The new Ed.D. program in Teacher Education and Teacher Development is the first of its kind in the region and one of only a few in the nation. The program builds on Montclair State University's nationally-recognized expertise in teacher education and on the most current research regarding how teachers learn and develop professionally throughout their careers. Over the past fifteen years, substantial research has provided teacher educators with a better understanding of how teachers develop and of the various learning needs that emerge at different points in teaching careers. Informed by this research, graduates of the Teacher Development program will be well-equipped to prepare, support, and mentor teachers.

The first cohort of students selected for the program was comprised of teachers from varying disciplinary backgrounds, teacher educators, school administrators, department supervisors, and a school psychologist. The program was designed to include students who could offer unique perspectives. It has been this aspect of the program that current student Kathryn Strom (above, left) says, “has heightened and deepened my thinking and has brought my meta-cognitive awareness to a level that it has never been before.” Although these students have different areas of expertise and hold various professional roles, they were all drawn to this program in hopes of developing the skills and expertise necessary to support teacher growth and development.

Mindful consideration went into the structure of the program, which is designed to recruit a small cohort of students yearly. In its first year, there were over 60 applicants to the program, and only 14 students were selected. The dynamics of the group enable the faculty and students to cultivate a strong sense of community. Dr. Ana Maria Villegas (above, right), the program’s director, has been very pleased with how the initial cohort has coalesced. “It’s a strong, supportive group and while we were hoping for that to happen, it has more than met my expectations,” she says. The size of the group also allows the faculty to model the mentoring relationships that they hope their students will form with the teachers they prepare and support. Dr. Villegas says, “It’s important that the faculty models the practices that we want our students to use in the future.”

Diversity in backgrounds and perspectives is not only considered when selecting students for the program, it is a theme that permeates the academic program of study. Students examine culturally responsive teaching, a critical area of learning for all teachers who work with today’s diverse student population. The importance of ongoing support and mentoring for teachers is also addressed as part of the academic program. “With the shift from an industrial to an information-based economy, schools are now required to do much more than in the past. Today’s teachers are expected to get all students, not just some, to meet higher academic standards than ever before. To attain this goal, teachers need professional support throughout their careers. The preparation they receive in preservice programs—while essential—is not enough,” says Dr. Villegas. Recognizing the critical need to support ongoing teacher learning, school districts are beginning to create positions to oversee induction programs for novice teachers and design and implement innovative professional development for experienced teachers. Graduates of the Ed.D. in Teacher Education and Teacher Development program will be equipped to fill these types of positions in schools and districts, along with a broad spectrum of teacher educator roles in colleges and universities, state agencies, professional development organizations, and foundations.

For more information regarding the Ed.D. program in Teacher Education and Teacher Development, please visit cehs.montclair.edu or send an email to tetd@montclair.edu.
After a long and challenging winter, spring is in full bloom on the beautiful campus of Montclair State University. Spring is the time we gear up for convocations and commencement, but it’s also an appropriate moment to look back at our achievements this academic year.

I am proud of the recognition that our College continues to receive for our work in teacher education. For the second year in a row, US News and World Report Best Graduate Schools 2012 ranked our secondary teacher program and our elementary program among the top 20 in the nation. The Academy for Educational Development’s National Institute for Work and Learning has recognized Montclair State University’s Teacher Preparation Program in its new report, Pursuing Excellence in Teacher Preparation: Evidence of Institutional Change from TNE Learning Network Universities.

The College was honored this year for its work with urban school districts and communities. Montclair State University and the Newark Public Schools were named the recipients of the 2010 Dr. Shirley S. Schwartz Urban Education Impact Award for the Newark Public Schools-Montclair State University Partnership for Instructional Excellence and Quality (PIE-Q) program. Recently, Montclair State University was selected by the PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. and the PNC Foundation to be one of the first two organizations to receive funding as part of PNC’s Grow Up Great program. The University’s grant is for the professional development of more than 500 preschool teachers across seven counties in Northern New Jersey.

We are excited to be launching several new initiatives in global education, through the development of a partnership with Kibbutzim College of Education, Technology and the Arts in Israel. This partnership has begun with faculty exchanges and collaborative research projects and will incorporate student exchanges in joint programs in teacher preparation and online courses. It was my pleasure to visit our colleagues and friends at Kibbutzim College in March, on a trip to the Middle East that included meetings at University of Jordan in Amman and Haifa University in Israel. We are eager to add an international dimension to our work in education and human services and these universities are eager to become our partners.

This fall, we are launching a new MA in Family and Child Studies as well as a combined bachelor’s/master’s program for future teachers that includes dual certification in early childhood, elementary or subject area with special education. Our proposed Ph.D. program in Family Studies should be fully approved by the State in the coming months, adding to our portfolio of outstanding doctoral programs. At the undergraduate level, our former concentration in Adult Fitness will become a full-blown major in Exercise Science with a cutting-edge program and laboratories. Despite difficult budget times, we continue to add new programs to meet the needs of our region and our ever changing society.

May this season of renewal and beauty bring a breath of fresh air and a sense of hope and possibility to us all as we continue our work of building a better educated, healthier, more just society.
Dr. Jamaal Matthews, Assistant Professor in the department of Educational Foundations, is a recipient of the National Center for Research on Early Childhood Education (NCRECE) Fellowship. NCRECE awards fellowships to research faculty from underrepresented minority groups. Following a nationwide call for applications, four faculty members from various institutions across the country were selected.

The focus of the fellowship program is on secondary analysis of existing data sets to address issues of importance in the field of education, applied developmental psychology, child development, and related fields, with an emphasis on early childhood education. As part of this fellowship, Dr. Matthews is provided with access to nationally representative data and ongoing mentorship and consultation with senior investigators around the country who are invested in early childhood education. The mentorship piece also includes rigorous training in the latest statistical methods and programs and weekly conference calls that allow Fellows to collaborate with the NCRECE team, to provide updates on research progress and to prepare for upcoming presentations. The fellowship provides Dr. Matthews the opportunity to travel to the 2011 Society for Research on Child Development (SRCD) meeting in Montreal and the 2011 American Psychological Association (APA) meeting in Washington D.C., where he will give presentations of his work and findings.

This fellowship has allowed Dr. Matthews to further expand upon his research and examine the classroom features (e.g. teacher warmth/support, teacher ideologies, social structures and pedagogical orientations) that promote the development of cognitive regulatory functioning (i.e. working memory, directed attention, meta-cognition) in young learners, particularly those within low-resourced contexts. In his research, Dr. Matthews assesses the parental and cultural/community practices that elicit proficient regulatory functioning in young children from marginalized backgrounds and the degree of congruence between classroom and home/cultural practices. The goal of this research is to understand how students transfer regulatory capabilities learned within the home and other non-academic environments to the classroom and the catalysts that allow for effective transfer of cognitive and regulatory strategies.

Dr. Matthews, in collaboration with Dr. Amanda Williford at the University of Virginia, has also investigated whether gender differences in these adult-child interactions help explain gender differences in both cognitive self-regulation and later academic achievement. Through the examination of both homes and classrooms, their work has provided strong evidence that the types of early experiences children have with influential adults largely impact their cognitive self-regulation and consequently their academic achievement, particularly teacher-child interactions. During the next phase of his research, Dr. Matthews will conduct an extensive analysis on father-child versus mother-child interactions at 36 and 54 months of age and the differential impact these relationships may have on the development of attention, working memory, persistence and socio-emotional development for boys and girls.

Faculty Profile: Dr. Jamaal Matthews
National Center for Research on Early Childhood Education (NCRECE) Fellow

Dr. Jamaal Matthews completed his joint doctorate in Education and Psychology at the University of Michigan. His scholarly interests include the development of self-regulatory learning skills during childhood, and the relationship between academic identity development, academic motivation, and self-regulated learning in adolescence. Born and raised in NYC, his educational interests are grounded in his experiences as a middle school math teacher in the Bronx. Dr. Matthews has also served as program coordinator, curriculum developer and program evaluator of various inner-city mentorship/special interest programs.
Through their work with the elementary students, teacher candidates are able to gain valuable hands on experience and put the skills learned in class into practice. They design creative and interactive lessons that keep the elementary students engaged and excited about coming to campus. They have created interdisciplinary lessons, where content from math, social studies or other subject areas are integrated into the physical education lesson. They have also found various ways to incorporate health and wellness objectives, teaching children the importance of having a healthy and active lifestyle. Heart rate monitors and other forms of technology have been utilized to inform students of the benefits of physical activity. Teacher candidates also plan and organize a field day event at the end of each semester for the elementary students.

Students in the teacher education program are currently working on a project to assess student learning during the visits to the University. They have administered a pre-test to gauge 4th grade students' abilities to perform particular motor skills. The students are taught lessons and engage in activities that reinforce the particular skill being assessed. At the end of the semester, the 4th graders will receive a post-test to evaluate their progress. Throughout the project, the elementary students are active participants, involved in tracking and graphing their improvement. Teacher candidates benefit by learning how and when to differentiate and refine their lessons to address the needs of students with varying abilities and learning styles.
The Teachers Club of Montclair recently celebrated its 100th anniversary. The Club started in 1911 to provide emotional, financial, and social support to young educators. It now has approximately 75 members, including teachers who either live in or have taught in Montclair, and a headquarters at 35 Park Street. The Club provides regular programs with speakers on a variety of educational subjects.

Alumni Spotlight: The Teachers Club of Montclair Supports the Teachers of Tomorrow

The mission of the club is to support Montclair teachers and community organizations, with a special emphasis on encouraging future educators, including students from the College of Education and Human Services at Montclair State University. The Club has faithfully supported annual scholarships for decades. In the last 10 years alone, 99 deserving teacher education students have each received a $1,000 scholarship thanks to the Club’s generosity. This year, 10 students in the College of Education and Human Services are receiving Club scholarships.

“The Teachers Club of Montclair awarded me a scholarship which I was very proud to receive,” says Christyn Scillieri ’11, a Family and Child Studies major. “The Club and this scholarship have enabled me to strive to be the best teacher I can be.” Christyn is currently student teaching in West Orange at Hazel Avenue Elementary School in a Kindergarten class.

“I am honored to be recognized among so many successful future teachers and grateful to the Teachers Club of Montclair for supporting me throughout my journey here at MSU,” says Sarah Rylick ‘11. She majors in Family and Child Studies, and is currently student teaching in Teaneck at Lowell Elementary School. “I aspire to become a teacher who uses the skills that I was taught here at MSU to create the most comfortable and productive classroom environment,” adds Ms. Rylick. “Ultimately, I want to become the kind of teacher who makes a difference in the life of a child.”

“We are extremely grateful for the long-standing commitment of the Teachers Club of Montclair to providing scholarships for our students, who are the outstanding teachers of tomorrow,” says Dean Ada Beth Cutler.

Julie Isidor has been president of the Club since 2005 and a member for nearly a decade. “We are all supportive of education and focused on our educational mission,” she says. “It is a very simple formula that we use: we share a meal, form community, continue our thirst for learning, and engage in acts of charity, all to the benefit of ourselves and our community.”

For more information about making your gift of support to the College of Education and Human Services, contact Myrtis Yake at 973-655-4036 or yakem@mail.montclair.edu.
Student Spotlight

Graduate Student Awarded National Public Health Fellowship

Tosan Boyo spent most of his undergraduate career preparing to become a physician. While working at Greystone Psychiatric Hospital, he was asked to cover for his supervisor in an administrative capacity. During that experience, Tosan realized that he enjoyed providing patient care on a larger scale. With guidance and support from Dr. Amanda Birnbaum, Dr. Lisa Lieberman and other faculty members from the Health and Nutrition Sciences department, Tosan began his pursuit of a Masters in Public Health (MPH) at Montclair State University. He hoped to gain a broader perspective of healthcare that not only focused on patient care but incorporated the business aspect as well. The MPH program gave Tosan the understanding of how a hospital can influence and address the needs of the community.

Nearing the end of his Master’s program, Tosan applied for the prestigious Administrative Fellowship with the University of California San Diego Medical Center. Out of 130 applications, 10 finalists were invited to tour the facility and interview with the leadership team at the hospital. Tosan and competitors from Harvard, Georgetown and other universities went through a rigorous selection process that consisted of five consecutive interviews and two written papers. To his surprise, Tosan received a phone call within 24 hours of leaving California, in which he was offered the Ambulatory Care Fellowship, one of the two fellowships awarded. Tosan is excited to train in the hospital administration field and strives to eventually become a senior level executive so that he can improve the relationship between hospitals and the communities they serve. He also dreams of one day building a hospital in Nigeria.

MSU Student awarded prestigious Woodrow Wilson—Rockefeller Brothers Fund Fellowship

Aliah Singletary and Melissa Sande were selected by Montclair State University as nominees for the Woodrow Wilson-Rockefeller Brothers Fund Fellowship for Aspiring Teachers of Color (WW-RBF), which supports and trains students with an undergraduate major in the arts and sciences. Fellowship recipients are awarded a $30,000 stipend towards graduate school along with on-going post-graduate support as they begin their teaching careers in a high-need urban or rural public school district. Following the completion of a rigorous selection process, Aliah was selected as a recipient of the Fellowship along with students from Yale University, Amherst College, Howard University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Pennsylvania.

Aliah Singletary is an English major at Montclair State University. She is involved in a sorority on campus and is a member of the campus chapter of NAACP. In September 2011, Aliah will pursue her master’s degree in education, a dream that may not have been possible had she not received the fellowship.

As part of the fellowship, Aliah will make a three year commitment to teach in a high-need urban or rural school district. When she has a classroom of her own, Aliah’s priority will be showing the students that she genuinely cares about them as individuals and wants to help them achieve. Aliah feels that a relationship should be a component of every classroom. She believes that, “anyone can physically be in the classroom, but it’s all about having a presence.” She plans to utilize creative strategies to teach her students and inspire their interest in English. She also hopes to capture her students’ attention with her strong public speaking skills, which have been refined through her undergraduate major in communication studies.

Melissa Sande, a dance major at Montclair State University, recalls writing an essay in fourth grade about how she wanted to be a dance teacher when she grew up. Melissa finds it essential for children in urban areas to have role models that they can look up to. When asked about the importance of having minority teachers enter the workforce, Melissa stated that, “children need to see someone who looks like them achieving great things.” Although she was not selected as a Fellowship recipient, Melissa still plans to pursue her master’s degree in dance education, which will enable her to earn her teaching certification. She stresses the importance of offering dance classes in school, especially to children living in low socioeconomic areas, who may not be able to afford lessons elsewhere. Melissa firmly believes that dance builds a community, where kids can connect, rely upon each other, and form trusting relationships.
courses where the YPAR curriculum has been integrated are given the opportunity to direct their own learning by selecting research problems that are relevant to them. Some of the issues students have chosen to investigate pertain to the nutritional value of the school lunch program and teenage pregnancy. They developed a rationale for studying these particular issues, collected and analyzed data, and are now in the process of formulating ideas about the types of action they will engage in, which may be in the form of advocacy, activism, or education.

In addition, the students will have the opportunity to present their inquiry projects at the First Annual Youth Researcher Summit at Montclair State University on May 19, 2011.

Dr. Zaal and her research team (which includes graduate students from MSU and Rutgers) are overseeing the implementation of the curriculum and plan to identify how students are impacted through involvement in Youth Participatory Action Research. In particular, they are interested in understanding the extent to which participating in an active learning process empowers youth to see themselves as agents of change within their school and communities.

Dr. Zaal and her research team applied for funding to improve the curriculum and convert it to a web-based learning module (YPAR Portal) that can be disseminated to schools throughout New Jersey. The YPAR Portal would allow youth researchers across the state to connect with each other through online learning communities, through which they can share ideas and findings, as well as discuss any challenges they are encountering as novice researchers. Teachers will also have the opportunity to share their experiences and best practices for implementing this type of curriculum in the classroom. In addition, a web-based module will enable Dr. Zaal and her team to track usage, connect with teachers and students involved, and study the curriculum in action.

Faculty Profile: Dr. Mayida Zaal
Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) in the Classroom for Critically Engaged Citizenship
Faculty members and graduate assistants (GAs) in the MA in Counseling program partnered with the Office of Residential Education & Services to create the Mediation Resource Center (MRC), which was initiated as a result of increasing room change requests in the residence halls due to roommate conflict. In addition, as the University will be doubling the number of students living on campus next year, this presented an opportunity to ensure that residential students and residence life staff are provided with resources and training in the areas of communication and conflict resolution. The MRC may be utilized by any campus resident, not only those referred for services.

The program was developed by Housing Assignments Coordinator Kevin Schafer and Counseling faculty members Dr. Leslie Kooyman and Dr. Edina Renfro-Michel. They also provide ongoing supervision for the GAs and volunteers providing mediation services at the MRC. Megan Gordon, a graduate assistant and mediator, has been a part of several successful MRC interventions. She has found it gratifying to see “students who initially sit with their backs turned to each other begin to communicate and work through their problems.” She hopes that the conflict resolution skills learned in mediation will not only improve relationships between roommates, but will also help students to have healthier relationships with others in the long term.

The MRC staff has worked to raise awareness about their services through programming in the residence halls and the distribution of handbooks and materials to staff and students. Their efforts have established mediation services as a part of the referral process before any room changes are made. Future plans include the development of an online course for new residents that will educate them on effective communication strategies and available resources.

Although it was established as a resource for students living on campus, the MRC has been beneficial for all involved. Graduate students from the MA in Counseling program are given the opportunity to put their skills into practice. Those GAs in the Student Affairs in Higher Education concentration gain valuable experience working in residence life, a career path they may choose to pursue after graduation. Community Assistants and Community Directors in the residence halls receive support from the MRC staff and are provided with a resource to which they can refer matters that are beyond the scope of their training.