both evaluation services and research partnerships that employ education evaluation methods, Phipps explained. “CEDER can serve as a third-party evaluator for a faculty member who needs an evaluation component for a grant, for example. In fact, CEDER can be written into grants as evaluators. We provide such services within the School of Education, across the university, and in school districts around the State of Michigan. We can also work as consultants for, say, a nonprofit company, to look at evaluation materials and offer suggestions to improve the grant process.”

The research strand, led by Moje, conducts and collaborates on multiple forms of education research across campus and in the com-
munity, as well as providing grant support and oversight for SOE faculty grant proposals and projects. Moje said CEDER can help match the research expertise of the school’s faculty members with other researchers who are doing work that touches on educational issues. In effect, CEDER has expanded the school’s former research office by building infrastructure, collaborative capacity, and new services. Phipps adds, “We also want to add support for grant writing and to provide matching support for grant opportunities.”

CEDER also provides support for professional learning for educators, offering various educational tools, workshops, and resources such as the Teaching and Learning Exploratory, which has extensive collections of classroom videos and other records of practice that can be used for professional development of veteran teachers; the education of new teachers; and, with the proper permissions, research on education practice. “We’re working with various school districts to identify topics that teachers need support for,” said Phipps.

Each of CEDER’s functions can provide collaborators and clients with access to specific expertise of SOE faculty members, Phipps said. “CEDER can make available to teachers the expertise that is relevant to them; it can be a community resource. It just makes sense to have this kind of center for U-M faculty and staff colleagues, as well as school leaders, teachers, and other community educators to access. We want to be seen as a resource for SOE, the university at large, and the broader community.”

CEDER in action: Projects in progress

Innovation in Action: Solutions to Real World Challenges
CEDER has been chosen to act as the lead education partner for this successful transdisciplinary campus-wide student competition that originated at the School of Public Health. Now in its third year, with funding from U-M’s Third Century Initiative, Innovation in Action has been expanded from its initial focus on public health challenges to include a competition to innovate in order to solve challenges in the field of education.

Taubman College’s Michigan Architecture Prep Program
Beginning in the 2014–2015 school year, CEDER has worked with the leadership of U-M’s Alfred A. Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning to act as the education design consultant for the newly launched Michigan Architecture Prep program; a studio architecture program offered to Detroit 11th-graders for high school credit. CEDER design staff visit the program in Detroit on a semi-weekly basis to offer expert advice in instructional design and working with young people in an educational setting.

Creating4Change Curriculum and Research
CEDER has partnered with Washington, D.C. nonprofit Driftseed to create an education toolkit to be used in conjunction with its forthcoming documentary, Creating4Change, which profiles women who have found innovative ways to use their art to tackle the most pressing issues facing the women in their communities. Additionally, CEDER will work with School of Education faculty members to develop research and evaluation activities that assess the effectiveness of the program’s activities.

The Teaching and Learning Exploratory
CEDER houses the Teaching and Learning Exploratory (TLE), a collection of full-length classroom videos with integrated tools for interaction and exploration. The TLE includes more than 1,000 full-length classroom sessions from diverse locations in K-12 settings, covering core subjects such as mathematics, language arts, and more. The TLE offers videos of real students and teachers interacting in their everyday settings. The TLE is currently being used by a variety of education professionals, such as education researchers, teacher educators, administrators, and classroom teachers.

NSF Engineering Research Center Workforce Development
CEDER has convened information sessions and assembled teams of faculty members to work with colleagues at the College of Engineering to develop robust research and workforce development plans to accompany National Science Foundation Engineering Research Center proposals. This will allow for the School of Education to play a much larger and more active role in shaping the research and dissemination agendas associated with these large grants.
At the School of Education, the effort to study and improve educational practice is inseparable from the conviction to develop more effective and socially just systems of education. In 2014, the school launched a faculty search seeking to recruit scholars with expertise in “methodology in the study of diversity and equity.” This was part of a purposeful process to bring in faculty members doing work that aligns with the values of the school and serves the needs expressed by our students.

With their expertise in a wide range of theories and methodologies, five new faculty members hired through this innovative search are enriching the school’s course offerings and programs of research. In addition to training students in methods to account for race and racism, social class, gender, and related issues in educational research, they are helping the community to attend to issues of equity and inclusion in all contexts, including within the University of Michigan.

Paradoxically, educational institutions can serve to perpetuate inequities, even as they represent the greatest hope for overcoming injustices. School of Education faculty members, students, and alumni offer their voices to crucial conversations on reform, assessment, curriculum, policy, recruitment, and retention. Preparing students to recognize and challenge structural inequities is essential for training a new generation of scholars.

Professors Camille Wilson and Tara Yosso teach highly anticipated courses on critical race methodology and critical race theory. In these classes, students are deeply engaged with the issue of how to make educational spaces and research more equitable. Aurora Kamimura, a doctoral candidate in the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education says, “Students of color have to think about how their voices are valued or devalued and how that factors into their positionality within the system. The readings and the dialogues in Professor Yosso’s class allow me to bring my whole self to this work.” She adds that the hiring of faculty members who bring consciousness to issues of race and racism is a reflection of a changing value of scholarship and pedagogy at the School of Education.

Students are exploring different paths for their own scholarship and research, informed by the study of diverse methodologies. Bonnie Tucker, a third year doctoral student in the Joint Program in English and Education, altered her dissertation approach after completing a midterm project in Professor Yosso’s course. Bonnie, who examines teaching and learning in first-year writing classes at for-profit universities, says, “Through my framework, I need to address race and racism because I see the urgency for this work in my particular field of study.”

Meet

five new faculty members with research and teaching expertise in methodologies to study diversity and equity. In addition to a brief description of their research, a methodology course taught by each professor during the 2015–16 academic year is listed.

Trained in cultural anthropology and comparative education, Michelle J. Bellino centers her research on young people’s understanding of historical injustice, particularly in conflict-affected and post-conflict contexts. In her work, she traces youth experiences from schools to homes and communities in order to understand how knowledge and attitudes toward historical injustice travel across public and private spaces, as well as between generations.

Course: Ethnographic Approaches to Educational Research

Developmental psychologist Matthew Diemer works to understand how marginalized youth negotiate structural constraints in school, college, and work. Specializing in quantitative methods, he studies how poor and working-class African American and Latino youth, in particular, think about social inequalities and become engaged in political activism. He also examines how social class, particularly family wealth, intersects with other social identities to contribute to educational and occupational inequality.

Course: Psychometric Theory: Classical and Latent Trait Models
By promoting a deep conceptual understanding of social science questions, he helps students to translate data and equations into meaningful and persuasive evidence that can be used to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Professor Matthew Diemer’s research is concerned with the development of critical consciousness in marginalized groups. Through his courses, he intentionally trains students to think differently about statistics. By promoting a deep conceptual understanding of social science questions, he helps students to translate data and equations into meaningful and persuasive evidence that can be used to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion. He accomplishes this, in part, by assigning texts and projects that highlight the application of quantitative methods in studies related to social justice.

Aixa Marchand, a third year doctoral student in the Combined Program in Education and Psychology, took Professor Diemer’s class on structural equation modeling last year and currently works on one of his research projects. Together, they are using longitudinal data to investigate whether differential treatment from teachers (on the basis of race) affects African American students’ confidence in math, as well as math achievement. They are now replicating the study to explore the effects of gender.

Aixa’s own research probes the effectiveness of traditional models of parental educational involvement in marginalized populations. “Qualitative research will inform the questions that I want to ask. Structural equation modeling will then allow me to test relationships and interpret the data.” Aixa hopes that by skillfully selecting methods to conduct her research, she will be able to reach broad audiences and present compelling evidence to address issues of inequality.

The field of educational research must invent and refine methods that increase our capacity to study complex issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. School of Education students increasingly embrace this challenge and bring valuable knowledge and experience to the critical discussions that will shape the future of American education.

David G. García is one of a handful of historians across the country documenting Chicana/o community histories of education. His research addresses the interconnectivity of history and education in relation to Chicana/o and Latina/o communities in the United States. Dr. García’s current book project uncovers a significant link between racial covenants and school segregation, a form of discrimination sorely under-researched in relation to Mexican Americans.

Course: Applying History Methods to Educational Research

Camille M. Wilson (AM ’96) explores school-family-community engagement and transformative leadership from holistic, critical, and culturally relevant perspectives. She particularly focuses on issues of educational advocacy and activism in communities of color. Using critical qualitative research approaches, she explores how families and community members strive to enact agency and political resistance to advance equitable educational reform. She is currently leading a multiple case study of educational community organizing in Detroit.

Course: Critical Race Methodologies for Qualitative Research

Tara J. Yosso’s research and teaching apply the frameworks of critical race theory and critical media literacy to examine educational access and equity, emphasizing the community cultural wealth students of color bring to school. She has authored an award winning book, Critical Race Counterstories Along the Chicana/Chicano Educational Pipeline (Routledge), and numerous collaborative and interdisciplinary chapters and articles in publications such as the Harvard Educational Review, Equity and Excellence in Education, and Qualitative Inquiry. Her second book deconstructs Hollywood’s urban school genre with a particular focus on images of Latina/o youth from 1955 to 2007.

Course: Critical Race Theory in Education
Professor Michelle Bellino studies history education and the civic development of youth in the wake of armed conflict. As a cultural anthropologist, Bellino spent 14 months conducting ethnographic research in urban and rural settings in Guatemala. Through interviews, observation, and participation in schools and community events, Bellino discovered the ways that Guatemalan youth make sense of civic expression and their role as citizens in a new democracy. She is currently writing a book centering on the relationship between education and youth citizenship in postwar Guatemala.

The following passages are excerpted from Professor Bellino’s article, “Civic engagement in extreme times: The remaking of justice among Guatemala’s ‘postwar’ generation.”

**Human rights are dead**

During my first month in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, I was troubled by the graffiti on a cement wall that declared, “human rights are dead.” The letters were cleanly stamped with a stencil in black and red ink. One evening while walking home I noticed a group of young people in knit ski masks, hovering under a streetlight. They chatted casually, some twirling baseball bats, others gripping scrap metal. Convinced I had sighted my first gang, I clung to the side of the house and ran to the back door. Soon I came to know this group as one of the self-claimed “neighborhood watch” vigilantes. Local youths took turns monitoring the streets at night, while community members brought them refreshments as thanks for keeping the streets safe. My middle-aged neighbor assured me, “They are not delinquents. They are the good ones.” When I asked a young person about the “death” of human rights, he affirmed that “rights in Guatemala do not exist. That is why we have the group.”

This instance brings to the surface several of the central paradoxes regarding youth attitudes toward civic participation in Guatemala today, notably the way outlooks turn on questions of violence, human security, and the right to justice in the face of impunity. It also demonstrates the restructuring of roles that civil society actors take on when they perceive that the human rights and civil contracts do not exist, as well as how these roles are interpreted from within a society whose experience with violence...
appears to be ongoing. Nearly 20 years after peace negotiations that formally ended the country’s civil war, Guatemala exhibits one of the world’s highest rates of violent crime, often attributed to gangs and youth delinquency. Under these “extreme” conditions, are these actors practicing civic engagement through decisive, albeit drastic, action—or are they delinquents using extrajudicial violence as a threat to control the community? Does this group demonstrate how youth have inadvertently embraced a culture of violence as a consequence of Guatemala’s history of protracted violence—or does it reveal the way citizens intervene when their government is too weak to protect them?

States undergoing democratic transition have increasingly invested in civic education projects, often linking democratic civic participation to peacebuilding goals. But despite the Ministry of Education’s civic education reforms in the years following the civil war, Guatemala’s postwar generation remains wary of democracy. Just 20 years ago in Guatemala, to critique the state was tantamount to a death sentence. Young people today may be born into families who have lost members to state repression, witnessed or experienced brutal violence, or suffer from psychosocial trauma related to the war. Understandably, many of the adults in these young people’s lives are fearful of civic participation, distrusting the state and fellow citizens. Guatemala is no longer an authoritarian regime, but it is not yet the multicultural and peaceful democracy its postwar transition promised.

My middle-aged neighbor assured me, “They are not delinquents. They are the good ones.”
Moreover, young people’s daily experiences reflect a society where deep disparities persist between indigenous and nonindigenous groups, structural inequality spanning generations and institutionalized, in part, through unequal access to public education. These disparities played a role in the conflict, and they continue to marginalize indigenous communities and opportunities for Maya youth.

Remaking Justice

In a Q’eqchi’ Maya community, students in a 12th-grade social studies class explain that justicia propia, making “one’s own justice,” is a form of resistance against state laws, and the racial exclusion, corruption, and impunity that hollow these promises. One student, Álvaro, reasons that every pueblo has “its own form of fighting back. This pueblo burns.” Although extreme, these expressions of extrajudicial justice mediate the people’s anger at being gravely neglected on a national level. Yolanda explains, “If the people don’t respond, who will punish the criminals?... Here, someone can kill a child, or 10 children, and never get caught or go to jail. He can keep killing. This is why people respond in this form...We have the right to safety, but the state does not give us this right. This is why people must respond.”

Yolanda and Álvaro’s classmates agree, “Maybe it is not right, but it is how we keep our streets safe.” Their teacher, César, holds up a newspaper and says he can hardly bring himself to read about Guatemala anymore, things have gotten so bad. Students embrace this rare opening for dialogue in what is traditionally an authoritarian classroom, structured around lectures and dictation exercises. César leans against his desk as students recount recent instances of mob violence in the village, including lynching of criminals and arson of the local police station and police vehicles. There is a mix of shame and defensiveness in their comments, as students are well aware of the dangers of reacting too quickly. Victor says, “Sometimes the people just do it to do it... There is no dialogue.” Another says, “They don’t open the space to talk. They just come with gasoline and start pouring it in the road. They don’t listen to what people have to say.” These instances of “justice” transgress categories of civic and criminal actions. Simultaneously, they obscure and complicate motives, resistance, and historical injustice and its legacies, creating a “grey zone” in the civic space between enacting justice and perpetrating injustice.

As the conversation gets heated, César exits the room to meet with other teachers in the hallway. Students continue the discussion, educating me about the limits placed on justice in their pueblo. Gregorio explains that it is impossible to stop the escalation. “If you say anything—if you say, for example, let’s call the police instead of all this—they will say you are working with him too.” I listen, wondering how educators can reasonably teach about the value of civic participation in a democracy where speaking out carries such risks.

Considering the dangers of taking justice into one’s own hands leads the students back to their instinctive beliefs, that some justice is better than none. Rosa says, “On one hand, I’m in favor of taking justice in your own hands, because what does justice do here? Right now, here, justice doesn’t do anything.” David agrees, “It’s true. Even if you capture a criminal, they let them go... And when they are set free, they say, ‘Tomorrow we steal.’ This is how the cycle continues. This is why people have to take justice into their own hands.”

This conversation, notably taking place in the absence of their teacher, demonstrates how young people struggle to make meaning of justicia propia, and how the moral valence of these extreme acts shifts depending on how they are situated. When I ask students about how violence affects their community, they list domestic abuse, gangs, and the range of street crime that the neighborhood watch groups and flash mobs respond to. Not one student includes justicia propia as a form of violence. The violent nature of “people’s justice” reveals itself only through careful examination, and even then it remains tied to exclusion, neglect, and victimization. Students fear it, but they understand it.

Not all acts outside the law are collective or public spirited, but youth voices demonstrate that these transgressions are conceived as both acts of resistance and acts of order. Young people talk about justicia propia as acts of despair, revealing deep frustrations with the state, and as acts of autonomous collaboration, a “making” of justice, even if what is generated is more
damaging than constructive. These are simultaneously stories of democracy’s failures and stories of citizens coming together. In the process, young people negotiate the lines they are willing to cross in a state too weak or corrupt to guarantee basic protections. At times proud of their willingness to come together as a community, they are also ashamed and fearful that violence appears to be the default mode of social interaction.

Meanwhile, when these students collectively consider the value of indigenous movements and other forms of organized resistance taking place across Guatemala, they frequently dismiss these as dangerous acts that provoke violent standoffs between civil society and the state. Initially baffled at how organized protests could be viewed as more socially disruptive than justice proper, over time I come to realize the historical legacies embedded in these interpretations. In this community, those who planfully resist are the criminal agitators, whereas the spontaneous frustration enacted in vigilante justice is conceived as a valid response to injustice. Student interpretations reflect broader social discourses that portray activists as social menaces, subversive delinquents, and even terrorists, designations that were instrumental during a war that targeted and repressed popular movements.

Given the limited public space for civic dissent and the risks associated with civic participation, inaction has increasingly become the duty of the good citizen in a violent “postwar” democracy. Under these extreme conditions, young people in this community conceive of civic disengagement as serving the common good.

Implications for civic education in extremis

At its extremes, good citizenship in “postwar” Guatemala either requires distancing and disengagement, or breaking the law in order to access a civic voice. Eerily reminiscent of wartime repression, civic participation remains a dangerous forum for exercising one’s voice. Consequently, collective action is construed as dangerous for individuals, as well as damaging to state cohesion. Meanwhile, civic efforts to “fill the gaps” left by a weak state veers into vigilantism and extrajudicial violence. These are not merely unconscious reproductions of state-citizen interactions but also new sites of contestation, representing profound neglect and exclusion from the civic space. In the process, breaking the law to fill gaps creates new voids. The persistence of blame placed on social movements and youth criminals reinforces the cultural belief that good citizenship resides in nonparticipation.

Inaction has increasingly become the duty of the good citizen in a violent “postwar” democracy.

Educational actors and institutions have an important role to play in dismantling these authoritarian legacies and facilitating young people’s understanding of the civil contracts that underlie democratic arrangements. Yet schools are embedded institutions and are not always in a position to lead change, especially when challenging the status quo carries threats to personal security. How can educators promote messages of youth civic empowerment when there is strong evidence that civic action is dangerous—when young people fear rather than trust state actors, when young people are vigilant rather than reliant on their neighbors? Teachers in this community visibly struggle to reconcile democratic civic ideals with the everyday realities they share with their students, and at times, they become complicit in promoting conceptions of good citizens who acquiesce in the face of unjust systems. César leaves the room as his students delve into an honest reflection of community violence, admitting that he is not sure “what to tell them.” Additionally, most students regard this conversation as atypical and not indicative of school learning, because they “already know” their reality. Young people, too, have come to believe that civic dialogue has little value when authentic openings for civic participation are absent.

Young people’s interpretations of civic opportunities and obligations in “postwar” Guatemala force us to reconcile with several fundamental questions. Notably, does civic action have to fall within the realm of the legal in order to be civic? Surely, global resistance movements have tested the bounds of legality in order to expose unjust structures and transform inequitable institutional arrangements. However, civic discourse alone is an insufficient criterion for breaking the law, when mass violence is frequently carried out in the name of the common good. At the other extreme, can strategic withdrawal from public spaces be construed as acts with lasting civic value, in that they are intended to avoid public conflict? To what extent do extreme times call for extreme measures and new ethical criteria for what constitutes civic action? For too many Guatemalan youth, the only world they know is one of extreme conditions. Young people in this community struggle to define and enact appropriate civic action—at times, stretching the bounds of what has traditionally been envisioned as participation for the common good. This study demonstrates the need for further research on the qualities of civic engagement, as well as the underlying logic governing young people’s decisions about participation in states that are no longer authoritarian, but not yet democracies.

All names of individuals are pseudonyms, in order to protect the identity of participants. The complete article can be viewed at esj.sagepub.com.

The final, definitive version of this paper has been published in Education, Citizenship and Social Justice, Vol 10/Issue 2, July 2015 by SAGE Publications Ltd, All rights reserved. © Michelle J. Bellino
Impact Profile: Multifaceted gift with a holistic approach

A $5 million gift by Kathleen (ABEd ’72, TeachCert ’72) and Bryan (BBA ’73, MBA ’75) Marsal to the School of Education was stunning in its amount, but its impact will be priceless.

“The Marsals’ gift is the largest and most generous demonstration of support from a family that the School of Education has ever received,” said Dean Deborah Loewenberg Ball. “Their gift will dramatically transform how we guide and support our students and alumni as they move into careers as teachers, administrators, policymakers, and other education professionals.” The Marsals identified four areas in which they felt their gift would have the greatest impact: scholarships, TeachingWorks, community engagement partnerships, and career services for graduating students.

The first Marsal Family Scholarship was awarded in the fall of 2015 to a student pursuing a master of arts degree with teacher certification. Many SOE students rely on scholarship support to attend U-M. Scholarships enable students to pursue their studies with fewer financial worries, allowing them to receive the transformative education that defines the Michigan experience.

The Marsals’ gift to TeachingWorks is helping to improve the standard for skillful beginning teaching practice. Specifically, the gift is accelerating the development of professional networks necessary to accomplish the goals of the organization. “We have developed the curricula, the tools, the exemplars, and the assessments to transform teaching in this country,” said Dean Ball. The gift also supports partnerships with K-12 schools and community engagement programs that allow researchers to investigate important areas of education, including preparing teachers to educate students from diverse backgrounds, reducing educational inequalities, increasing basic literacy, and supporting students’ understanding of complex ideas.

Seeing a critical need, the Marsals helped the school build up its career services office. As Dean Ball explained, “For the first time ever, we will be able to help students and alumni prepare for their job searches by building key relationships with schools and districts across the country, assisting with interviewing and other search skills, and developing networks of alumni to aid in the process. We have long recognized the need for this, but haven’t had the resources to do it effectively.” The new Career Center is staffed with full-time employees who connect with students early, help develop their career goals, provide them with resources, and support them in their efforts. The center is led by Assistant Director Shamille Orr and Career Coordinator Laura Mayer (BFA ’09).

Every facet of support stemming from the Marsals’ gift is aimed at enriching students’ education, as well as improving the study and practice of teaching. The family’s commitment to the field of education and the School of Education community will have lasting impact, both on a national scale and in the lives of students on campus.

Campaign Q&A

In November 2013, U-M officially launched its Victors for Michigan fundraising campaign with a total goal of $4 billion. As part of that effort, the School of Education is aiming to raise $60 million. Let us answer some questions you may have about the campaign.

How is the current campaign different from the fundraising that the school always does?

Although fundraising is always ongoing, a campaign is a long-term, high-energy effort that encompasses several years and focuses our efforts on key objectives. These objectives best align with what we think donors will want to support and what we need most in order for us to be the best school of education that we can be.

What are the School of Education’s priorities in this current campaign and how were these determined?

Our $60 million goal (double our previous campaign goal) includes the areas of student scholarships, building renovations, programmatic support, support for community engagement efforts that benefit children in under-resourced schools here in Michigan and beyond, and general operating support.

All of these initiatives stem from our 2010 strategic assessment in which we identified our key goals and top priorities. Support from our donors will help to get us there.

How have donors and alumni responded to the campaign priorities presented?

We’re pleased to say that after approximately half of the time elapsed in this campaign (official counting began in July 2011) we are ahead of schedule. We have more to do to reach our goal, but we are deeply grateful for the generous support of our alumni and friends.

Are campaigns only about raising big gifts?

Certainly major gifts are a part of any capital campaign, but so are gifts of all sizes. Our Fund for Excellence is a major part of this campaign with a goal of $3.5 million. We will get there with gifts ranging from $10 to $10,000+ for that fund. Annual gifts are crucial to the school because, unlike endowments, these gifts can be allocated quickly by the dean to take advantage of opportunities or solve urgent problems. All gifts to the Fund for Excellence have an impact in the year that they are given. Additionally, many people don’t realize that one of the factors in college rankings is support from alumni, so a gift of any size actually helps the school when it comes to college rankings.
In the middle of the summer when most kids are sleeping in and playing with friends, a group of upper elementary students were in a classroom at the School of Education. Seated with their desks forming a horseshoe shape, their faces demonstrated the concentration required to solve the math problem that Professor Ball posed. Something was very different about this mathematics class—aside from the video cameras and the audience seated silently at the back of the room. Ball led the class in a discussion of the problem. One student described how he approached the question. Other students voiced agreement and disagreement. Students assessed one another’s reasoning, sometimes changing their approaches as their classmates spoke. Dede Feldman, one of the observers, knew she was witnessing something unique that went well beyond a typical math class. Dede saw students discovering their own thought processes.

The Elementary Mathematics Laboratory (EML), hosted in Michigan for more than a decade, draws together children, their families, teachers, teacher educators, and educational researchers with a common goal: strengthening our ability to teach mathematics in order to improve outcomes for children. The program provides elementary students with the opportunity to work with expert teachers and researchers to improve their mathematical knowledge and skill while providing educators with an opportunity to engage deeply with public teaching. A diverse group of education professionals participates each summer, including research mathematicians interested in problems of mathematics teaching and learning; education researchers studying different aspects of instruction and achievement among children from various racial and socioeconomic backgrounds; veteran teachers aiming to improve their own instruction; and student teachers studying expert practice as part of their professional training.

Because of our intrinsic belief in the power of education and the imperative we have to provide educational opportunities to all children, the School of Education is especially committed to partnering with schools and communities that have been educationally underserved. We recently received support toward this goal in the form of a gift from Dede Feldman to expand our successful EML program into Detroit.

Feldman has a deep interest in public school education, particularly in the city of Detroit. After attending the EML last summer, it was clear to her that the methods used in EML for improving math skills are applicable to all subjects, and are especially powerful because they teach children how to think critically. Dede (DentHygCert ’51) and Ozzie (AB ’43, MBA ’47) Feldman are longtime supporters of the University of Michigan. Their deep commitment to the Museum of Art, Stephen M. Ross School of Business, and Michigan athletics—among other programs—has created opportunities across campus.

The inaugural Detroit-based program will provide supplementary mathematics instruction to elementary students from Detroit schools. The instruction, led by Deborah Loewenberg Ball in collaboration with a team of faculty and graduate students, will be centered in ambitious mathematical work and be specially designed to develop strong academic identities in the students, and to support their success in school. The instruction will fill gaps in student knowledge while improving students’ reasoning and problem-solving skills through accelerated instruction, tasks, and problems that are created strategically to stretch students’ thinking and build their capacity to engage in mathematical practices.

Although the laboratory class draws education professionals from around the country and the world to observe and contribute to the research and activities that surround the class, Detroit teachers will be the primary participants in the new elementary mathematics laboratory made possible through Mrs. Feldman’s generous support.

The School of Education is committed to deep engagement in Detroit and other communities in southeastern Michigan. Building strong partnerships with schools and families in the area is central to the mission of the school. Nicole Garcia (BSEd ’01, TeachCert ’01, AM ’04), who brings significant expertise in mathematics education and professional development, directs the EML. She says of this next endeavor, “We have much to learn from the children, families, and educators in Detroit, and we are excited to be building stronger partnerships with the schools and communities there. Dede Feldman shares our vision for providing all children with high-quality instruction.”

A generous gift from Dede Feldman allows the SOE to expand the Elementary Mathematics Laboratory program in Detroit.
As an objective, it sounds simple: "A well-prepared teacher in the twenty-first century needs to know how to use a broad spectrum of technology resources." But given that the range of education technology is anything but simple, it takes a lot to put that objective into practice.

That's why the School of Education has wholeheartedly embraced technology; no more so than in the Teacher Education class EDU 444: Teaching with Digital Technologies.

Even the class schedule reflects the complexities of education technology: the two-credit class is spread out among three semesters over two school years. "Because there are so many technologies to learn about, students in the class need time to ‘marinate’ and try out different things," said Liz Kolb (PhD ’10), a professor in Teacher Education who teaches the class. In addition, the class structure uses a "blended learning" approach where half the class sessions are in face-to-face settings and half are virtual meetings, via the Blackboard Collaborate online platform.

The class is not an exhaustive survey of all that's currently available in educational technology. "We’re not looking at each one of the technologies out there," said Kolb. "But with a project-based approach, students will learn how to identify and integrate the technologies that will work in their classrooms." That is reflected in the class's format. One crucial part of the format is developing a conceptual framework. That means students will learn how to think critically about which technologies would be a good fit in the classroom, taking into account the grade level, age, and cultural and technological background of the schoolchildren they will teach. "There are important issues of accessibility, too," said Kolb. "What technologies have the children used? What do they have access to at home?"

The conceptual framework incorporates "three E’s," explains Kolb: engage, enhance, and extend. A successful integration of technology engages children, enhances their ability to learn, and extends learning beyond the classroom.

Another part of the class format is an examination of emerging technologies, and approaches such as blended learning and virtual platforms. Some of these are modeled in the EDU 444 class, with online polls, breakout sessions, and "gameification," which brings mechanics of online games into education courses. For example, a tool from 3D GameLab is used by Kolb's students to complete "quests" to progress through various educational activities related to the class. Students can earn badges for acquired skills, and provide feedback on their experiences. In turn, Kolb can monitor their progress and provide her own feedback.

A crucial part of EDU 444's format is clinical experience in classrooms. Teaching interns, working with their mentor teachers, learn not only how to introduce technologies to their young students, but also how to manage what happens when something goes wrong, such as losing access to the Internet. "It happens," said Kolb. "And you have to learn how to deal with it."

Because the class can't cover everything in the macro sense, Kolb uses a micro approach, giving her students experience by choosing selected activities to pursue in the classroom. An example is the "Super Digital Citizen" project, in which teaching interns taught sixth- and eighth-graders how to be safe, responsible, and respectful when they are online. Exercises like these get teaching interns more comfortable working one-on-one with kids using technology as a learning tool.

So, how does Kolb herself stay on top of the avalanche of new technology? "A really good resource is edSurge, a website that follows new startups in educational technology," she said. "I'm also active on social media, and get information and ideas from colleagues.

"It's a great field—always challenging," Kolb said. "But it can be overwhelming. Sometimes, you just need to take a digital week off."
It was the beginning of a major campaign to recruit students to the school’s Teacher Education program—a campaign that continues today. Playmaker focuses on the crucial role that teachers play in our world. Dean Deborah Loewenberg Ball explained it: “As playmakers behind the scenes, teachers are the influencers and the entrepreneurs who seek to inspire those who will go on to stem climate change, create new art forms, rebuild economies, and fight social injustice. Their sphere of influence is immeasurable. They inspire the big ideas and they strive for the big challenges.”

The School of Education asks, “Are You a Playmaker?”
Congratulations to SOE students, alumni, and faculty on their outstanding accomplishments

Professor Susan Dynarski received a special tribute from Michigan legislators in recognition of her proposal for a new scholarship program, the HAIL (High Achieving Involved Leaders) Scholarship. The tribute notes that the scholarship not only will provide full tuition and fees to select students, but also will “develop a unique step-by-step guide to the application process for families who may lack information or face additional financial barriers.” The tribute document was signed by Governor Rick Snyder, State Senator Rebekah Warren, and State Representative Adam F. Zemke.

Four SOE students received scholarships through the Center for the Education of Women (CEW). Channing Mathews, a doctoral student in the Combined Program in Education and Psychology, and Kimberly Reyes, a doctoral student in the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education (CSHPE), received Margaret Dow Towsley Scholarships, named for the noted Ann Arbor educator, civic and political leader, and philanthropist. Brian Peck, a master’s student in Educational Studies, received a Christine Kahan Black Scholarship, a scholarship created by Herb Black to honor his wife, a teacher/mentor at U-M. Amber Williams, a master’s student in CSHPE, received a Gail Allen Scholarship, established in 1997 and awarded annually to women who are returning to complete an undergraduate or graduate degree.

Professor Edward A. Silver was named the Fulbright Canada Visiting Professor Edward A. Silver (ABEd ’79, TeachCert ’79) was named Danbury (Connecticut) Public School District’s 2016 Teacher of the Year. A veteran of 29 years in the classroom, mostly in special education, Michael just completed her third year teaching second grade at Pembroke Elementary School in the Danbury district.

At its national conference in New Orleans, the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators awarded the 2015 Robert P. Huff Golden Quill Award to Professor Stephen L. DesJardins. The award is presented each year to an individual or individuals chosen for their contributions to the literature on student financial aid. Nominees for the award are judged on the basis of published work that exemplifies the highest quality of research methodology, analysis, or topical writing on the subject of student financial aid or its administration.

Seanna Leath was named the first recipient of the Dr. Joseph R. Morris Fellowship in the Combined Program in Education and Psychology. The fellowship was established by Joseph Morris (AM ’72, PhD ’75) in 2014 to express his gratitude for the academic experiences he had at U-M. The fellowship is awarded to doctoral students who “demonstrate through written application that they are researching topics relevant to African American success in schools.”

Luke Wilcox (BSEd ’01, TeachCert ’01) received a Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, noted as the highest recognition in the United States that a kindergarten through 12th grade mathematics or science teacher may receive for outstanding teaching. The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching are administered by the National Science Foundation. Wilcox is in his 14th year at East Kentwood (Michigan) High School, where he leads the math department and teaches 12th grade Advanced Placement statistics and introduction to statistics. He also serves as an academic support coach, developing teacher-learning opportunities that include professional learning communities, classroom learning laboratories, book clubs, and cognitive coaching.

Deborah Joseph (AB ’80, TeachCert ’81, AM ’82) was honored as one of Ann Arbor Public Schools’ Exceptional Teachers. Joseph, a kindergarten teacher at Bryant Elementary, said, “I love the opportunity to teach in a diverse community. There are students from around the world who attend Ann Arbor schools. I feel that I can learn as much from my families as they do from me. I frequently tell my students that they are my teachers when they know about a topic, language, or culture that I don’t know. I want my students to know that you never stop learning.”

The U-M Board of Regents approved promotions for seven School of Education faculty members, effective September 1, 2015. Gina Cerretti and Donald L. Peurach (MPP ’87, PhD ’05) were promoted to the rank of associate professor, earning tenure. Kendra Hearn was promoted to clinical associate professor of education. Michael Bastedo, Betsy Davis, Allison Ryan (AM ’97, PhD ’98) and Michaela Zint were promoted to the rank of professor. These promotions represent significant accomplishments across the domains of faculty work, including a substantial body of research, excellence in teaching, and professional service at the school and campus level, as well as nationally and internationally.

Professor Julie Posselt (PhD ’13) was named a 2015–2016 National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellow. The fellowships are administered by the National Academy of Education, an honorary educational society. They are funded by a grant to the academy from the Spencer Foundation. Now in its 29th year, the fellowship program has more than 750 alumni, who include many of the strongest education researchers in the field today.

Mitch Bickman (AB ’03, TeachCert ’03), director of K–12 social studies in the Oceanside, New York School District, received the 2016 New York State Social Studies Supervisory Association’s Supervisor of the Year Award. This award is given to professionals who have demonstrated the highest commitment to social studies education in New York State and have established innovative and effective supervisory techniques.

Charles Wilkes, a doctoral student in Educational Studies, was awarded a prestigious Ford Foundation Fellowship. Doctoral students Asya Harrison, Michael Medina, and Channing Mathews received honorable mentions in the 2015 fellowship program. The program seeks to increase the diversity of the nation’s college and university faculties by increasing their ethnic and racial diversity, to maximize the educational benefits of diversity, and to increase the number of professors who can and will use diversity as a resource for enriching the education of all students. The program is administered by the National Research Council of the National Academies. Ford Foundation Fellowships are awarded based on superior academic achievement and a stated commitment to a career in teaching and research at the college or university level.
Announcing the 12th Dean of the School of Education
Elizabeth Birr Moje

Moje teaches courses in secondary and adolescent literacy, literacy and cultural theory, and qualitative and mixed research methods. In recognition of her outstanding contributions to undergraduate education, Moje was selected as an Arthur F. Thurnau Professor.

Looking forward to her deanship, Moje says, “I am committed to the continuing development of our school partnerships and the advancement of our efforts to serve the city of Detroit through engagement with families, youth, teachers, and school and community leaders.” Moje plans to build upon current successful partnership models. “The school is poised to support the growth and revitalization of the Detroit area through public scholarship,” says Moje.

Moje also emphasizes the school’s commitment to provide just and equitable educational opportunities for all students. In many ways, this objective is at the core of all education, research, and outreach endeavored by the school. Still, Moje anticipates building upon the intentionally of the school’s agenda around diversity, equity, and inclusion, with the support of the SOE community and U-M President Mark Schlissel.

As the education landscape shifts, SOE must continue to develop programs to meet the needs of students and, ultimately, the nation. Moje has been a close partner with Dean Ball in the improvement of the teacher education curriculum through Clinical Rounds in Secondary Teacher Education, which she co-founded with Professor Bob Bain and currently co-directs with Dr. Emily Rainey. A continued focus on student access, the student experience, and career preparation will be central to Moje’s work as dean.

Moje also acknowledges that in order to maintain the excellence of the school, she will need to focus on increasing external funding and improving the school’s research infrastructure. “I look forward to working with my School of Education colleagues to continue the school’s international leadership in conducting robust research on education practice and policy and offering rigorous learning opportunities for education professionals.”

In addition to her leadership roles within the university, Moje currently serves as the chair of the National Academy of Education’s Professional Development Committee and of the William T. Grant Foundation’s Scholar Selection committee. She also serves as the vice president representing a division of the American Educational Research Association.

“I look forward to working with my School of Education colleagues to continue the school’s international leadership in conducting robust research on education practice and policy and offering rigorous learning opportunities for education professionals.”
Recent publications by School of Education faculty

Susan Bennett-Armistead, Neil K. Duke, and Annie Moses provide guidance for parents who understand the importance of promoting literacy in their young children, but often aren’t sure how to do it, in Beyond Bedtime Stories: A Parent’s Guide to Promoting Reading, Writing, and Other Literacy Skills from Birth to 5 (2nd ed.). Taking a “literacy-throughout-the-day” approach, the authors organize the book around spaces in the home—the kitchen, bedroom, living room, and so forth—and suggest fun, stimulating activities for building children’s reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in those spaces. Published by Scholastic (2014).

Neil K. Duke draws from the latest research to explain how to design and carry out project-based instruction in Inside information: Developing Powerful Readers and Writers of Informational Text Through Project-Based Instruction. The book provides a blueprint for developing units from start to finish—units that move children through a logical progression of phases: Project Launch, Reading and Research, Writing and Research, Revision and Editing, and Presentation and Celebration. Published by Scholastic (2014).

Kathryn L. Roberts, Gail E. Jordan, and Neil K. Duke have written an innovative, research-based workshop kit that prepares literacy educators to lead a series of five 90-minute sessions that demonstrate with videos and hands-on activities easy, practical ways families can read, write, draw, and talk with young children. Engaging Families in Children’s Literacy Development: A Complete Workshop Series is published by Scholastic (2014).

Throughout history, people have appropriated and reconstructed rhetorical and religious resources to create effective arguments. In the process, they have remade both themselves and their communities. Renovating Rhetoric in Christian Tradition by Elizabeth Vander Lei, Thomas Amorose, Beth Daniell, and Anne Ruggles Gere (PhD ‘74) offers notable examples of these reconstructions, ranging from arguments that occurred during the formation of Christianity to contemporary arguments about the relationship of religious and academic ways of knowing. Published by University of Pittsburgh Press (2014).

Chauncey Monte-Sano, Susan De La Paz, and Mark Felton have authored Reading, Thinking, and Writing About History: Teaching Argument Writing to Diverse Learners in the Common Core Classroom, Grades 6-12. This book is a practical guide that presents six research-tested historical investigations along with all corresponding teaching materials and tools that have improved the historical thinking and argumentative writing of academically diverse students. Published by Teachers College Press, Columbia University (2014).

Through video vignettes and audio clips, teachers unpack the Common Core State Standards model of text complexity and offer models of teaching students to negotiate text complexity, methods of assessment, and planning for teaching text complexity in Text Complexity: Supporting Student Readers by Anne Ruggles Gere, Elizabeth C. Homan, Christopher Parsons, Ruth Anna Spooner, and Chinyere Uzogara. Published by the National Council of Teachers of English (2014).

Sue Garton and Kathleen Graves bring together different perspectives on English language teaching materials from a range of international contexts and a variety of educational settings, including Algeria, Argentina, Thailand, Italy, and Japan in International Perspectives on Materials in ELT. The chapters exemplify theoretical principles while addressing practical concerns and debates in materials design and use. Published by Palgrave MacMillan (2014).
Julie R. Posselt (PhD ’13) draws on firsthand observations of admission committees and interviews with faculty in 10 top-ranked doctoral programs in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences to look at the graduate-school admissions process from decision makers’ points of view, including episodes of committees debating the process, interviewing applicants, and grappling with borderline cases. Inside Graduate Admissions: Merit, Diversity, and Faculty Gatekeeping is published by Harvard University Press (2016).

Edward St. John, Victoria J. Milazzo Bigelow (PhD ’13), Kim Callahan Lijana (AM ’11, PhD ’15), and Johanna C. Masse (AM ’14) have written Left Behind: Urban High Schools and the Failure of Market Reform. They examined educational reforms in four urban charter schools across the United States and four public high schools in New York City, and found that district schools struggle to comply with standards that leave little room to develop advanced thematic curricula and that charter schools have not succeeded in substantially raising student test scores. Published by Johns Hopkins University Press (2015).

Transforming Mathematics Instruction: Multiple Approaches and Practices, edited by Yeping Li, Edward A. Silver, and Shiqi Li examines different approaches and practices that contribute to the changes in mathematics instruction, including innovative approaches that bring direct changes in classroom instructional practices, curriculum reforms that introduce changes in content and requirements in classroom instruction, and approaches in mathematics teacher education that aim to improve teachers’ expertise and practices. Published by Springer (2014).

Refinancing the College Dream: Access, Equal Opportunity, and Justice for Taxpayers by Edward St. John traces the history of federal policy on student aid, student encouragement programs, and high school reforms, and effects of policy changes from the 1960s through the 1990s. Published by Johns Hopkins University Press (2003, updated 2014).

Higher Education, Commercialization, and University-Business Relationships in Comparative Context, edited by Joshua Powers and Edward St. John, is the second entry in the Globalization and Social Justice series. It looks deep into the hoods of higher education’s embrace of the economic development mission and explores what is both promising and troubling in its effects. Published by AMS Press, Inc. (2014).

Advancing Equity and Achievement in America’s Diverse Schools, edited by Camille M. Wilson (AM ’96) and Sonya Douglass Horsford, illustrates how educators, students, families, and community partners can work in strategic ways to build on social, cultural, and ethnic diversity to advance educational equity and achievement. Published by Routledge (2014).
When I heard the story about football players at the University of Missouri joining a protest movement, I was quite surprised. It is not like student athletes to take a stand on anything unrelated to athletics and their sports. Coaches have traditionally used the threat of a loss of playing time and perhaps the loss of scholarships as a means of managing and controlling student athletes. This time was different. No one has yet come up with a clear explanation as to why this situation was different than so many others that have occurred on college and university campuses around the country.

There has been plenty of speculation as to why this happened in this case. There are those who think the football team at Missouri had a losing record and was not slated for postseason play. This view, of course, was intended to undercut what was to many a historic and heroic effort. Others expressed the view that the university president was already on thin ice and this incident was used as a means to hasten his exit independent of the current problem. Whatever the reasons, it represents a new day for student athletes and perhaps a change in the relationship between players and coaches and the universities where they play.

The controversy at the University of Missouri grew out of the student athletes’ perception that racial incidents at the university did not receive adequate attention by the university president. There were also indications that the student athletes viewed the president as being insensitive to the problems they were facing. It should be noted that not only did the football players join the protest movement but so did their coaches. The protest started primarily with the black football players, but they were soon joined by the white players on the team in a show of solidarity for their teammates.

Student athletes have long been thought of as sleeping giants with considerable power and clout. The fact that this clout has not been used is puzzling to many observers. The University of Missouri football players were willing to put it all on the line and risk their scholarships, financial aid, and reputations to fix what they perceived to be a serious flaw at their institution.

Universities are designed to produce knowledge and encourage critical thought. That is precisely what transpired at the University of Missouri.

Percy Bates is a long-time School of Education faculty member and served as faculty liaison to Michigan Athletics for two decades.
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