Field Notes

Spring 2015

FOR PARTNERS IN TEACHING AND TEACHER EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

Director's Note: International Partnerships and Teacher Effectiveness

For more than 40 years the College of Education has partnered with schools and universities around the world to prepare candidates to teach in a globally minded fashion. We believe teachers who spend time abroad develop a better understanding of international relationships and cultural diversities which we view as a critical component of effective teaching. The overseas experience prepares them to assume leadership roles in 21st century schools in what clearly is an interconnected world.

Recently, the College expanded these partnership efforts by establishing exchange programs that enable our candidates to trade places with those from other countries and by providing professional learning opportunities for internationally based educators through participation in UK programs. This issue of *Field Notes* highlights the benefits of the international partnerships we have forged. As you peruse the newsletter, I think you will see why we place such high value on them.

Haleigh LeCompte leads the way by describing her life-changing experience student teaching in South Africa, one that led her to join the Peace Corps. Haleigh's reflections include a photo essay depicting aspects of her experience learning to teach outside the United States. Following that, UK faculty members Ellie Holliday and Lee Ann Jung discuss a popular initiative they have launched, designed to strengthen the expertise of international educators, as part of the newly created Office of International School Partnerships (ISP).

I hope you enjoy taking this virtual journey to our international sites. These samples represent merely a few of the collaborative efforts we have underway to build expertise and connect the world through teaching. We will keep you informed of changes as we continue to grow in this direction, and we welcome your ideas to strengthen efforts along the way.

Wonderfully Lost

By Haleigh LeCompte Oakhill School Knysna, South Africa

I left the States running, searching desperately for the type of change and self-clarification that only comes as a result of being completely and utterly thrown out of the nest. I wasn't scared, or even overly excited; I was numb, running headdown, full force into something big--something new.

Crossing through security, I transcended into a state of limbo: unable to return to my family (who still stood on the other side, hopeful that I would change my mind), yet still 48 hours and four plane rides away from this "new life" I so highly anticipated. For the first time, I felt alone, isolated on the other side, trapped inside a "movie moment," unsure of my role in the movement around me.

Continued on next page



Haleigh LeCompte waves goodbye as she heads off to South Africa for her student teaching semester. Look inside for more about her overseas experience!

-SB

(Continued from previous page)

As the airplane's wheels detached from the runway, I still nostalgically remember the first song that rang through my headphones and the lyrics that followed, "we'll all float on... good news is on the way!" --reassurance, as small as it was, that I was headed in the right direction.

Shortly after my arrival, my host family pulled up, with windows rolled down, exclaiming, "Hallowww, my darling!" (one of the many phrases that still ring in my ears today). My host family and I spent most of the car ride laughing at each other's accents, as they just couldn't fathom why my voice did not mimic the "American" ones they had become so accustomed to on TV.

As we traveled towards their home, we passed miles of beaches, mountains, and grasslands! Aesthetically, South Africa exceeded all possible expectations I had prepared myself for, possessing a type of beauty that overtakes your senses. I had never seen anything remotely comparable. It was as if everything the world has to offer had been crammed into one place and I assured myself that I would spend the next five months exploring it.

My first few days with the Bodley family flew by. We took trips to the beach, had dinner at the local market, hiked scenic routes, and settled in at night to snuggle up with a cup of coffee and a late movie (soon to become a nightly tradition). To be honest, when school started the following week, I was a bit reluctant, as my vacation-style life would have to come to an end.

What I wasn't prepared for was just how much my job at Oakhill School would open my eyes to the path I knew my career needed to take. I was working at a private, predominantly white, upper-class high school, but I quickly learned that my heart was elsewhere.

Every morning during my commute, we would pass miles of broken down townships and hundreds of African students standing along the street in attempts to hitch a ride to school. The country, despite its efforts, still remains painfully segregated--a notion many South African citizens refuse to recognize.

I spent several nights on the back porch discussing race, politics and equality with my host family. What I gathered from these conversations was simple, yet surprisingly profound: we all live in the same world, yet we understand it very differently.

Editorial Staff
Sharon Brennan
Julie Cleary
Mary Henderson
Martin Mills

104 Taylor Education Building Lexington, KY 40506-0001 859-257-1857 E-mail: fieldx@uky.edu http://education.uky.edu/OCP

Fleld Notes is published twice a year by the Office of Clinical Practices and School Partnerships.

Every day in South Africa my beliefs were challenged, my goals were reset, and my dreams were expanded; an awakening for which I have every member of my host family to thank. I was never a guest in their home but a very real member of their family.

Within a couple of weeks of my arrival, my host brother became my best friend: the one with whom I laughed, cried, and did generally everything. My host sister perfectly embodied a "real" sister: the one with whom you fight, make up, and share secrets. As for my host parents, I have them to thank for showing me that the world is as big or small as I choose to make it.



Haleigh gained new perspective on South Africa and life.

The American lifestyle requires a sense of urgency, immediate success, and direction for one's life. When I would speak of this "timeline" on which, at 23 years of age, I felt I was falling behind, they would both laugh and always ask the same question, "Why is it that you are in such a hurry?"

Four months later, I still find myself asking this same question: where is this authoritative clock that constantly hangs over our heads, reminding us that we must decide everything now? For years, I have spent countless hours stressing over this idea that I need to figure out who I am, what I want to do, and where I want to do it. What I learned in South Africa, is that I still have no idea...and that's okay.

When I left the States, I couldn't begin to fathom how long five months away from home would feel. What I found, however, is that home isn't a place at all, but a state of mind. My South African home may have looked different, my family a bit larger, and the beach (thankfully) closer; but, I was loved. And I loved them right back.

This sense of peace I found while living in South Africa assured me that I can make it in any part of the world. Although my eyes have been opened to many of the world's treasures, I could not help but notice all of its struggles and inequalities. I now know I want to devote my entire life to solving these kinds of problems.

If I had not taken that chance a year ago and believed in my ability to start over in a new place, I never would have discovered my strong independence, my ingrained desire for change, or my ability to just make it. It is because of my experience in South Africa, the wonderful family I gained, and the eye-opening job I held, that I have chosen to devote my life to the service of others, regardless of how far I may be called to do it.

In an attempt to live out this epiphany, I moved to Chicago upon my return, where I began working for an educational non-profit on the south side, partnering with urban high schools to reverse the dropout crisis that continues to plague the youth of Chicago.

Haleigh LeCompte instructs her pupils during her student teaching experience in South Africa.

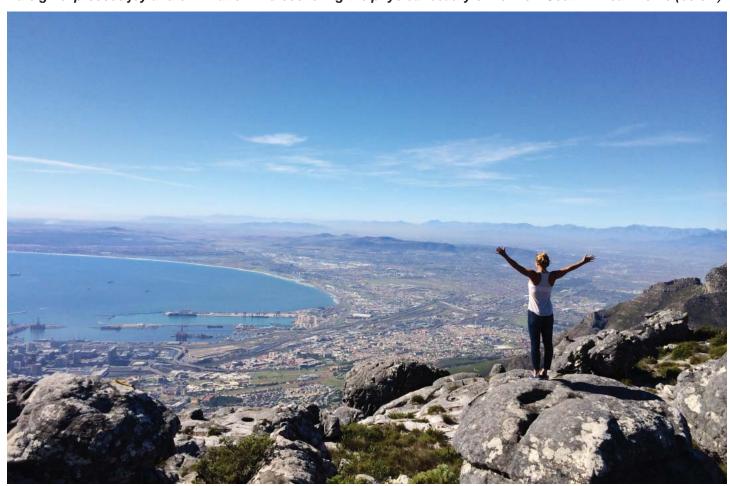


Following my year in Chicago, I will be dedicating the next two years of my life to serving in the Philippines as a member of the U.S. Peace Corps, a decision entirely inspired by my time in South Africa. This decision in no way fits into the "timeline" I had previously allotted for my life; but, I have never been more sure of its timing.

Last January, I left the States running; running from my fears, my problems, and my life's countless ambiguities. However, this time when I cross through airport security and stop to take in the movement around me, I'll know that I am no longer running from...I'm running to.



Haleigh expresses joy and exhiliration in discovering the physical beauty of her new South African home (below).



Collaborative Connection: Sharing Ideas

One way to sustain the collaborative connection between university and school-based partners is to share ideas about teaching and learning. In your experience, what works and doesn't work to promote quality teaching and foster student learning? What changes have you made; what challenges have you experienced that colleagues might find interesting or helpful?

Please send thoughts, suggestions, or concerns to mrhrab0@uky.edu. We welcome your contributions!

Cooperating and Resource Teacher **Tuition Waiver Program**

Senate Bill 77 stipulates that state universities will provide a tuition waiver for up to 6 credits to a cooperating teacher who supervises a student teacher for a full semester. Teachers supervising for only 8 weeks will be eligible for 3 credits. Resource teachers can also receive a tuition waiver for up to 6 credits for each KTIP intern supervision they complete.

To qualify you must:

- use your credits within one calendar year of completing the assignment,
- gain admission to the university and be a student in good standing,
- complete the tuition waiver form before you enroll each semester, AND
- submit the waiver form to the Associate Dean's office prior to the first day of classes for each semester of enrollment.

Visit http://education.uky.edu/ADeanRI/students/sb77-tuition-waiver for information and an application. If you have questions, please contact:

Michelle Traynor

Office of the Associate Dean for Research and Innovation 107 Taylor Education Building Lexington, KY 40506-0001 (859) 257-9795 traynor@uky.edu

Upcoming Events

January 5 University-Based

> Supervisors' meeting 1:00 p.m. in 122 TEB

January 6 Student Teacher

Orientation meetings Taylor Ed. Auditorium

January 7 First day of

student teaching*

January 19 Martin Luther King,

Jr. Day (holiday)

February 20 Last day to apply for

a May 2015 graduate degree (online in MyUK)

February 28 Last day to apply for

an August 2015 undergraduate

degree

(online in MyUK)

March 9 Dual placement

> students begin 2nd half placements*

March 25

KY Teachers 3:30pm - 6:00pm Network Career Fair

hosted at EKU

March 30-April 3 P-12 Spring Break

(in most districts)

May 8 End of Spring 2015

semester

June 20 Last day to apply for

an August 2015 graduate degree (online in MyUK)

*For most programs. Check with program coordinator for your specific start date.

University of Kentucky Office of Clinical Practices and School Partnerships 104 Taylor Education Building Lexington, KY 40506-0001

College of Education Faculty Provide Professional Learning Opportunities for International Educators

By Ellie Holliday and Lee Ann Jung COE Office of International School Partnerships



As educators in the United States, we may not realize our counterparts in other countries, who may have fewer resources or less experience, often struggle to develop professionally, earn higher degrees, and stay up to date with recommended practices.

This past summer, the Office of International School Partnerships (ISP) was created within the College of Education to connect international schools that have identified needs for professional learning with expertise in the College. The ISP mission is to build strategic partnerships between the College, international schools, and professional learning organizations worldwide, leading to mutually-beneficial experiences for all.

Starting in the fall semester of this year, 46 international educators from the Latin American region signed on to be a part of the first ISP cohort studying inclusive education. The program is being offered through a partnership with the Tri-Association, the premier education professional learning association in that region. Participants are funded by the Tri-Association and the U.S. Department of State. Dr. Lee Ann Jung organized group discussions online for several weeks before meeting face-to-face at the Tri-Association educators' conference in early October. There, she saw real examples of why educators from this region see such a need to learn more about how to include children with disabilities in the classroom. She was encouraged to find immediate outcomes of this program in the lives of children with disabilities.

"Two participants in the program described a little girl in their school who is experiencing selective mutism. This child is unable to speak at school, but does at home. Not understanding the psychological nature of selective mutism, many of her teachers have been lowering her grades because of lack of participation. The school administration wants to exit her from the school next year unless she begins to talk. As a result of the program, the two participants will be supporting the student in new ways and advocating for her to continue to be served by the school. This is just one of many stories we heard that week. I can't wait to see the ways this program changes the way people think about students with disabilities as people first, who deserve the same human rights as all students."

ISP is now working to develop a partnership with NESA (Near East South Asia Council for Overseas Schools) to identify areas where UK College of Education faculty can meet some of their identified areas for growth by working together to provide professional learning experiences, online coursework, and degree programs for teachers. ISP also hopes to supplement the international opportunities currently available to domestic UK students by identifying potential placements for clinical experience abroad with our partners.

You can find more information about the Office of International School Partnerships by visiting seeblue.com/isp. To discuss the activities of the office, contact Lee Ann Jung, Director of ISP: ljung@uky.edu. If you are interested in finding out more about education abroad opportunities for education majors, contact Assistant Director Ellie Holliday: eholliday@uky.edu.

Please Note: Office Name Change

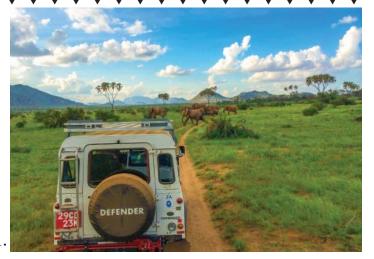
We have changed our office name from Field Experiences and School Collaboration (OFE) to Clinical Practices and School Partnerships (OCP) as a way to punctuate the point that clinical practices serve as the linchpin of our teacher education program. Be assured that our program remains field based, clinically focused, and globally-minded as we help our partners around the world *See Blue*.

Award-Winning Staff: Julie Cleary

We proudly announce that Julie Cleary, Academic Administrative Coordinator for the Office of Clinical Practices and School Partnerships (OCP), recently received the College of Education's Outstanding Staff Award. We are delighted that she received this well-deserved recognition and grateful for her continuous contributions to our partnership initiatives. Kudos and hooray!



Photos from the Field



1



