

# IMPACT

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and teachers today*

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**Rewarding Inventiveness: Faculty advisors Anu Basu (left) and Janene Perez (right) join contest winners Christopher Tam and Debby Xie.**

## Bright ideas

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION SENIORS SHARE CAMPUS INNOVATION PRIZE

**M**OST LURIE COLLEGE of Education students are probably more concerned with classroom management than managing a business startup, but thanks to their education-themed inventions, Child and Adolescent Development seniors Emily Swiger and Debby Xie might one day prove exceptions to the rule.

Their ideas were among 14 winners in a cross-campus competition sponsored by the Center for Entrepreneurship at San José State University's College of Business. The Silicon Valley Innovation Challenge, now in its eighth year, invites students to come up with ideas for a new business or non-profit venture.

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## from the Dean

**THE ARTICLES IN** this issue of *Impact* focus on the efforts made by individuals to improve the lives of others. SJSU's Day of Service demonstrates the university's commitment to our local neighborhoods, for example, while the undergraduate winners of the Silicon Valley Innovation Challenge, Emily Swiger and Debby Xie, used their talents and energy to design products that give children greater access to education.

Our featured alum, Stefanie Blanco de Wills, chose to become a teacher because she wanted to help her community, an orientation that continues to inform her work with her colleagues at James Lick High School.

Professors Patty Swanson and David Whitenack provide extensive professional development to help local teachers teach math to English Language Learners. I applaud the work of these individuals, because they represent the Lurie College's commitment to service for the greater good.

While we can feel inspired by these individual efforts to do the right thing for our communities, I worry that our society has given up on taking more collective action to improve the lives of young people.

Each year schools at all levels feel the effects of budget cuts. Class sizes have increased. School facilities continue to deteriorate. Report after report documents how educational achievement in America falls further behind that in other countries. Proposed solutions fall on different sides of familiar political and ideological divisions. We seem incapable or unwilling to agree on what the problem is, much less how to fix it.

A recent book entitled *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* by Michael Sandel, presents an insightful analysis about why political discourse in our nation has been reduced to polemics and sound bites rather than true dialogue and engagement.

Sandel teaches a wildly popular class at Harvard on political philosophy. If you read his book, you'll know why he attracts so many students. His central argument is that we need to define for ourselves what constitutes the "common good" if we are to make any headway in solving problems in society. That is, the public needs to debate

what we mean by morality in civic life if we are to achieve a just society.

Sandel provides a nuanced account of what he means by moral values and acknowledges that there are bound to be disagreements: "There is no guarantee that public deliberation about hard moral questions will lead in any given situation to agreement—or even to appreciation for the moral and religious views of others."

The students, alums and faculty highlighted in this issue seem to be motivated by an ethic of care or sense of morality and social justice. As a College, we do not shirk from preparing our future educators to engage in such discussions to develop the dispositions of the heart and mind that will tend toward the greater good.

And that is why we will have no dearth of stories like the ones in this issue.

*Elaine Chin*

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# Classroom dynamo

ALUMNA STEFANIE BLANCO DE WILLS  
RECEIVES TEACHING HONOR

**G**ROWING UP IN Salinas, Calif., where her Mexican-American forebears had worked for generations as agricultural workers, Stefanie Blanco de Wills knew from an early age exactly what she wanted to do with her life.

"I always wanted to be a teacher," she says. "I had the concept I wanted to help little kids. I wanted to help my community."

Now on the faculty at James Lick High School in San José's East Side Union High School District, Blanco de Wills, 28, has been recognized as a Santa Clara County Teacher of the Year.

Last Sept. 27, she and 30 other area teachers gathered for the 42d annual Teacher Recognition Celebration at the Campbell Heritage Theatre co-hosted by Charles Weis, the Santa Clara County schools superintendent, and local television news anchor Jessica Aguirre.

"I don't think I knew what a big honor it was," Blanco de Wills says (although the ice sculptures and the packed auditorium should have been a clue). "I definitely felt treasured as a teacher."

But she also sees the award as an acknowledgement of the hard work of her fellow teachers at James Lick. "I felt like it was more of a collaboration for all of us," she says. "I know how hard we work and how hard the students work. It goes back to the family. It's 'We,' not 'I.'"

Blanco de Wills' passion for teaching comes from her family. Her mother was a first-grade teacher, and her grandmother, now in her 90s, taught Head Start. They provided, she says, "a very strong female presence. It's a very strong matriarchal model."

After high school, Blanco de Wills studied history at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo—and

became the first in her family to graduate from a four-year college. Then it was on to San José State University, where she earned a teaching credential in social sciences and a master's degree in administration in the Lurie College of Education.

"I had some amazing professors," she says. "It was a very grounding and helpful program." Among the faculty members who stood out was Mark Felton, chair of the department of secondary education, she says.

Blanco de Wills wound up teaching at James Lick after her car broke down while she earned her teaching credential and she started relying on public transportation to get to work.

She thinks it is a good fit. "I come from a very similar background to the students that I work with," she says. Blanco de Wills is proud that James Lick has been recognized as one of the most-improved schools in Santa Clara County over the past three years.

She maintains a busy classroom schedule, teaching world history, U.S. history, AP world history sociology and psychology, among other subjects. She is part of an initiative at her school to help her colleagues come up with strategies to help failing ninth-graders.

She also serves as the advisor for the academic club, which helps students prepare for standardized tests, the Leos, the youth affiliate of the Lions Clubs International and the student Gay-Straight Alliance.

An avid runner, Blanco de Wills somehow manages to find the time to coach her school's formidable girls' cross-country team, a commitment that also includes helping the runners fundraise so they can travel to their meets. "We've made it consecutively to the league championships for 22 years," she says matter-of-factly.

Despite her busy schedule, she says she has no plans to slow down. "Giving back is part of being a teacher," she says. ➡



Last fall, 100 students submitted their entries, which were mounted on standard-sized poster boards. The boards were set up for display during a daylong judging session held last Dec. 1 in the Ron Barrett Ballroom in the Student Union.

Swiger's entry, *Talk to Me*, an interactive method that promotes communication skills in autistic children, and Xie's *ePrepared*, an all-in-one website aimed at helping students navigate the college application, curriculum and financial aid process, tied for first place in the social innovation category. It was the first time Lurie College students had won an award in the competition.

"I screamed—I was probably inappropriate," recalls Janene Perez, a lecturer in ChAD who helped organized the innovation challenge and was on hand when the winners were announced. "I thought I was going to cry, I was so excited."

Perez had urged her students—Swiger and Xie among them—to enter the competition, sweetening the deal with the promise of extra credit. She helped both students perfect their entries beforehand.

"I saw judges repeatedly go over to their booths," she says. "To get the two tied for first place—I was overjoyed."

Anuradha Basu, director of the Center for Entrepreneurship in the College of Business, launched what she originally called the "Neat Ideas Fair" in 2004 when she arrived at San José State after a career in business and education spent mainly in India and the United Kingdom. Most of the original participants were business majors, she says, but in time, it became apparent that the net needed to be cast more widely.

"For successful innovation, one really needs students from different disciplines to get together and learn from each other," she says. "The question became how do we get students from different disciplines to get together?"

With the support of the university's administration, a campus-wide organizing committee drew faculty from each of the colleges (Perez represented the Lurie College of Education), Basu says.

This year's competition drew 25 volunteer judges from local businesses and the university's alumni pool, she says. Some Silicon Valley businesses also provided financial and in-kind support.

Prizes were awarded in a variety of categories, including the best overall innovation, clean tech, a "people's choice" award and social innovation. The overall winner was J.D. Leadam, a business administration major, who came up with an idea for a hemp plastic water bottle.

Meanwhile, some students developed a "90-second elevator pitch," which required that they distill the high points of their presentation into a concise oral summation. "This gives an opportunity for the students to build their self-confidence," Basu says—although students usually are resistant to the idea at first. "When they do it, they say, 'Thank you, professor.'"

The boy is completely nonverbal and manipulates icons on a touch-screen device to express his basic needs, she says. "That's what got me interested in the communications side of special education."

Despite his deficits, Swiger was convinced that the boy was "really intelligent in other ways" and started thinking about how his communication abilities might be enhanced using an icon-based system.

Although she lacks technical skills, she envisions *Talk to Me* as an iPad-like device (or even a collection of iPad apps) that could provide autistic kids with a system of activities to help induce communication. Swiger thinks the suite of games and activities would actually enable the children to acquire new vocabulary, leading to richer interactions with caregivers and other children. For her innovation challenge entry she fashioned a prototype that used Velcro icons to demonstrate her idea.

Swiger says she drew some inspiration from the SMART Table, a touch-screen interactive device for elementary school students that Perez had in her classroom last

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—Anuradha Basu

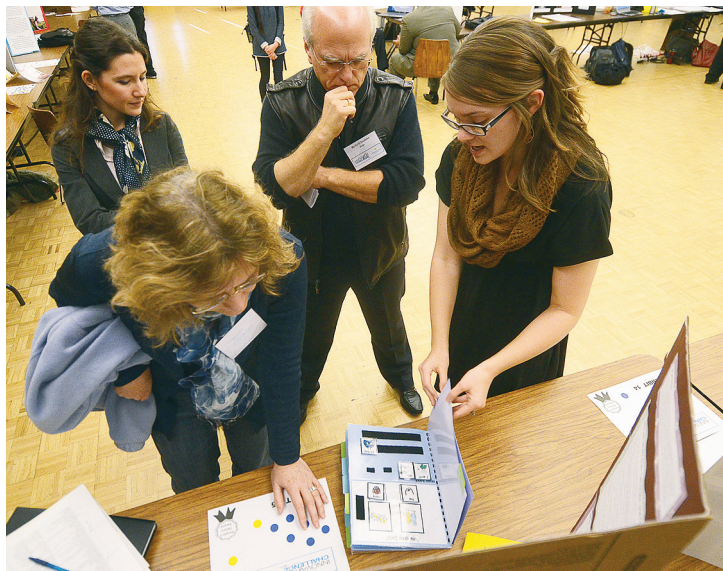
Swiger, a senior who studied accounting at a community college and worked at a bank before transferring to San José State, comes by her interest in helping autistic children communicate through first-hand experience: her older sister is autistic, and Swiger herself has worked as a behavioral interventionist with a 9-year-old boy in the Franklin-McKinley school district.

semester. Swiger and others in the class spent time developing simple game apps for the SMART Table as part of their training.

Meanwhile, she decided to take on the challenge of developing a 90-second elevator pitch to promote her invention—and she's glad she did. "It was intimidating, because there's not a lot of awareness about autism," she says. "What is autism? What



**COMPETING IDEAS:** Business professor Anu Basu (above) at the Silicon Valley Innovation Challenge student fair. Lurie College senior Emily Swiger (right) explains her Talk to Me project to contest judges.



are the challenges? What is the icon system? I had to write it out word for word and remember it exactly.”

Swiger, who enrolled at San José State as a business major before switching to ChAD with the aim of working in special education, now wants to pursue a graduate degree in Communicative and Speech Disorders so she can focus on helping autistic children.

As a student at Piedmont Hills High School in San José’s East Side Union High School District, Debby Xie became friends with Christopher Tam, a whiz at online marketing and search-engine optimization. Both share dual majors in business, but Xie is also in education, while Tam’s second major is in communications studies. They also shared the experience of being the first ones in their family to attend a four-year university—and both have younger siblings who are applying to college.

Xie, whose parents primarily speak Chinese, were supportive of her academic goals, but were unable to provide much guidance as she went through the college

application process. “I was kind of left on my own—to do it myself,” she says.

Finding herself counseling her younger brother about applying to college, Xie decided to collaborate with Tam in developing a website to provide all-in-one information for college-bound young people from backgrounds like theirs. “We had in mind that we wanted to do something involving society and education,” she explains. “We looked back to high school.”

Their *ePrepared* website ([www.ePrepared.net](http://www.ePrepared.net)) aims to get high school students to stay in school while helping them select a curriculum that will improve their chances of winning college admission. When the website is fully active, it will also include videos, practice questions and guidelines for parents that explain college entrance exam requirements and provide other helpful tools. It will also offer charts and checklists to help students keep track of what they need to do to complete the admissions process.

The pair plan to keep the website non-profit, Tam explains, “Because we’re doing

this from our own experience and want to help.” If they succeed in attracting funding, they hope to pay teachers to write college-bound curriculum that can be posted on the site.

Xie credits Perez with mentoring her and Tam as they developed their idea. “She was really excited,” Xie says. “She helped us achieve something we wouldn’t have been able to achieve otherwise.”

Basu says students who enter the innovation challenge are also encouraged to enter the spring semester’s business-plan competition, which is aimed at actually bringing their new ideas to market.

Perez meanwhile looks forward to continuing her involvement with the innovation challenge—and urging her classes to participate. “The more students try to create something for this challenge, the more they will find something that resonates for them,” she says. “This is a great way for them to combine their passion with innovation and see it come to life.” ➡





# Too many words to count

## BOOSTING MATH LITERACY FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

**M**OST OF US CAN recall from our own school days the challenges math word problems pose for students as they struggle to translate convoluted sentences into solvable equations—but research has shown these difficulties are amplified for English language learners.

In fact, language is such a big part of mastering mathematical concepts in upper elementary and middle school grades that when looking at how students perform on standardized test scores, “You can almost predict the math score with their language score,” says Patricia Swanson, an associate professor of elementary education.

Swanson and David Whitenack, a fellow elementary education professor in the Lurie College of Education, have spent

the past several years figuring out how to improve math instruction for English language learners, focusing primarily on offering teachers new strategies for imparting concepts to their students.

The pair are part of a consortium that recently won a five-year \$1.97 million federal grant to train future teachers to better present math, science and social studies concepts and vocabulary to students who are falling into a widening achievement gap. Nationally, for example, 70 percent of English language learners haven’t mastered basic math skills by eighth grade. “When you look at how math is taught,” Swanson says, “You learn our curriculum is a mile wide and an inch deep.”

Meanwhile, Swanson and Whitenack are writing a paper (with research assistant

Heidi Westmoreland) about their experience in offering 31 elementary and middle school teachers in east San José’s struggling Franklin-McKinley School District a day-long workshop on how to improve students’ mastery of math-related academic language.

“Franklin-McKinley was a challenge, because it’s an urban school district, underperforming and serving the neediest students,” says Whitenack. The district, threatened with state takeover due to poor standardized test scores, counts 78 percent of its students as coming from economically disadvantaged families, while 97 percent are students of color and nearly 60 percent have limited English proficiency.

Teachers have a mandatory block of 30 minutes a day set aside for language development, Whitenack says, but “it’s often disconnected from the rest of the curriculum.” The beauty of introducing focused math vocabulary is “we can teach English language development through content,” he says.

The district was receptive to having Swanson and Whitenack conduct professional development workshops for its teachers, but funding was lacking. The pair received a small private donation to conduct a series of single-day sessions in May 2010 just after state testing had concluded.

Swanson and Whitenack already had identified three key points for intervention: grades 3-4 (fractions), grades 5-6 (rational numbers—fractions, decimals and percents) and grades 7-8 (proportional reasoning and linear relationships). In intensive 6½-hour sessions with teachers from each grouping, they demonstrated two kinds of lessons teachers could use to engage their students.

“Lead-in lessons” are meant to be brief, engaging introductions to a new topic that relied on manipulatives—concrete objects such as colored blocks and multicolored geometric shapes that help illustrate math concepts. “Referent lessons” are longer,

more in-depth explorations of foundational concepts that lead to ongoing study.

In teaching fractions, for example, students can compare fraction sizes using proportional pieces while orally comparing fractions that are “greater than” or “less than” one another. In more advanced language learners, the students are encouraged to share their reasoning, explaining why one fraction is larger or smaller than another.

In another example, Swanson uses a picture of an iceberg to teach the concept of whole numbers and their opposites—positive and negative numbers. She shows how positive numbers can be used to describe the height of the iceberg above the waterline, then points to the underwater portion, saying, “We need a special kind of number to talk about this situation that you see.”

“We call this contextualization,” Whitenack comments. “We’re showing how the content can exist in the real world.” Meanwhile, he says, math educators must teach discipline-specific words to language learners—terms like “numerator” and “denominator.”

“When we’re teaching fractions, we have them count  $\frac{1}{6}$ ,  $\frac{2}{6}$ ,  $\frac{3}{6}$ ,  $\frac{4}{6}$ ,” Swanson says. “When we count something, we ‘enumerate,’ so ‘numerate’ means ‘to count.’” This method goes deeper than teaching fractions by portraying slices of pie in a textbook, Swanson says, because, “A, they can’t read English that well, and B, it’s abstract—and it’s not their pie.”

The teachers were asked whether the strategies would help the students learn and whether they could be implemented in the classroom. Swanson and Whitenack also conducted long-term follow-ups to see how well teachers had actually been able to implement what they had learned.

“We were interested in the feasibility of the training—how much did they use the strategies we presented?” she says.

One thing that was apparent is the urgency of meeting test-driven curriculum pacing milestones, Swanson says. Teachers often can’t pause to make sure that all the students are getting it—nearly three-quarters felt the pacing was too quick.

“There was this tension,” she says. “They knew this was good for the students, but they feel tremendous pressure to go faster.”

Nevertheless, in the 2010-2011 school year, “They did go and try a lot of the ideas,” she says. “The teachers felt the strategies were useful, and felt the integration of math and language was helpful for the students.”



#### *Concepts that count*

*Swanson and Whitenack say kids need to acquire math vocabulary while gaining English-language proficiency.*

The pair acknowledges that the brief one-day workshops were less than ideal—although it was what they could afford to provide. “All of the research says you need to do it longer and more in-depth,” Swanson says.

Meanwhile, she says, there is no mechanism to track kids through the educational system to see whether their math skills improved as a direct result of professional development interventions like this one.


Ultimately, Swanson says, “We know they have to tinker with it and make it their own in the classroom.”

Swanson and Whitenack, who have both taught in the Lurie College since the late 1990s, share a longstanding interest in bilingual education and the acquisition of academic language, and have collaborated on other projects. Swanson has taught elementary and middle school as a bilingual teacher, while Whitenack taught high school Spanish and English as a second language.

Their latest venture involves the new federal grant to implement the English Language and Literacy Integration in Subject Areas (ELLISA) project in the multiple subject teacher preparation programs at San José State and San Francisco State University.

The project is co-led by Whitenack and colleagues at the University of California, Santa Cruz and San Francisco State. It uses proven strategies to integrate the teaching of English language and literacy development with concepts in science, mathematics and social studies. Along with Swanson, other Lurie College elementary education faculty members include assistant professors Jolynn Asato and Grinnell Smith.

The project highlights a critical issue in contemporary public education: a growing number of students with limited English skills. Within a dozen years, an estimated one-quarter of U.S. students will come from homes where a language other than English is spoken, and more than a third of the country’s English language learners are currently being educated in California schools.

The \$1.97 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of English Language Acquisition National Professional Development Program is intended to combine cutting-edge research on teaching with best practices in teacher preparation to help new teachers more effectively teach math, science and social studies. 

# Updates

## FACULTY IN TRANSITION



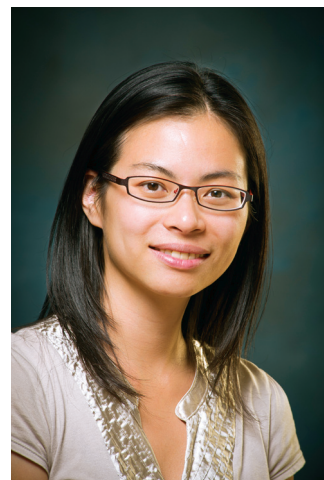
**Jason Laker** has joined the Lurie College of Education as a professor in the department of counselor education. Laker previously served as San José State University's vice president for student affairs, leading a division with more than 20 departments, 350 staff and a combined budget of \$68 million. He is also a 2011 SJSU Salzburg Fellow. Laker previously served as an associate vice president and dean of student affairs at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, where he also taught in the Department of Gender Studies and served as a Fellow with the Centre for the Study of Democracy in the School of Policy Studies. Prior to that, he was dean of campus life at Saint John's University in Collegeville, Minn., where he also served on the fac-

ulty of the Women's and Gender Studies program. He also taught undergraduate, graduate and honors courses at St. Cloud University in St. Cloud, Minn.

He holds a Ph.D. from the Center for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Arizona, an M.A. in community counseling from Adams State College in Colorado and a B.S. in organizational communication from Central Michigan University. His doctoral dissertation, *Beyond Bad Dogs: Toward a Pedagogy of Engagement of Male Students*, won the Dissertation of the Year Award from the Association for Student Judicial Affairs.

Laker has presented many keynotes at professional conferences on higher education, student affairs and development issues, gender, community leadership and related topics. He also has taught courses on the subject of community and identity. Most recently, he was selected for the American College Personnel Association Foundation's 2010 Class of Diamond Honorees. He serves on five peer-reviewed academic journal editorial boards and has chaired or participated in several national professional association committees.

He has served as the only North American on the editorial board of the Expertise Publications Program of the European Training Foundation (an agency of the European Union), and as a visiting scholar at the University of Rijeka, Republic of Croatia (on gender issues in education) and at Universidad de Navarra in Spain. He has also served community advisory and nonprofit boards, particularly focusing on youth and families, education, poverty reduction and immigrant resettlement support services.



**Pei Tzu Tsai** has been appointed assistant professor in the department of communicative disorders and sciences in the Lurie College. She earned her M.A., CCC-SLP and Ph.D. from the University of Maryland at College Park. She has been teaching voice and fluency disorders in the communicative disorders and sciences department and supervises the Voice/Fluency Clinic at the Kay Armstead Center for Communicative Disorders. Her research addresses the cognitive aspects of speech-language production in monolingual and bilingual speakers with and without voice/fluency disorders.



# Promoting scholarship

## ALUMNI ASSISTS THE NEXT GENERATION OF TEACHER CANDIDATES

**EACH YEAR, DOZENS OF STUDENTS** in the Lurie College of Education benefit from the generosity of alumni who have established scholarships to help meet their financial needs while pursuing their goals.

For 2011-2012, teachers-in-training Arlett Carillo and Timothy Wilson are receiving the Marion Cilker Scholarship for Infusing Art into Teaching. The \$6,000 scholarships are to help cover tuition, fees, books and materials for future teachers who are committed to teaching and using the fine arts, performing arts and art history in K-12 classrooms. The recipients also participate in the conference and work-

shops supported by the annual Marion Cilker Conference for Arts in Education. The scholarship and arts conference are made possible by a gift from Marion Cilker, an arts patron and 1939 graduate of the College of Humanities and the Arts whose family has long been connected with San José State University.

Colleen Carey has received a scholarship from the Catherine Costa Bullock Memorial Endowment, established to help support a student in an innovative teacher preparation program for middle and high school teachers. The program builds partnerships with local schools to collaborate

in setting initiatives, designing curriculum, coaching teacher candidates and providing professional development. Catherine Costa Bullock was born to Italian immigrant parents in 1933 (her father sang with the New York Metropolitan Opera for 20 years). The family moved to San José when she was 13. After graduating from Stanford University she taught high school physical education and Spanish for 30 years.

Carillo, Wilson and Carey will join the rest of this year's Lurie College scholarship recipients at a reception on May 24 at History San José. Below is a listing this year's scholarship recipients:

RECIPIENT	SCHOLARSHIP	RECIPIENT	SCHOLARSHIP
Erin Hannon	College of Education Alumni Board	Kathryn Berg	Phyllis Lindstrom
Mark Duc Pham	College of Education Alumni Board	Erin Hannon	Phyllis Lindstrom
Nancy Bui	Lucy Americh Endowment	Victoria Tarumoto	Phyllis Lindstrom
Rebecca Anne Parker	Phil & Eleanore Anastasia Scholarship	Yvonne King	Phyllis Lindstrom
Kymber Marine	Phil & Eleanore Anastasia Scholarship	Dean Nguyen	Florian & Grace Niemeczek
Carol Chen	Elaine Anderson Memorial	Briana Bartle	Helen Newhall Pardee
Amie Lam	Richard Campbell Baugh	Dean Nguyen	Helen Newhall Pardee
Cecilia P. Carillo	Michelle D. Bee	Timothy Wilson	Helen Newhall Pardee
Jenna Heise	Michelle D. Bee	Blaine Bowman	Helen Newhall Pardee
Arlett Carillo	Elden & Florence Belanger	Rina Sutaria	Dolores Raneri
Colleen Carey	Catherine Bullock	Adriana Silva	Dolores Raneri
Arlett Carillo	Marion Cilker Infusing Art into Teaching	Amie Lam	Dolores Raneri
Timothy Wilson	Marion Cilker Infusing Art into Teaching	Maegan Bright	E.A. Rocky (College of Education)
Jennette Petrak	Maxine Hunt Fink	John Manuel Sanchez	Doris W. Shaw
Megan Sunseri	Claudia Greathead	Yu-Ting Wang	Charlotte B. Stelling
Mark Duc Pham	Claudia Greathead	Isabel Gordon	William Sweeney
Esther Yuju Cho	Claudia Greathead	Skye Ann Schmidt	Dr. Colleen Wilcox
Georgina Rodriguez	John & Peter Laznibat	Mark Duc Pham	Dr. Colleen Wilcox
Nicholas Honda	Marla Duino Lenz	Bethany Speir	Michelle Winner (General)

## FACULTY RESEARCH

**Roberta Ahlquist** presented (with Virginia Lea) "The Way That Hegemony Works" at the *National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME)* conference in Chicago in November 2011. With Ann Berlak, she presented, "Assessing PACT: A State Mandated High Stakes Exit Exam for California Teachers Presenters," to the *Northern California NAME Conference* at University of California, Berkeley, on Oct. 7, 2011. She also received paid leave for travel to the Middle East and India during the spring 2012 semester for research aimed at helping area high school teachers understand the backgrounds of new immigrant students.

**Rebeca Burciaga** gave a guest lecture at the University of California, Los Angeles, titled "Testimonio in Educational Research: Epistemological and Methodological Considerations," in October 2011.

**Brent Duckor** presented (with Diana Wilmot, Bill Congrad, Jimmy Scherrer and Amy Dray) "Measuring Teachers' Use of Formative Assessment: A Learning Progressions Approach," at *California Educational Research Association (CERA)*, in Anaheim, Calif., on Dec. 1, 2011.

**Stephen Fiss** presented (along with Bill Gould), "How to Get There From Here" at the *19th Annual California Charter Schools Conference*, in Sacramento, Feb. 27-March 1, 2012.

**Katya Karathanos** co-authored (with Marina Aminy) "Benefiting the Educator and Student Alike: Effective Strategies for Supporting the Academic Language Development of English Learner (EL) Teacher Candidates," for *Issues in Teacher Education*, 20 (2) (2011): 95-109. With **Dolores Mena**, she presented "Exploring Teacher Competencies in the Affective Domain" at the *National Association for Bilingual Education*, in Dallas, Texas, Feb. 15-17, 2011.

**Jason Laker** presented (with Tracy Davis and Ron Williams) "Calling Men to Personal and Social Responsibility: Engagement, Pedagogy, and Practice," at the *AACU Conference on Educating for Personal and Social Responsibility*, in Long Beach, Calif., Oct. 13-15, 2011. He also presented, "The Elephant is Male: Honest Attention to Gender in Threat Assessment Discussions," to the *National Behavioral Intervention Team Association* in Bonita Springs, Fla., Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 2011.

**Henriette W. Langdon** completed the Spanish version of the *Structured Photographic Elicitation Language Test-3 (SPELT-3)* in January 2012. The project, which took five years to complete, assesses bilingual Spanish-English speaking children's linguistic and pragmatic proficiency in Spanish. The test is available through Janelle Publishers (DeKalb, Ill.).

**Roxana Marachi** presented "School Violence Prevention and Educational Psychology: Connecting Fields to Improve Prevention Efforts," at the *10th Annual Hawaii International Conference on Education*

in Honolulu, Hawaii, on Jan. 7, 2012. She presented a workshop titled, "School Safety & Violence Prevention: Research, Practice, & Policy Trends and Gaps" to the *Santa Clara County Children's Summit* in San José on Jan. 27, 2012. She led a professional development workshop titled, "Sparks, Support, and Sustained Engagement for Learning," to faculty at McKinley Elementary School in October and December 2011. She also led workshop on "Research, Practice, and Policy Trends and Gaps in School Safety and Violence Prevention" for the *Juvenile Justice Systems Collaborative Prevention & Programs Workgroup* (Santa Clara County Office of the Public Defender) in San José, Oct. 14, 2011.

**Nancy Markowitz** presented "Embedding the Social-Emotional Dimension of Teaching and Learning in the Preparation of K-8 Teachers" at the *American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education* in Chicago, Feb. 24-26, 2012.

**June McCullough** received a five-year, \$1.25 million federal grant for her *Project Aural Impact*. This personnel preparation training grant from the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs will provide financial support for speech-language pathology graduate students (30 in all). They will provide services to children with hearing loss who use hearing aids and cochlear implants for developing listening and spoken language.

**Jean M. Novak** co-authored (with Karen Mendez, Karen M. Levy, Marley Nelms, Dayna Hoff and Michael L. Levy) a chapter titled, "Cross Cultural Variation in the Neurodevelopmental Assessment of Children with Autism," for *A Comprehensive Book on Autism Spectrum Disorders*, Mohammed-Reza Mohammadi, ed., (Croatia, InTech, 2011). She co-presented "Early Identification of Communication Disorders in Children: Utilization of a Preschool Screener," at the *2012 Hawaii International Conference on Education* in Honolulu, Hawaii, Jan. 5-8, 2012.

**Colette Rabin** presented (with **Grinell Smith**) "Sustainability Education as a Core Concept in Elementary Science Instruction," at *National Science Teachers Association*, Seattle, Wash., Dec. 10, 2011.

**Amita Roy Shah** will present (with Ravneet Kaur Tiwani, Uzma Aakand Hossain and Harpreet Neelam), "Exploring South Asian Experiences in North America: Negotiating Multiple Identities Across Educational Spaces," at *American Educational Research Association (AERA)* in Vancouver, Canada, April 13-17, 2012.

**Maureen Smith** and **Emily J. Bruce** (School of Social Work), addressed the Santa Clara County *Beyond the Bench Conference*, a gathering of professionals who work with youth in the juvenile justice system. Their talk outlined key findings from their research on the impact of parent support on case outcomes for youth in the juvenile court (February 2012).

**Amy Strage** presented (with **Nadia Sorkhabi** and **Lindsay Tanner**) "Links between Parenting Styles and Student Academic Engagement and Achievement among Latino Fifth-Graders," at the *Society for*

*Research in Adolescence* in Vancouver, Canada, March 8-10, 2012. With **Sorkhabi, John Jabaghourian** and **Wendy Quach**, she presented "Links between Parenting Styles and Student Academic Engagement and Achievement among Latino Fifth-Graders," at the *Society for Research in Child Development—Special Topic Session*, Tampa, Fla., Feb 9-11, 2012.

## FACULTY SERVICE

**Roberta Ahlquist** presented from her book "Assault on Kids: Hyper-Accountability, Privatization, Deficit Ideologies and Ruby Payne are Destroying our Schools," to the *Women's International League for Peace and Freedom* at the Los Altos Public Library Forum, Sept. 18, 2011. She also is serving a three-year term on the *CTA Peace and Justice Caucus Youth Human Rights Awards Committee*. It provides programs on social justice issues, holds annual social justice, human rights youth awards for K-12 students in California and increases the awareness of young peoples' social justice activism

**Steve Berta** worked with San José State University Athletic Department to plan and facilitate its retreat (September 2011). This was a unique collaboration between two SJSU departments and helped the Athletic Department develop goals for 2011-2012 while building interdepartmental relations.

**Stephen Fiss** serves as a board member for San José's *Discovery Charter School*, a public K-8 program.

**Jason Laker** serves as a *2011 Salzburg Fellow*, participating in efforts to internationalize San José State University.

**Elba Maldonado-Colon** served as chair of San José State University's provost search committee. "We have brought to campus Dr. Ellen Junn, an outstanding and accomplished senior officer in charge of the Academic Affairs unit," she reports. "Dr. Junn joined us as our new provost in January 2012." Maldonado-Colon also serves on the university's Heritage, Preservation and Public History Committee.

**Roxana Marachi** served on the *Juvenile Justice Systems Collaborative Prevention and Programs Workgroup* for the Santa Clara County Office of the Public Defender. She helped develop a survey of Zero Tolerance practices and beliefs and supports the group in promoting evidence-based alternatives to Zero Tolerance in schools.

**Jean M. Novak** has been selected as president-Elect of the *Santa Clara County Speech and Hearing Association*. The organization represents the field of speech pathology at the local level and mentors students in the field of speech pathology.



**I**T WAS COOL AND RAINY as hundreds of volunteers assembled on Tower Lawn on the morning of Nov. 4 for San José State University's fifth annual Day of Service, but the sun broke through as everyone headed out for their work assignments.

Ten faculty members, staff and administrators from the Lurie College of Education joined some 700 other SJSU volunteers, including sports team members, fraternities and students in the day-long event, aimed at building ties between the university and the neighborhoods surrounding campus.

Lurie College Dean Elaine Chin led a contingent that included staff members Sami Monsur, Sarah Arreola, Lavette Hay, Nikole Abrego, Ha Thai, Maria Munoz, Sherilyn Williams, Luz Zamora and Gaylene Laupp to the McKinley/Bonita neighborhood near the I-280-U.S. 101 interchange.

Equipped with plastic garbage bags and pickup sticks, they collected trash,

branches and other debris, which were deposited into a dumpster brought in for the purpose.

"Education takes many forms," Lurie College Dean Elaine Chin says. "It's not just what we do in our classrooms, but how we work with our neighbors in all facets of their lives."

Elizabeth Figueroa, a project coordinator for CommUniverCity, the service-learning consortium that co-sponsored the project with the university, says Day of Service work usually is performed within a 1½-mile radius of campus. This year, volunteers also helped schools organize their classrooms, worked with churches to help the homeless and assisted in an historical conservation survey.

In McKinley-Bonita, football players and fraternity members helped erect a split-rail fence and rebuild a footpath using decomposed granite, Figueroa says. Used by pedestrians taking a shortcut to McLaughlin Avenue, the path runs on Caltrans property alongside an I-280 on-ramp.

A local resident donated the use of a tractor with an auger to drill holes for the fence posts, she says. Meanwhile, overgrown oleander branches needed trimming, creating plenty of work for the cleanup crews.

Sections of the neighborhood show evidence of urban neglect and gang activity, with streets and alleys littered with food wrappers, cans and syringes, Figueroa says. "We found a screwdriver sanded down to make a knife hidden in a palm tree."

Figueroa had recruited students beforehand to serve as project leads and met with neighborhood residents to see what kind of help they could use. More students have been getting involved, she says, as "more classes are requiring service learning components."

Sami Monsur, a resource analyst in the Lurie College dean's office who is also president of the McKinley/Bonita Neighborhood Association, says the Day of Service gives neighborhood children, many of whom come from Spanish-speaking and undocumented working-class families, a chance to expand their horizons.

"We try to get the children to be around university students," she says. Next year, local students may be given a day off from school so they can actively help with the cleanup, she says.

Monsur, who works closely with the City of San José's Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, works overtime to organize monthly cleanups and graffiti removal. The area has seen a 63 percent reduction in violent and gang-related crimes since 2008, earning her association recognition from the city.

"One of the reasons we were able to do this was because we're keeping it clean," Monsur says. Thanks to the Day of Service volunteers, "We filled up the dumpster," she says. "It was very successful," she adds. "I was very pleased with how excited the staff was." 🗑️





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### **IMPACT**

**SPRING 2012**  
Elaine Chin, PhD, Dean

**EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**  
Michael Haederle

**PHOTOS**  
Robert Bain, (except pages 11-12)

**DESIGN**  
Eunice Ockerman



### **The Art of Teaching**

This year's Marion Cilker Arts Conference, held Nov. 18-19, 2011, drew more than 400 in-service and pre-service teachers eager to learn how they can incorporate the arts into their classroom presentations. Local artists, dancers, singers and musicians presented workshops and performances during both days of the event, held on campus and at the Santa Clara County Office of Education. The next conference is scheduled for Nov. 16-17, 2012.