COLLEGE WELCOMES NEW FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS

The College of Education and Human Services at Montclair State University is currently hosting five Fulbright Scholars pursuing the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree. Students from this program come from around the world to study public health in order to improve public health disparities in their countries of origin. Each of these candidates in Montclair State’s Fulbright program is committed to making a positive impact on their surroundings.

Sivuyisiwe (Ntombi) Wonci

Ntombi, a MPH program scholar who graduated this past May, recently headed back to her homeland of South Africa. She received her undergraduate degree in Sociology in South Africa. During her undergraduate program, she became increasingly interested in health disparities. She continued to pursue her education after college and became a Fulbright Scholar at Montclair State. Through the MPH program, she began researching and examining health disparities, especially regarding HIV/AIDS and children’s health. Having struggled with chronic illness throughout her life, Ntombi was able to connect deeply with the public health mission of helping others and addressing health disparities.

Ntombi credits the supportive MPH faculty and staff for helping her overcome some of the challenges of living in a foreign country where English was her second language and she was far away from her family. From all of her experiences, she has realized that it is necessary to recognize the “value of the present moment and appreciate every moment and experience.” Ntombi plans to continue her education by pursuing a PhD at the University of South Africa.

Fernanda Andre

Fernanda Andre was a dentist in Mozambique, where she became interested in public health and addressing gum disease in women and children. She viewed these health problems as a by-product of policies, a lack of community education and minimal preventative education in her community. As a result, Fernanda applied for the MPH program at Montclair State through the Fulbright program. Prior to starting her Fulbright at the University, Fernanda studied at The University of Florida for eight months in order to improve her English and prepare for the program.

Since coming to the United States, Fernanda has had many wonderful experiences meeting new people and traveling. In addition, the curriculum taught in Montclair State’s program has helped her to enhance her critical thinking and her own perspectives on U.S. health disparities.

Irma Hidayana

Irma Hidayana is a USAID PRESTASI Scholar (Program to Extend Scholarships and Training to Achieve Sustainable Impacts) originally from Indonesia. Irma has been a long-time advocate for breastfeeding to reduce maternal and child mortality in Indonesia. She continues to educate and instill the values and importance of breastfeeding in the U.S. Irma was able to successfully create and lead a series of workshops about breastfeeding for underprivileged young women in New Jersey. The support from faculty and peers in the program was beneficial for Irma, who had to temporarily leave her son and husband in Indonesia to pursue her MPH degree. Following her completion of the MPH program, Irma plans to complete her PhD and then return to Indonesia to create positive change in her country.

Kadek Ridoi Rahayu

Kadek Ridoi Rahayu, also from Indonesia, was born and raised in Bali. She applied for the USAID PRESTASI scholarship to study abroad and break down the negative stereotypes of certain cultures, based on what tourists see when they travel in certain parts of the world. In the area of Indonesia where she was born, harsh economic conditions exist for children, forcing them to work extended hours, taking them away from pursuing an education. Children often experience other abuse including pedophilia. Her concern for the quality of life of these children led Ridoi to apply to the MPH program at Montclair State.

Graduating in May 2016, Ridoi plans to return to Indonesia and pursue her goal of strengthening connections among the government, society and health care workers “so that we can work together to become the agents of change in public health.”

Dr. Hamid Abdul Elmyar

Dr. Hamid Abdul Elmyar is a Fulbright scholar as well as a pediatrician from Afghanistan. While becoming a doctor was his childhood dream, he realized that there were factors outside of his practice that were affecting his ability to treat patients. Recognizing that curative care, hospital settings and private practice had an impact on his patients’ health, he found himself pursuing an MPH at Montclair State. Interested in Community Health Education, Dr. Elmyar emphasizes a multispectral approach to health care, recognizing that curative care alone cannot solve the world’s problems.

Following his graduation from the program, Dr. Elmyar plans to return to Afghanistan to further help the country’s health care system by leading a new wave of health professionals “who can analyze the paradigm shift in the international arena and facilitate the communication between the Afghan government and the international community.” Acting as a pioneer for health care professionals who will implement research and program planning, Dr. Elmyar hopes to improve the health care system in Afghanistan as well as other developing countries.

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It’s that energizing time of year again. After a cold winter, the campus is in full bloom, providing a stunning backdrop for end-of-semester activities. It’s a time to say congratulations and farewell to our graduates. This year, the College awarded a record number of degrees – 581 baccalaureate, 575 masters and 14 doctoral – and certified 665 graduates from across the University to teach in the public schools of New Jersey. We wish all of our graduates well. We look forward to keeping in touch and witnessing their success in the coming years.

It is also a time to reflect on what has been a year of continued accolades and honors for the College. For the fourth year in a raw, U.S. News & World Report’s 2016 edition of Best Graduate Schools has ranked Montclair State University as one of the nation’s “Best Education Schools.” Montclair State is one of only two New Jersey institutions to be ranked nationally. I am pleased that Montclair State continues to be recognized as a national leader in the preparation of teachers and other education professionals. This ranking, along with other national honors bestowed on the College, reflects the high-quality work of our faculty, staff and students.

In the health and human services fields, our faculty and students continue to excel and break new ground. The Master of Public Health program once again hosted a record number of graduate Fulbright Scholars, who you will read about in this issue. These special MPH students work side by side with our extraordinary faculty to develop a foundation on which they will build when they return to their home countries after graduation. This year one of the MPH graduates, Siwoyiake Wonci, was the graduate student speaker at Commencement. Wonci is returning to her native South Africa to pursue a doctorate. Our Nutrition and Food Science programs have gained international recognition, and the department hosted the International Conference on Culinary Arts and Sciences in June, the first time this conference has taken place in the United States.

In the coming academic year, we will launch several new academic programs, including a Master of Science in Athletic Training, a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership with a concentration in Higher Education Leadership, and a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Food Science. Despite difficult budget times, we continue to add new programs to meet the needs of our region and our ever-changing society.

I am grateful for the partnerships that our faculty and staff have built with our students and alumni, and for our commitment to innovative and entrepreneurial programs that have developed from these partnerships. I encourage you to visit our website at montclair.edu/cehs to learn about upcoming events, programs and conferences, and I hope to meet many of you through these activities in the fall. I wish you all of our graduates well. We look forward to keeping in touch and witnessing their success in the coming years.

Warm regards,
Tamara Lucas, PhD
Acting Dean

Message from the Dean

Tamara Lucas, PhD
Acting Dean

THE VISIONARIES BEHIND THE PATERSON COALITION AGAINST SUBSTANCE ABUSE (P-CASA)

The Paterson Coalition Against Substance Abuse (P-CASA) is led by Montclair State University faculty members, program directors and husband-and-wife team Dr. Robert J. Reid and Dr. Pauline Garcia-Reid. This initiative is focused on implementing evidence-based environmental prevention strategies to meet the goals of the Drug Free Communities (DFC) Grant Program, which are meant to increase community collaboration and reduce substance use among youth aged 12-17. The program is funded by a $625,000 grant from The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Paterson, the third largest city in New Jersey, has one of the highest rates in the state for both substance abuse and drug-related crime. Factors that contribute to the high level of substance use and drug-related crimes are correlated with structural barriers such as poverty and population density. Key community stakeholders convey that the scarcity of prevention resources and gaps in service delivery have contributed to the social problems experienced by Paterson youth. Working with different members of the community, the coalition works to change social customs that promote alcohol and drug use through social marketing/social norms campaigns, reduce youth access to alcohol and tobacco products and support policies that will improve the regulation policies of alcohol and tobacco selling establishments. Ultimately, they hope “that through our efforts, we [are] able to give kids a fighting chance to rise above their circumstances.”

Interest in action research and working with the community were established early in Dr. Garcia-Reid’s life. As a Puerto Rican female raised in Union City, New Jersey, she witnessed “the destructive structural effects of poverty, crime, drugs and violence on the lives of young people.” Experiences from her youth helped her establish her “passion for working with racial and ethnic minority youth.” Like his wife, Dr. Reid recognized his desire to work in urban, poverty-stricken areas early on as well, specifically when working as a substance abuse counselor at a methadone maintenance facility located in Newark, New Jersey. Reflecting on this practice, he recalls how 60 percent of the clients in his caseload as a licensed clinical and alcohol drug counselor were HIV positive in 1992. Because of this experience, he became motivated to earn a social policy doctoral degree from Columbia University in order to help this population.

Looking to the future, the couple’s ultimate goal for P-CASA is to “serve as a model prevention initiative that allows [them] to expand [their] scope of services to reach the broad community beyond the 1st Ward” of Paterson. They plan to continue to expand the program through additional grant attainment and aspire to expand their work throughout the city of Paterson and into the 4th Ward of the district.

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NEW PROGRAMS THAT BUILD EXCEPTIONAL LEADERS IN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The faculty and staff in the College of Education and Human Services consistently strive to develop cutting-edge programs that allow students to become leaders in their respective fields. We are pleased to announce the following new programs in the College:

**HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP**

**MA in Educational Leadership, Concentration in Higher Education Leadership**

The Master of Arts in Educational Leadership with a concentration in Higher Education Leadership provides graduate students with the knowledge and skills needed to take on leadership positions with higher education organizations in student affairs, academic affairs, and college and university administration. Montclair State was the first public university in northern New Jersey to offer this program, allowing current and aspiring professionals to study higher education at a nationally ranked college of education.

This program is unique in that it emphasizes leadership and administration across all functional areas of colleges and universities, as opposed to placing sole emphasis on student development and student affairs. Courses in the program aim to integrate theory, research, policy and practice to provide students with a comprehensive graduate experience. The program does not limit students to a particular field, but allows them to use their electives to investigate a variety of fields within Higher Education Leadership, and then complete a field experience in a specific functional area. Students complete an eight-course core requirement that covers organizations, management, leadership, finance, communication, research and evaluation, and then choose from a variety of electives that address their individual interests.

**FOOD SYSTEMS**

**BS in Nutrition and Food Science, Concentration in Food Systems**

Issues of sustainability and the environment, adequate food supply for the future, growing rates of hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity, all set against the backdrop of increasingly knowledgeable and demanding consumers in both international and local markets, are among the many challenges that confront the globalizing food system in the 21st century. This program is designed to provide tomorrow’s leaders with the skills and knowledge they will need to manage these challenges and to foster the creation of a sustainable food system locally and globally. Students will gain a holistic knowledge base, enriched with practical training and experiences, to prepare them for careers in the field, including: food service and management; supply chain management and alternative distribution, such as farm-to-school/ institution networks; food policy; food education and outreach; food production and processing; retail and wholesale; international development, and community and nonprofit organizations.

**EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT**

**Certificate in Educational Assessment**

Given the recent changes in educational policy at the national level (e.g., NCLB, Race to the Top), schools and districts need to provide ongoing evidence of student learning and achievement. This means that all members of school/district communities need to become versed in a variety of assessment activities, multiple methods for interpreting and summarizing data, and constructing sound educational policy and practices that are supported by the local evidence provided in schools. This certificate program is the first and only in New Jersey that is specifically designed to prepare educators for using assessment data to inform instruction.

**HONORS AND ACCOLADES**

- **U.S. News & World Report’s 2016 edition of Best Graduate Schools** ranks Montclair State University as one of the nation’s “Best Education Schools.” In the 2016 edition of Best Graduate Schools, the University earned a ranking of 110 to place among the top 30 percent of the nation’s education schools. It marks a third year of improvement in the rankings by Montclair State. Last year, it was rated 135 and, in 2014, it ranked 149. Montclair State is one of only two New Jersey institutions to be nationally ranked.

- **Dr. Amanda Birmaaum (Chairperson, Health and Nutrition Sciences) has recently been named an Outstanding Advising Award Winner in Faculty Advising by NACADA:** The Global Community for Academic Advising, Dr. Birmann is one of only 12 faculty members nationwide to receive this award.

- **The College hosted the 8th annual three-day meeting of the Urban Teacher Education Consortium (UETC) in February 2015. The event was cosponsored by the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers University. Comprised of more than 50 teacher-educators from higher education institutions across the country, UETC is dedicated to developing powerful urban teacher preparation programs through on-site investigations of practice, joint problem solving and research.**

- **The College hosted the 9th Annual International Conference on Culinary Arts and Sciences in June 2015. This prestigious event attracts top scholars in the discipline from around the world, and will feature internationally recognized speakers, including Brian Wansink and James Beard Award-Winner and Guest White House Chef Dr. Michael Perez. Montclair State is the first United States institution to host this conference.**
College of Education and Human Services

Montclair State has received federal funding in the amount of $6.2 million from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) for the second iteration of the Newark-Montclair Urban Teacher Residency (NMUTR) Program. This program was first launched in September, 2009 and has given students with a passion for teaching the opportunity to obtain a master’s degree, quality induction mentorship and support, and a teaching position in the Newark Public School System upon graduation.

The program is housed in the Early Childhood, Elementary and Literacy Education (ECELE) department, and is led by Principal Investigators Dr. Susan Wray of ECELE and Dr. Jennifer Robinson, executive director of the Center of Pedagogy.

The NMUTR program places an emphasis on early childhood STEM education and inclusion. Dr. Sumi Hagiwara, ECELE lead faculty for STEM education, stated “a hallmark of our department is inclusive education and making sure that all children have a way of being included as part of a classroom’s community of learners.” This interdisciplinary program focuses on developing new ways of thinking and the fundamental skills of inquiry and processing, which distinguishes it from other programs that focus on middle school and high school students.

In the first 15 months of their residency, students are placed in a co-teaching mentorship where they have the ability to learn, firsthand, the processes of their mentors and gain an in-depth look into classroom preparation before teaching in the classroom on their own.

Susan Taylor, director of the NMUTR recalled that, “One of the most powerful moments of the first grant was the conversation we had with a classroom mentor. Students have a chance to really observe and ask questions of their mentor teacher about their classroom across multiple dimensions of teaching and learning. Our mentor teachers said ‘no one has ever talked to me about my classroom and the thinking and the fundamental skills of inquiry and processing, which distinguishes it from other programs that focus on middle school and high school students.'”

For the remainder of the three-year program, students teach in their own classrooms and continually receive induction support from their mentors. Induction is the key element to the program’s sustainability. The NMUTR program embeds teachers in schools and allows them to focus on critical practice; they are able to learn to teach while teaching alongside a master teacher, while simultaneously taking course work that will give them the foundations of good teaching knowledge and content, all the while being able to make sense and have critical reflection of their experience in the residency program.

“We see this program as a way of stopping the revolving door of teachers, so that they will have a better sense of how to identify, instruct and develop curriculum for gifted students,” said Blowe.

“High school students in grades 9-12 are offered workshops that include the fine arts, political ethics, rhetoric and composition, and a course in underwater robotics. The program already has so much to offer its students, but Blowe continuously searches for new and innovative ways to grow the academic program.”

GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION – A NEW BEGINNING AT MONTCLAIR STATE

It has been 33 years since Montclair State first established its Gifted and Talented program. At its inception, the program served 77 students annually. After 33 years of growth and development, Montclair State’s Gifted and Talented program enhances the lives of more than 1,500 students and their families each year. This year, the program moved to the College of Education and Human Services under the leadership of new director, Paulette Blowe.

“Our main objective is to continue developing a self-sustaining program; striving to meet National Standards and creating an environment and curricula to help these students thrive,” Ms. Blowe said. Children come from all over New Jersey, New York and parts of Pennsylvania to participate in the program. It offers students the opportunity to explore subjects that are not found in traditional school settings.

Grades K-8 students have a variety of specialty courses to choose from, including songwriting, pre-med, Java (coding for beginners), neuroscience, debate team and a range of topics that allow children to learn about themselves and their interests.

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The Future of Gifted and Talented

All too often, students who are gifted and talented go unnoticed in traditional school settings because students are evaluated today primarily on their test scores. It is difficult to meet the needs of students with different levels of talent and giftedness when teachers in traditional school settings are not prepared to do so. “One piece that I have been charged with doing since the program has come under the College is to create an online certificate program for teachers, so that they will have a better sense of how to identify, instruct and develop curriculum for gifted students,” said Blowe.

Despite the wide range of capabilities gifted and talented students possess, Blowe noted, they may feel lost in a system that does not know how to evaluate their needs. As students move into high school, the high-ability children are placed into AP and Honors classes, but these students need more. “They need independent study time and apprenticeships so that they can really hone in on their interests and focus on what their abilities are,” Blowe said.
Dr. Susana Juniu, chair of the department of Exercise Science and Physical Education, has received a Fulbright award, and will be a U.S. Fulbright Scholar lecturing and conducting research at the University of Costa Rica (UCR). She will focus on the effectiveness of educational programs to prepare P12 teachers and university faculty to integrate information and communication technologies (ICT) into their teaching and research.

The Fulbright program aims to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries, and it is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government. Fulbright alumni have become heads of state, judges, ambassadors, cabinet ministers, CEOs and university presidents, as well as leading journalists, artists, scientists and teachers. They have been awarded 53 Nobel Prizes. Since its beginnings in 1946, more than 360,000 Fulbrighters have participated in the program.

Senator J. William Fulbright’s goal of developing international understanding depends on a commitment from Fulbright grantees to establish open communication and long-term cooperative relationships. Fulbright Scholars have the opportunity to work collaboratively with international partners in educational, political, cultural, economic and scientific fields.

Dr. Juniu demonstrates the qualities of service, excellence and leadership that have been the hallmarks of the Fulbright program for more than 65 years. We congratulate Dr. Juniu on her receipt of this prestigious award.