CUSP OUTREACH TEAMS - VIGNETTES

With CUSP outreach teams, teachers are in good hands! Education, experience, and effectiveness are evident in the service each is equipped to provide. Professional development should be a constant factor at every level of instruction, and the CUSP outreach teams are ready to assist with your specific needs. Nancy Schultz, the Mathematics outreach team leader, was instrumental in locating, hiring, and guiding these outstanding professionals to serve in the CUSP program.

**MATHEMATICS**

Irving Barocas

Mr. Barocas has served as teacher, supervisor, vice principal, and principal in public and private schools in New York and New Jersey, and adjunct professor of mathematics for St. John’s University. As an instructional leader Mr. Barocas prepared mathematics and language arts curriculum guides for grades K - 5, planned programs for gifted students in grades 3 and 4, and conducted staff development workshops in the use of mathematics manipulatives. As principal, Irving established community-based programs that increased parent and civic association involvement in the education process. In CUSP, Mr. Barocas, a fluent Spanish language speaker, is in demand in mathematics classrooms of several districts, observing instruction, advising, demonstrating, and following up to assure teacher improvement.

Barbara Krukar

Ms. Krukar’s career goal is professional mastery of best teaching and learning practices in middle school mathematics. Barbara is a Purdue University graduate, and is currently enrolled in a mathematics certificate program at MSU. Currently, Barbara is assisting Nancy Schultz in preparation of mathematics packets for special needs. The objective is to revamp and code the adopted textbook, ancillary materials, and other available resources to simplify individualization of instruction in constructivist and inquiry-based learning situations. Ms. Krukar is available to visit designated middle school mathematics teachers, especially those in need of highly qualified status. She can be reached by e-mail at 4krucks@comcast.net.

Danielle Nix

Ms. Nix is a graduate of The College of New Jersey with a BA in Mathematics, a Master of Science degree in Natural Sciences from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and an Ed.M in Educational Leadership from The Bank Street College of Education. Danielle is an experienced high school mathematics teacher, workshop leader, and professional development consultant.

As an outreach team member Danielle wants to guide mathematics teachers in the techniques of inquiry-based instruction and constructivist and cooperative learning experiences in the middle grades. If a teacher has both math and science classes, Ms. Nix is qualified to assist in each case. Danielle’s e-mail address is daniellenix@yahoo.com.

Karim Rupp

Ms Rupp, a retired public school teacher and supervisor, has more than 10 years of experience as a mathematics consultant, conducting professional development workshops throughout the state for K-12 teachers. Ms. Rupp is a state-certified administrator with MSU graduate credentials in Pure and Applied Mathematics and Biological Science. Karim’s workshops range from test preparation strategies, using calculators in critical thinking, and writing in mathematics class, to improving student responses to open-ended questions. In 1996 through 2001 Ms. Rupp was an editing assistant for the NJ mathematics curriculum framework, a Rutgers University facilitator and trainer in the Family Math Program, a workshop presenter for NJDOE in mathematics, and an adjunct instructor in theory and practice of teaching mathematics: K – 4 in the graduate program at Kean University. Karin’s special interest is to equip teachers with knowledge and strategies.

Yolanda Maldonado

Ms. Maldonado’s speciality is analysis and resolution of problems. She earned a B.A. in Psychology at Boston University with concentration on animal behavior, and a master’s degree in conservation biology at Kent University in England. Yolanda’s success as an education coordinator, supervisor, and consultant stems from the ability to communicate clearly and productively, to stimulate others to participate actively and collaboratively, and to present plausible change strategies based on careful review of circumstances. Ms. Maldonado’s experience as a zoo keeper and wildlife researcher is an asset to science teachers in areas of animal classification, habitats, conservation, care, and development.

Elinor (Ellie) Semel

Mrs. Semel emphasizes critical thinking through student creativity. In her hands the simplest handy objects can be transformed into useful items that serve entirely new purposes. Ellie has mastered the art of guiding students through minds- and hands-on activities that bring an interesting new meaning to the term “supplies for science.” Mrs. Semel is a graduate of Connecticut College with a BA in Zoology, and Columbia Teachers College with a Master’s degree in high school biology. Her range of experiences includes science teacher at every public and private school level, biology and physical science adjunct instructor at Pace University, and long-term CUSP consultant. For CUSP Mrs. Semel is assisting middle school teachers with inquiry-based science strategies that challenge students to put scientific theory into practice. Ellie’s e-mail is esemel@comcast.net.
FROM THE DIRECTOR
Traveling Teachers Bring Wildlife Experiences Back to their Classroom

From August 2-19, 2004 a group of nine professional educators traveled to Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay to experience firsthand the natural wonders of South America while exploring Big Ideas of Science. The group was led by native Uruguayan and PRISM staffer Anna Mazzaro. Whether collecting amethyst geodes in northern Uruguay or relishing the rainbows of Iguassu waterfalls in Brazil, the group experienced the richness of the various habitats and observed a variety of wildlife. The PRISM travel course provided teachers with close-up observations of capybaras in the wetlands of eastern Uruguay and of rheas in the grasslands of Brazil and Argentina. Weighing in at 90 lbs. or more, capybaras are the largest rodents in the world. Found only in South America, rheas are large flightless birds related to ostriches and emus. As ostriches are native to Africa and emus to Australia, the existence of rheas in South America raises intriguing questions about how flightless birds spread and provide solid evidence of continental drift. Up next is PRISM in East Africa. This ecology field course will lead educators in a study of wildlife in Tanzania July 5-20, 2005. If interested please contact the PRISM office.

RAINFOREST CONNECTION LIVE - VIDEOCONFERENCE

On December 16th a 2-way videoconference originating from Hillside School in Bridgewater reached CUSP partners in Park Ridge in Totowa, as well as three Rainforest Connection Live! partner schools in Temple, TX. Presented by Katrina Macht and Christine Pelcak the workshop focused on videoconferencing etiquette and procedures. The purpose of the workshop was to instruct teachers on how to prepare their classes to participate in video broadcasts. Using videotape of past Rainforest Connection Live! sessions, Macht and Pelcak focused on methods to train students to participate fully in an interactive videoconference/lesson. This was a 2-way interactive telecast version of the December 11th workshop presented on the MSU campus.

TSUNAMI FACTS

The current disaster in Pacific coast nations can be an effective tool for teaching your students about seismology and its importance in our existence. Below are websites that students can use to find basic information that defines this phenomenon, describes its action, and offers survival techniques. Some of the sites provide pictures in motion, and compare wind-driven waves to the waves of a tsunami.

http://www.pmel.noaa.gov/toga-tao/ThemePages/nws/tsunami-nws.html
Answers frequently asked questions such as: What is a tsunami? What causes a tsunami? What is the impact of a tsunami? Are all tsunamis the same? Can tsunamis be predicted?
http://www.geophys.washington.edu/tsunami/images/tsulg.jpg
Graphic comparison of wind-driven waves and waves of a tsunami.
http://wcatwc.gov/
Information on the West Coast & Alaska Tsunami Warning Center. Serves Alaska, British Columbia, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington. Brochures on Preparedness and other publications are distributed in at-risk areas of the pacific coastal states. This literature is available in Adobe Acrobat format as a link on this website.
http://pubs.usgs.gov/circ/c1187
How to survive a tsunami