

Community Outreach Makes Things Happen

The Office of Community Outreach is a collaboration of the School of Education and the Division of Continuing Education that serves as a liaison to the community through a variety of initiatives, programs, promotions, publications and special events.

Located on the 5th Floor of the Eberhard Center, the Office of Community Outreach includes Director of Community Outreach Claudia Sowa Wojciakowski, Assistant Director of Administration and Special Projects Amy Moore, Assistant Director of Marketing and Community Outreach Clay Pelon, Community Outreach Coordinator Veda Hodges and Professional Development and Partnership Office coordinator Janine Fidler.

“We work hand in hand with community schools to create the best education and educators possible,” Sowa Wojciakowski said.

The Office of Community Outreach also serves as a liaison for Continuing Education, State Board Continuing Education Unit (CEU) program, Professional Advisory Council and Alumni Association.

The office offers community based activities from publications to professional development workshops and service learning projects. It also organizes and promotes special events such as the Character Education Conference, scheduled for Nov. 21, 2002, at the L.V. Eberhard Center at GVSU’s downtown campus.

“We serve as a link to those activities, as well as work with Division of Continuing Education,” Sowa Wojciakowski said. “Community Outreach also recognizes the role of teacher education, teacher preparation and administration in community education.

“We have a faculty and staff right here at the School of Education available as a resource for public and private schools. It’s a cutting edge collaborative training.”



The Community Outreach staff facilitates School of Education endeavors among university, business, local, regional and national constituencies.

Among the training initiatives currently underway are Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) programs dealing with post 9/11 issues. ACCESS is being presented in conjunction with the GVSU History Department.

“Community Outreach recognizes what Schools of Education have always done,” Sowa Wojciakowski said. “The School of Education provides many forms of internships, including service projects and working with neighborhood schools.

“Community Outreach is a very important function for the School of Education.”

Leadership & Human Services Continues Building On Success

The School of Education’s Leadership & Human Services Unit is an academic unit that oversees graduate studies in administrative services.

Programs such as Education Leadership, Special Education Administration and College Student Affairs Leadership — which prepares students for positions in higher education at university level — continue to expand in scope and stature as needs for professionals in these specialized areas increase.

“All these programs continue to grow each year,” unit chair Dr. John Shinsky said. “Our Special Education Administration master’s program — for special education supervisors and/or directors — is a highly renowned program that people all over the state are interested in and it continues to grow in scope and size.

“Educational Leadership is also a big, growing area. A school teacher interested in being a building administrator or special education administrator would want to contact us.

“There is a real need for good, quality administrators out there as well as college-level CSAL professionals. These programs have had a lot of success.”

Shinsky said a key to the success of the graduate programs is that all faculty members have themselves been school administrators in the subject areas and disciplines they teach. Citizenship in the unit includes Lorraine Alston, Rick Geisel, Liz Margulus, Randy Remenap, Shinsky and Claudia Sowa Wojciakowski.

Administrative Services Works In Background To Ensure School of Ed Stays In The Forefront

Compliance, accreditation and certification are key processes taking place behind the scenes at GVSU’s School of Education.

The School of Education’s Office of Administrative Services is in place to accommodate, meet and ensure adherence to required national, state, local and university standards.

Dealing primarily with all faculty, outside agencies and accreditation issues, the Office of Administrative Services is headed by former School of Education Assistant Dean Cynthia Mader, Ph.D. She works with Associate Directors Glenda Eickenberry and Barbara Fournier to oversee compliance among the 25 subject areas that are part of the network in the School of Education.



Cynthia Mader, Ph.D.

The division maintains compliance with national accrediting boards, along with state

approval for certification and university policies. Other key components include tracking data and evaluating research for the School of Education.

At the national level, the office is responsible for maintaining accreditation and program approval through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

Responsibilities at the state level include program approval for undergraduate majors/minors, Title II, graduate endorsements and state certification and licensure in accordance with state department regulations and procedures.

“It is important that the unit continues to meet accreditation and certification standards,” Mader said.

University level policies, procedures and grants are also supervised by the department.