



*Patterson*

**Name:** Nancy Patterson  
**Current Position:** Assistant Professor, School of Education  
**Special Interests:** Literacy theory and practice  
**What Experience Has Taught Me:** It is not where

we arrive that is important, but how we get there.

**Biggest Problem Facing Education:** The current craze for higher standardized test scores too often pushes aside meaningful curriculum and learning-rich environments.

**Favorite Book:** "Ceremony" by Leslie Marmon Silko

**Family:** Father was a psychology professor and Mother was a school psychologist. Sister is a building-level curriculum director in Colorado.

**Name:** Jay Cooper

**Current Position:** Assistant Professor, School of Education



*Cooper*

**What Experience has Taught Me:** There is something to be gained from every experience, particularly when reflection is practiced.

**Biggest Problem Facing Education:** Cost and the need and dilemma for students to manage both academics and work.

**Words to Live By:** "In the social jungle of human existence, there is no such feeling as a sense of identity" Erik Erikson

**Favorite Author:** Kurt Vonnegut

**Hobbies, Interests:** Tai chi, Music, Travel

**Family:** Married to Eva Aguirre-Cooper, two children: Elisa, 15, and Victor, 12



*Smith*

**Name:** April T. Smith  
**Current Position:** Assistant Director for S.O.E. Student Information and Services Center  
**Research and Special Interests:** Multicultural Issues in Education

**What Experience has Taught Me:** All things are possible and the opportunity is always there; seek and you shall find it

**Words to Live By:** "Change is good, once you learn to embrace it."

**Favorite Book:** Wounds of Passion

**Favorite Actor:** Denzel Washington

**Most Respected Public Figure:** T.D. Jakes

**Hobbies:** Reading, writing, walking, sports, poetry, novels, autobiographies, skating, rollerblading, short stories, educating, mentoring, musicals, dance, travel

**Family:** Husband: Donté C. Smith

## Character Education Conference Returns For Third Straight Year

The third annual West Michigan Character Education Conference is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 21, 2002, at the Eberhard Center in downtown Grand Rapids.

The day-long conference runs from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. and consists of 16 different breakout sessions, including an address by keynote speaker Dr. Jim Kern, author of "Build The Fort...Today."

Kern lectures audiences on how to help children change how they see the world and better understand themselves and others. He follows Hal Urban, the keynote speaker at the 2001 Continuing Education Conference.

Breakout sessions include the "ABC's of Building Character Education," "RESPECT," "Kids, Character and the Classroom," "Proud to Be An American" and "Building a School into a Community," among others.

Another breakout session, "Moral Stages of Development," uses ideas from Character Education guru Dr. Thomas Lickona about how to identify stages of moral development.

The registration fee — which includes continental breakfast and lunch — is \$100. State Board Certification Education Unit (CEU)



*Hal Urban provided valuable insights at 2001 conference.*

credit may also be obtained.

A binder of related materials and information will be provided to each attendee.

For registration information, contact the School of Education's Community Outreach Office by phone (616.771.6650) or e-mail (moorea@gvsu.edu).

The conference is hosted by the GVSU School of Education, in conjunction with the Kent and Muskegon intermediate school districts and Character Unlimited.

## S.O.E. Alumni Association Forming

The School of Education is in the process of forming an Alumni Society.

It is being created to increase communication between professionals and the school, support current students in their development through alumni expertise, provide information about professional development opportunities and provide alumni the chance to revisit campus through events and conferences.

A core group of alumni is being sought to form an executive council, draft a constitution and plan for a Fall event to officially start the society.

Alumni are encouraged to complete an information form that has been created on the School of Education website ([www4.gvsu.edu/soe](http://www4.gvsu.edu/soe)), or contact Clay Pelon via e-mail ([pelonc@gvsu.edu](mailto:pelonc@gvsu.edu)).

The information will allow the School of Education to keep alumni informed on upcoming events and exciting opportunities across the region and world.

"An Alumni Society is an outstanding way for graduates to continue to make a difference around campus, enjoy fellowship of former classmates and continue to show their Laker pride," Pelon said.

## Applications Are Being Accepted For Study Abroad to New Zealand

A graduate study abroad program in New Zealand has been scheduled for the Summer of 2003.

During the three-week stay — from June 14 to July 5 — participants will attend lectures given at host universities of higher education, the Ministry of Education and various primary and secondary schools located on the North Island.

Reading students may focus on literacy, administrators investigate school organization and policies, technology students study their specialty and elementary, middle and high school teachers on their levels and subject areas, but all will participate on the study tour together. The common meetings permit varied insights and information to be shared and connected to each other.

Students will experience educational practices in Auckland, Hamilton, Rotorua and Wellington and be housed in a variety of ways,

including dormitories, hotels and at home stays with area faculty. Tours of the stunning New Zealand countryside — including a trip to the ancient Maori land of Rotorua — are also scheduled.

Academic credit may be earned for either Current Issues in Education (ED 671), Curriculum Development (ED 630), Comparative Education (EDG 680) or Research Application (695).

The approximate fee for the program — which includes round-trip fare from Grand Rapids, local transportation, housing and most meals, program fees and visits to schools and universities — is \$3,500.

Applications for the program are due by Jan. 10, 2003.

Additional information may be obtained by e-mailing professor Loretta Konecki ([koneckil@gvsu.edu](mailto:koneckil@gvsu.edu)).