

CONVOCATION CEREMONY SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 22

Graduating education students and alumni will be honored at School of Education Convocation ceremonies scheduled for April 22, 2004, at the DeltaPlex in Grand Rapids.

A total of 689 students – 250 elementary, 126 secondary, 58 special education, 89 Graduate Teacher Certification and 176 masters – are scheduled to graduate from GVSU teacher education programs this spring.

As part of the ceremony, the School of Education is extending high honors to distinguished alumni, graduates and leaders in the field of education.

Janice Rocque, who received her master's degree in Gifted and Talented Education from GVSU in 1999, is being honored as the Outstanding Educator for 2004.

Susan Laninga, a curriculum consultant for the Kent Intermediate School District, is being honored as the Outstanding Administrator for 2004.

Undergraduate students receiving high honors include Molly Carl in the elementary program, Chad Ludtke in the special education program and Katie Brooks in the secondary education program. Graduate students receiving high honors include AmyLynn Meissner, who received a Master of Education in Reading last December, and Latoria Thomas, who is graduating from the College Student Affairs Leadership program.

Tickets are not required for admission. The DeltaPlex is located at the corner of Ann Street and West River Drive NW.

Convocation begins at 7 p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Students are requested to arrive by 6 p.m. to line up for processional.

IN REMEMBRANCE: DALE OLSEN, PH.D.

The School of Education lost one of its founding members last fall when Dale O. Olsen, Ph.D., passed away in November, 2003, at age 86.

Dr. Olsen was a lifelong educator and a founding member of the School of Education.

A WWII veteran, Dr. Olsen had a 40-year career in education as a teacher, principal and head of the Student Teaching Program at Grand Valley State. He was a member of the School of Education and served as its director for 13 years. Dr. Olsen also served as an administrator for the Michigan Education Association.

ON THE COVER: Shelley Irwin, award-winning host of WGVU Radio's Morning Show, showcases the School of Education and related issues the second Thursday of each month. See story, Page 4. Volunteer Marcie Bogner, upper left, works with Kayley Campbell on a string art project at Allendale Elementary School as part of the Adopt-A-District Program. Gary Bower, center, is a participating author at Celebrate Literacy. GVSU students, meanwhile, participate in a Current Practices Day for their ED350 class.

ELAINE C. COLLINS, Ph.D.

DEAN'S CORNER

A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



In the Fall 2003 issue of *Colleagues*, I outlined one of the School of Education's major tasks for the year – that of identifying a unique niche that distinguishes us from other schools of education and builds upon what we are currently doing well to design our future success.

In that same issue, I identified one particular interest – social responsibility – and cited its advantages, including building on an area that is already a major strength, aligning well with the larger university mission of liberal education, and tying together many of the wide ranging philosophical approaches within our school. In this issue, as part of our ongoing efforts to become more responsive to the needs of our students and the community we serve, I am pleased to share with you a refined vision statement of the School of Education that now includes social responsibility as part of its core.

"Teaching excellence enhanced by active scholarship" is the Grand Valley State University motto embraced by all academic programs in the university. Social responsibility, however, is unique to the vision of the School of Education. Social responsibility is defined here as our deeply rooted commitment to contribute consistently to the welfare of our communities.

Focus of Social Responsibility

Social responsibility efforts in the Grand Valley State University's School of Education are focused in several areas:

- Curricular enrichment
- Community support
- Professional development
- Tutoring

Perhaps the most common way that we contribute to our local community is through curricular enrichment such as our Learning To Give project, which is establishing partner schools in Kent, Ottawa and Allegan counties. Learning To Give is a comprehensive program designed to assist teachers in teaching the importance of voluntary action for the common good of a democratic society.

Another example of a curricular enrichment partnership is our ACCESS project with West Michigan schools. This project assists teachers and school administrators in understanding issues related to Arab Culture.

The School of Education's Urban Teacher Academy prepares a cadre of master teachers skilled in the use of standards based inquiry science curriculum.

Finally, our DREAMSS project with Grand Rapids and Muskegon Public Schools increases the use of research classroom instructional management strategies and establishes a network to support proficiency in science instruction and learning.

Community Contributions

The School of Education also contributes to our local community through service projects including volunteer work with Grand Rapids Public Schools to help in high school redesign efforts and the creation of schools within schools. Likewise, service is provided to the community through a number of required learning projects that integrate community service activities into course curriculum.

As a result of service learning projects, our students have tutored public school pupils, led small group activities and have participated in professional development activities with their public school teachers. In Professor Susan Carson's Diversity in Education Class, students contribute to the community in many different ways including delivering food care packages to neighborhood families, shoveling snow for neighbors, teaching swimming lessons at the YMCA, shopping for the elderly and disabled, and participating in events such as the River Clean Up, Crop Walk and Special Olympics Basketball.

Professional development and tutoring are two other areas in which we demonstrate our commitment to our communities. As part of our Adopt-A-District program, faculty members have provided professional development to Allendale Public School teachers in the area of differentiated instruction. Additionally, School of Education students have provided tutoring for the Allendale Public School District.

Another example of contributing to our community through professional development is our Middlestart project in Allegan, Kent and Ottawa Counties. This program creates a system for reform in the middle school that serves the needs of students.

Finally, the School of Education contributes to our communities in ways that cannot be easily classified into the four categories previously discussed. Representative examples include our Lord of the Rings Read-A-Thon in support of Grand Rapids Public Schools focus on literacy and our support of Absolutely Incredible Kid Day where 500 letters were written and distributed to public schools throughout Grand Rapids.

Clearly, serving and enhancing the communities in which we work and live is a strong commitment of the School of Education.

As we continue to work to actualize our mission, vision and values by taking an active role in our communities, I would like to hear your thoughts about how we can expand and deepen our service efforts to increase our commitment. Your comments, thoughts and suggestions are welcomed.

(Elaine C. Collins, Ph.D., is Dean of the School of Education. She may be accessed via e-mail at collinse@gvsu.edu).