

Neag Center
for
Gifted Education
and
Talent
Development

NEWS & VIEWS

The latest in Gifted Education

Sept. 18, 2006 Vol. 1, Issue 2 Visit us on the web at <http://www.gifted.uconn.edu>

ISSUE FOCUS: NEWS FROM THE HOME TEAM! In addition to the latest news stories impacting those interested in gifted education and to the Renzulli Learning System website recommendations, this issue focuses on updating you on the latest news, presentations, publications, awards, and more from the faculty, staff, graduate students, and friends of the Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development. This includes news of research results supporting the broadening of the definition of giftedness and wide support of the three-ring conception (see p. 6).



THE HIGH PRICE OF EASY SCHOOLWORK.

On September 4, the *Los Angeles Times* published an article about the problems bright children face when they are bored in schools, including not learning to work and underachievement. Read 13-year-old Emma's story and suggestions for parents who suspect their child is gifted at <http://www.latimes.com/features/health/la-he-themd4sep04,1,2407743.column?coll=la-headlines-health>.

PRESSURE ON YOUNG SCHOOL CHILDREN.

While some are worried about children being bored in school, others are concerned about young children being over tested and over pressured. Read *Newsweek's* article on what is happening in our nation's kindergarten and first grade classrooms and the impact it is having on students at <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/14638573/site/newsweek>.




THE COST OF MULTI-TASKING FOR STUDENTS. Do you have a student in your classroom or perhaps a child of your own who insists on doing homework while listening to the TV or an iPod and receiving instant messages? A new study suggests that multi-tasking may result in less learning. Read more about the study at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/09/03/AR2006090300592.html>.



GRANT PREPARES TEACHERS AND LOW-INCOME STUDENTS FOR AP CLASSES. Schools in Louisiana are benefiting from a grant that will enable more low-income students to be prepared for and succeed in Advanced Placement classes, resulting in more teachers being trained, after-school tutoring programs, more courses offered, more students involved, and a change from gifted and talented courses to gifted, talented, and advanced placement courses. Read more about it at <http://www.nola.com/newsflash/louisiana/index.ssf?/base/news-27/115812502611140.xml&storylist=louisiana>.

WHEN LOCAL RESOURCES ARE EXHAUSTED: ONLINE HIGH SCHOOL A NEW OPTION. No longer is homeschooling the only option for students in rural areas and overseas who have exhausted the resources available to them. Stanford University has become the first top-ranked college to offer high school diplomas on the Internet with its three-year Online High School, which has an annual tuition of \$12,000. Read more about this new option for talented teens at <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601103&sid=ax3lsWXpTI.M&refer=us>.



 **CELEBRATING TALENT.** At Taree High School in New South Wales, Australia, the skills of gifted and talented students recently were celebrated with special workshops, which may lead to longer-running programs. Read more about it at http://taree.yourguide.com.au/detail.asp?class=news&subclass=general&story_id=509127&category=General&m=9&y=2006.

'EARLY ACTION' ELIMINATED AT HARVARD. Harvard University announced that they will no longer have an "early action" admissions round, accepting students by late fall. By doing so, they hope to increase the schools' diversity and lessen anxiety for applicants. Read more about this decision at <http://www.newsday.com/news/nationworld/nation/wire/sns-ap-harvard-admissions,0,6884176.story?coll=sns-ap-nation-headlines>.



PROJECT M³ WINS AWARD. For the third year in a row, Project M³: Mentoring Mathematical Minds has received a National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Curriculum Division Curriculum Award. The purpose of this competition was to identify curriculum units that can be shared with other educators as models of exemplary curriculum for gifted learners. This year, the Level 4 unit *At the Mall with Algebra: Working with Variables and Equations* won the award. Previous Project M³ units that won the award are *What's the Me in Measurement All About?* (2005 award) and *Unraveling the Mystery of the MoLi Stone: Place Value and Numeration* (2004 award). You can read more about the project and the units at <http://www.projectm3.org>.



PUBLICATIONS FROM THE HOME TEAM.



- In the Summer 2006 issue of the *California Gifted Communicator*, the "Home Team" was well represented with the following articles:

- "Using Technology to Enrich and Challenge Student Learning: Introducing Renzulli Learning" by Sally Reis, Sheelah Sweeny, and Gara Field

- "Creating Electronic eBooks" by Del Siegle

- "New Literacies" Internet as Curriculum for Gifted Students" by Elizabeth Fogarty

- "Online Professional Development in Gifted Ed" by Elizabeth Fogarty

- In *Gifted Child Today*, vol. 29 issue 1 (2006), Joe Renzulli, Jennifer Koehler, and Elizabeth Fogarty published "Operation Houndstooth Intervention Theory: Social Capital in Today's Schools."

- In *Teaching for High Potential*, Spring 2006, Tutita Casa and M. Katherine Gavin published "A Challenge in Measurement: Searching for the Yeti."

- In the *Connecticut Association for the Gifted (CAG) Advocate Newsletter*, Spring 2006, Jill Adelson and M. Katherine Gavin published "What are Your Chances? Going Beyond Basics with Project M³."



- In June 2006, the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented published a new monograph, *Teachers' Guide for the Explicit Teaching of Thinking Skills* by Burns, Leppien, Omdal, Gubbins, Muller, and Vahidi.

CONGRATULATIONS TO KATHY GAVIN!

Kathy has been selected to receive the 2006 NAGC Early Leader Award, which is presented to an individual who has made significant contributions in leadership and service to the field of gifted education since receiving his/her doctorate. She will be presented the award at the Annual Awards Ceremony at NAGC's 53rd Annual Convention.

RESEARCH & EVALUATION RESOURCE AVAILABLE!

Looking for tips on conducting research or writing a dissertation? Do you want to read articles from some of the most respected researchers in the field? The R&E division of NAGC has a CD compilation of a decade of *Quest* newsletters now available. Issues focus on topics like lifespan development of the gifted, qualitative research, cross-cultural research, innovation in identification, ADHD and giftedness, program evaluation, professional development, and more. Get yours for only \$10 by contacting Jill Adelson at jill.adelson@uconn.edu.

UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS FROM THE HOME TEAM

- Look out NAGC! The Home Team is packing their bags for the 53rd Annual Convention in November in Charlotte, North Carolina. Look for the following presentations:
 - "Implicit Theories of Intelligence and Giftedness Identification in Educators" by D. Betsy McCoach and Maria Garcia Cepero (Caridad)
 - "Teachers and Coaches! Promote Effective Literacy Instruction for Talented Readers" by Elizabeth Fogarty, Angela Housand, Brian Housand, and Mark Oliver
 - "Math is Really Fun when Combined with the Arts" by Rachel McAnallen and Kris Berman
 - "Providing Challenge for Young Talented Mathematicians: Thinking Deeply about Measurement Concepts" by M. Katherine Gavin
 - "Developing Math Talent: The Impact of Challenge Curriculum and Mathematical Discourse" by M. Katherine Gavin, Ann Marie Spinelli, and Jill Adelson
 - "Javits Breakout Session" with MaryRuth Coleman, M. Katherine Gavin, Sally Reis, and Joyce VanTassel-Baska and Elissa Brown as panel members
 - "Renzulli Learning" by Gara Field and Sheelah Sweeny
 - "Challenging High-Ability Readers: Pairing Fiction, Nonfiction and On-line Texts" poster presentation by Sheelah Sweeny
 - "Differentiation in the Art Classroom" poster presentation by Hope E. Wilson
 - "Art Across the Curriculum" poster presentation by Hope E. Wilson
 - "Differentiated Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction" poster presentation by Elizabeth Fogarty
 - "Activating Algebraic Reasoning in a Differentiated Classroom" poster presentation by Jill Adelson
 - "Development of the *Adelson Math and Me Survey*: Measuring Attitudes towards Mathematics of Students in Grades 3-6" study progress shared by Jill Adelson at the Research & Evaluation division Research Gala
- The Home Team will also be at the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) annual meeting and exposition in Atlanta, Georgia, in March.
 - "I Know the Answer...I Just Can't Explain It!" Learn-Reflect Strand by M. Katherine Gavin and Jill Adelson
 - "Multiplying Talent with Factors, Multiples, and Leftovers" by Jill Adelson and M. Katherine Gavin
 - "Analyze This! Appropriate Representations to Organize and Interpret Data" by Ann Marie Spinelli and Tutita Casa
 - "Math is Really Fun when Combined with the Arts" by Rachel McAnallen and Kris Berman

MORE UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS FROM THE HOME TEAM

- The 12th Annual New England Conference on Gifted and Talented will take place in Warwick, Rhode Island in October. Look for these Home Team presentations:
 - "Nurturing Algebraic Reasoning in Young Mathematicians" by Jill Adelson
 - "Cultivating Creativity in Your Classroom" by Jill Adelson and Gara Field
 - "Combining Students' Interests with Technology for High-End Learning" by Gara Field and Sheelah Sweeny
- At the International Reading Association Annual Conference in Toronto, Canada, in 2007, Sheelah Sweeny will be presenting "Differentiated Reading Plans for Guided Reading Within the Readers' Workshop."
- At the international, cross-disciplinary conference "Creativity or Conformity? Building Cultures of Creativity in Higher Education" in Cardiff-Gales in January, Maria Garcia Cepero (Caridad) will be presenting "The Enrichment Triad Model: Nurturing Creative-Productivity among College Students."
- At the 28th Annual Meeting of the North American Chapter of the International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education in Mexico in November, Tutita Casa will be presenting "Focusing on Learners with Math Potential and their Teachers through Curriculum, Discourse, and Professional Development."

GRANT INFORMATION



VSP "Vision of Science" Award

<http://www.nsta.org/main/pdfs/awards/VSP.pdf>

Eligibility: K-12 Science Teachers Deadline: October 15, 2006

Value: school receives \$3,000; teacher receives \$2000 plus \$500

towards travel to NSTA national convention and one-year membership to NSTA
The National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) and Vision Service Plan awards this grant recognizing one K-12 science teacher who has designed creative, innovative science lessons that develop an understanding of eye health and vision.

"Show Me the Money: Tips & Resources for Successful Grant Writing"

http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/profdev/profdevo39.shtml

Many educators have found that outside funding, in the form of grants, allows them to provide their students with educational experiences and materials their own districts can't afford. Learn how they get those grants -- and how you can get one too. Included: Practical tips to help first-time grant writers get the grants they need.



WIDESPREAD ACCEPTANCE OF THREE-RING CONCEPTION OF GIFTEDNESS. The following is a dissertation abstract from Stephen T. Schroth of Knox College, Galesburg, IL.



Schroth, S. T. (2006). Perceptions of gifted programming: Degree of alignment in administrator, teacher, and gifted specialist beliefs. Doctoral dissertation, The University of Virginia. C. A. Tomlinson, advisor.

Experts in the field of gifted education have developed thorough and comprehensive program models for the education of gifted students. Gifted education services are provided to students through the combined efforts of administrators, gifted education specialists, and regular classroom teachers. Little is known about the perceptions of gifted programming held by those front-line educators who deliver the services to students. The investigator mailed a survey to a national sample of 900 educators to determine their beliefs about a wide-ranging array of topics central to gifted education. These topics include definitions of giftedness, factors influencing who receives services, identification methods, characteristics of gifted students, the need for resources/supports to teach gifted children, the responsibility for developing the talents of diverse gifted students, the appropriateness of certain accelerative practices, and which options should be included in a continuum of services.

This study focused around three research questions: 1) What perceptions do administrators, gifted education specialists, and regular classroom teachers have regarding key beliefs in gifted education?; 2) Are there differences of perceptions regarding key beliefs of gifted education across these groups? and 3) What are some of the differences within each of the groups as related to independent variables (ethnicity, free & reduced lunch, experience)? Responses to surveys were received from 411 educators, including 148 administrators, 115 gifted education specialists, and 148 regular classroom teachers. Descriptive statistics, ANOVAs, and post hoc tests were run to determine answers to the research questions. Findings included, for example, a determination that while educators accept many definitions of giftedness, they believe more traditional talents merit greater attention from gifted education programs. More inclusive definitions of giftedness, such as the Renzulli combination of above-average intelligence, creativity, and task commitment are the most popular with educators. Educators also showed more favorable reactions to differentiation than acceleration as a strategy for dealing with gifted students and endorsed certain methods of acceleration that related to single-subjects, over other methods, such as early entry to Kindergarten and grade skipping. Statistically significant differences were found between groups, for example, administrators favoring gifted programming options that do not require extra staff, and regular classroom teachers and gifted education specialists putting different weight on teacher nominations as a means of identification.

RENZULLI LEARNING SYSTEMS RECOMMENDATIONS! Here are some favorite websites from RLS that may help teachers motivate and interest their students through the use of Internet technology:

Monterey Bay Aquarium - http://www.mbayaq.org/efc/cam_menu.asp

This virtual tour of underwater exhibits lets you watch different animals live on web cams. Watch penguins, sharks, otters, and more!

Math Brain Games - <http://www.funbrain.com/brain/MathBrain/MathBrain.html>

Kids can play these arcade-style math games and have fun while practicing math skills.

Serengeti Photo Safari - http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/fun/serengeti_flash.html

Hop in your jeep, grab your camera, and head out. There is a lot of wildlife that you must film before nightfall. Travel around the plain and make it back to camp before dark so that you can watch the video of wildlife. Good luck and happy trails to you.

Design your own Roller Coaster! <http://virtual.questacon.edu.au/rollercoaster/>

In this virtual roller coaster activity, you will design your own roller coaster by dragging pieces into a template, and "riding" your coaster or watching it run. While riding or watching, you can see the speed of the car and the g-force, as well as the maximum speed and the g-force of the cycle. It's great activity if you're interested how we use physics in everyday life!

Acrostic Poems - <http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/acrostic/>

At the end of the activity you will be a poet! You will learn what an acrostic poem is, write your own poem, and share it with others.

You can check out Renzulli Learning at

<http://www.renzullilearning.com/>

Contributed by Gara Field



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As always, *News & Views* welcomes your submissions! Send us your project updates, website or book recommendations, grants or competitions for gifted children or for teachers, or current news in the field or affecting the field.