Letter From: THE EDITORS

This issue represents a new collaboration between the Education Administration master’s and the Urban Education doctoral programs. It is a year’s worth of updates and announcements from our faculty, students, and alumni. Thank you to four of our wonderful students for contributing pieces to this newsletter: Randice Sumner, Brendan McGrath, and Cynthia Massillon. There is much excitement in the air. Please enjoy reading about our programs and our people!

Sincerely, Francine Menashy, PhD
Mariette Ayala, MA

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At the start of this 2016-2017 academic year, The Urban Education, Leadership and Policy Studies program is now completely migrated to the newly designed PhD/EdD curriculum. Over the next few semesters, we expect that we will be able to launch the final few courses to round out the concentration areas in Administration and Leadership and Teaching, Learning and Leadership. As a program, we have maintained strong enrollments, this year welcoming 11 very talented students into the new cohort. We have also seen several powerful dissertations produced by our recent graduates who are poised to have an impact on K-12 education in their respective locations as well as the scholarly field of Urban Education more broadly. Our faculty and students continue to raise our scholarly profile locally, nationally and abroad by publishing in high quality journals, presenting in highly visible academic forums, and working as public intellectuals in community spaces and schools. In the months to come, we will be undergoing a faculty search to fill a vacancy and round out our faculty’s expertise. We will be collaborating with other programs and departments across UMass Boston to host a speaker series featuring world-renowned scholars of education, and we will be exploring ways to enhance the EdD track of the program in collaboration with the Educational Administration programs. The Urban Education program is gaining ground and visibility and it is a great time in the history of the program to be a student or faculty member.

Dr. Tricia Kress

First, I am pleased to assume the responsibilities of the new Graduate Program Director this year and will continue to serve as the Plenum representative at UCEA for UMAP Boston. Last year, we were thrilled about building two new district partnerships. The partnership with the five-district consortium of Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Revere and Winthrop resulted in a satellite program in educational administration at Revere High School, which now has 27 students enrolled. The partnership with Boston Public Schools also resulted in a satellite program with 36 students. In this case, there is a particular emphasis on recruiting and supporting educators of color, which has resulted in a cohort that is 83% non-white. In addition, the BPS partnership has spun off a new 3-course certificate program called Introduction to Educational Administration. Currently, there are 19 educators of color meeting in separate male and female mentoring programs, who are tackling introductory courses. We anticipate that these students will enter the Master’s program in the future.

We don’t want to overlook the international accelerated Master’s program in educational administration, which graduated 14 students in May 2016 and is currently serving 15 new students from China. Our international presence is growing. In addition to our Chinese students, we have one student from Korea, one from Saudi Arabia and one from Iran.

Finally, we are happy to announce a new partnership with the Perrone-Sizer Institute, which is part of the Center for Artistry & Scholarship in Education (CASE) under the direction of Dr. Linda Nathan right here in Dorchester. (Linda Nathan is the founder of the Boston Arts Academy and former founder/principal of the Fenway High School). Linda is offering a new 5-course certificate program in creative school leadership through UMB with 12 students, which will also serve to funnel candidates into our Master’s degree program. This year, with our expanded faculty and district partnerships, we plan to pursue full membership in the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA).

Dr. Catarina DaSilva
FACULTY UPDATES

Dr. Tricia Kress

In the 2015-2016 academic year, Dr. Kress was on parental and sabbatical leave. During this time, she presented her work at the American Educational Studies Association annual meeting and the Society of Professors of Education Annual meeting. She was also an invited presenter for USER-S (Urban Science Education Research Seminar) at the City of New York Graduate Center. Her sabbatical work included an examination of the educational leadership practice of Paulo Freire during his time as an administrator at the Social Services of Industry in Recife, Brazil. This research yielded implications for the relationship between critical pedagogy and education leadership. The work will be included in an upcoming collection edited by Peter McLaren and Suzanne Soohoo. This year, she is focusing her attention on coauthoring a book about critical education and social imagination which will be published by Sense Publishers.

Dr. Patricia Krueger-Henney

Dr. Krueger-Henney traveled to the 2016 AERA Conference in Washington, DC as a keynote speaker for the Graduate Student Forum to share with doctoral student’s strategies towards building engaged social justice scholarship. The special interest group (SIG) Critical Educators for Social Justice organizes The Graduate Student Forum every year as a pre-AERA conference event. Her other AERA panel presentation addressed an “Anti-Colonial Stance Towards Ethicalities in Doctoral Student-Advisor Relationships.” During the National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA) 2015 Annual Meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Dr. Krueger-Henney joined a panel of Indigenous Studies and Critical Ethnic Studies scholars to speak about “Young Women’s Educational Survivance and White Settler Colonialism in Education.” At the Eastern Sociological Society 2016 Annual Meeting in Boston, Dr. Krueger-Henney presented a paper on “Participatory Action Research and Embodied Social Listening to the Permanence of Anti-Black Racism.”

The highlight of her 2015-2016 conference season was joining Urban Education doctoral student Kimberly Frazier-Booth (cohort 2013) and colleague Dr. Tricia Kress on a panel to examine issues related to “Radically Listening to Radically Love: Toward Enactivism in Education & Educational Research.” The International Journal for Critical Pedagogy has dedicated a forthcoming special issue to publish the papers of all panelists.
A message from Dr. Leonard:

“I was happy to work this year with Ceronne Daly of the Boston Public Schools and Linda Nathan of the Center for Artistry and Scholarship in Education (CASE) on two new certificate programs, which will steer talented teacher leaders in the direction of school leadership. These certificate programs are now moving through the approval process on our campus.

Most of all, I am happy to step down as graduate program director for educational administration and to assist Dr. Catarina da Silva as she takes up the reins.”

Dr. Francine Menashy

Dr. Menashy recently completed a project funded by a fellowship with the National Academy of Education and the Spencer Foundation on the theme of international aid and organizational partnerships, focusing on the role of the private sector in education. She presented the findings from this research at conferences in Vancouver and Washington DC. Francine also completed an evaluation of the civil society organization the Global Campaign for Education, providing recommendations for their advocacy activities.

In her current work, Dr. Menashy is collaborating with Dr. Zeena Zakharia on a project studying the roles of private actors in the support of Syrian refugee education in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey, and she has been invited to present this research at a conference on refugee education in Stockholm, Sweden in November. For the 2015/2016 academic year, Francine served as interim Graduate Program Director for the Urban Education doctoral program. She wishes to thank the faculty members and students for their support and patience throughout the year.
Dr. Wenfan Yan

This past year, Dr. Yan has been working on grants to fund numerous projects in support of the growth of the department. Dr. Yan served as the principal investigator for the Teacher Leadership and Effective Teaching Grant. This $200,000 grant by the China Scholarship Council (CSC) supports a project that will fund Teacher Leadership and Effective Teaching Training for Chinese English High School Teachers. Dr. Yan is also serving as principal investigator for the China Municipal Government Grant. The supports The Strategic Plan and Implementation Program for Academic Program and Research Development in Hangzhou Normal University. Through the support of the Hangzhou municipal government, in China $450,000 will be issued. The last grant that Dr. Yan is the principal investigator is the Leadership Study Partnership Grant that funds the Collaborative Leadership Study: Leadership development programs and leadership research projects. It is a $200,000 donation funded by the Beijing No.2 Experimental Primary School, and the High School Affiliated with Renmin University of China.

Dr. Zeena Zakharia

Zeena Zakharia has been involved in research and professional service on issues related to the education of Syrian children and refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Over the past year, in collaboration with UNICEF and Save the Children, she has conducted training for the Syrian Ministry of Education and for the leadership of opposition groups who are delivering educational services in Syria through cross-border operations from Turkey. She has also conducted fieldwork in Lebanon to better understand the role, leadership, and policy work of local non-state actors in education. More recently, she has partnered with Francine Menashy to study private participation in the education of Syrian refugees at the global level. This work is funded by Education International, based in Brussels, and is expected to shed light on theoretical and practice-based debates on privatization and on education in emergencies. In May Prof. Zakharia celebrated the graduation of her advisees, Dr. Elizabeth Paulsen Tonogbanua and Dr. Naia Wilson Akubude, winner of the Urban Education Book Award.
Sumner Speaks on “Survivor’s Remorse”

Kandice Sumner (pictured above) of Cohort 2014 made it to the big stage as she shared her experience about going from a METCO student to a public school teacher. If you have not got the chance, you can see her talk at: https://www.ted.com/talks/kandice_sumner_how_america_s_public_schools_keep_kids_in_poverty. Read the details about how she took the TEDx stage below.

1. Tell me a bit about how your TEDx talk came about?

   A documentary was done on me about my METCO experience that followed me for a few years while I was in high school. Because of this, different METCO districts have viewings and then hold Q&A’s about it. One year, at a viewing at Brookline High, a Brookline parent (and TedTalk extraordinaire—Colin Stokes) was in the audience. He saw my presentation, tracked me down and asked if I’d be interested in doing a TedTalk about my experience. I told him no. At that time I was swamped with working, taking my PhD classes and generally trying to not go crazy so having one more thing on my plate was not of any interest to me. I made the mistake of telling my mother this, she all but cussed me out and told me that when God opens doors it’s our obligation to walk through them. So needless to say…my no turned to a yes.

2. How did you prepare for the talk? And did the Urban Education Ph.D. program have any influence on your talk, or how you formulated your story?

   As a TedTalk veteran, Colin Stokes (the man who recruited me) took me under his wing and gave me some conceptual help on how to set up a good talk. He gave me a general structure to work within and as he too was scheduled to give a TedTalk that same weekend we would send our drafts back and forth and give feedback to each other. Colin told me to think of myself as an expert on something that only I am an expert on because of my experiences and try to get people to see things in a new way. I figured the only thing I’m an expert on is being myself and loving my kids (students) and that love comes straight from my own experience as a student, so that felt like the only thing worth saying.
3. What made you choose "Survivor's Remorse" as the title for your talk?

I chose Survivor’s Remorse because that's truly how I feel and have always felt. Like, because of METCO there were certain things I was able to walk away from my educational experience with that other friends of mine were not able to, a certain college readiness, code-switching skills, social networking and academic stamina. I always felt like I walked away from a car-wreck unscathed while others have tragic stories of their urban public educational experience that I flat out believe is unjust. This however doesn’t mean that my METCO experience didn't bring with it its own traumas and tragedies (as my current doctoral research is uncovering), but academically the difference in the quality of education and educational opportunities should not be so stratified, especially along the lines of color.

4. In your talk (2:25), you spoke of "things you were not supposed to have" in comparison to the things your peers growing up and even your students still do not have today. What do you think this will look like for the next generation of students? Do you see an "education debt" in the future, too?

I do see an “education debt” in the future, especially if all we keep doing is recreating the wheel. We have yet to solve the problem at the root. It’s the same play, but different players and ever generation of policy-makers keeps iterating almost the same ideas over and over again but with a different name.

5. What was it like for you talking about disproportion, and segregation, while presenting to an audience that was largely segregated by race (See 1:36, 3:04, 6:05, 8:07)? How was your experience seeing the reactions of their faces?

I felt very out of place in the TedTalk space. I did not ever think that a TedTalk was something I could do. I’m not the type that sits and watches TedTalks on her spare-time. I thought it was only something important people like Chimimanda Ngozi Adichie do. I remember looking out at the audience and realizing the only people of color were my family and friends but oddly enough, this is the space that I am used to. So it was weird but weirdly comfortable at the same time. After the talk a lot of audience members (TedTalk aficionados) thanked me for having the courage to make things so plain, and address a prevalent issue so clearly. Another person even pointed out that we were physically in a school building (a suburban school) that represented the very problem I was addressing. Seeing their reaction gave me a certain validation because prior to that day I was nervous that people would be resistant and maybe even angry like ‘How dare you come in our space and insult us’, but in truth it felt more like ‘Thank you for saying things that we’re not comfortable enough to say’.

6. You made some final grounding points of ways to improve the educational system including: Removing big terms such as "The Achievement Gap, Income Gap, etc.) and simplifying it for what it is, not having school funding be decided by property taxes, and challenging our school committees to adopt an impoverished school and donating resources. If these steps are taken, do you think they will be sustainable?

The steps I mention in the talk were more so for the purposes of salient take-away. There several waves of practicing and TedTalk dress rehearsals and I was advised (especially considering the grandness of the topic) to give tangible take-aways, things that someone can do right now immediately. So in truth, I wouldn’t have recommended those ideas if I didn’t think they were sustainable but in the original draft my call-to-action was a change of mind, a “paradigm shift” as Dr. Patricia Krueger-Henney would say, and that’s the harder call-to-action that takes the longer investment, the deeper soul-searching and unraveling of the unjust institution that proliferates our colorized education system.

7. After you gave the talk, what was the reaction (from peers, colleagues, educators, students)?

After the talk, the most touching reaction was from my kids. Within the classroom, they know I love them but seeing it in TedTalk form on YouTube was like a public declaration to them of how much they mean and matter to me (and others) and they expressed to me how proud it made them feel to see me advocating for them. To see someone’s public love for them especially in a time when that’s the last thing they are feeling in public spaces was definitely a beautiful moment.
MEET DR. JILL BERG

Professional Experience in Education Administration

Professor Jill Harrison Berg is our newest faculty member. She also holds a B.A. from Harvard University, a M.Ed. from Lesley University, and an Ed.D. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. In her professional experience, she has worked in Massachusetts, Iowa, and Kentucky. In Massachusetts alone, she has worked with Boston Public school for nearly 15 years and taught elementary and middle school for 11 years.

Before joining us, she served as the Director of Leadership Support and Organizational Learning at Teachers21. Within this role, she directed the Massachusetts Turnaround Principals Network and the Boston Teacher Leadership Program. She did this by providing leadership coaching and consulting support for school leaders, district leaders, the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the National Research Council, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and State Department Partners. Her work was the result of professionals becoming more effective in their positions, making dramatic gains within a short amount of time, and maximizing their teacher expertise.

Research Interests and Publications

Professor Berg has published several articles on the topics of teacher leadership, school leadership, and teaching quality and leadership development. Dr. Berg is also the author of *Improving the Quality of Teaching through National Board Certification*. Apart from her publications, her research interests are closely tied to different education systems, teacher retention, and incredibly complex schools. She believes that no individual has everything they need to be successful and there is a need to coordinate the expertise of educators to make the most of what everybody should know.

Motivation for Teaching in Our Program

Dr. Berg has always had a commitment to public education. When first arriving to UMass Boston, she was impressed by the student diversity and the range of backgrounds and experiences. In her time her so far, she had grown excitement for teaching in their program and learning from her students. Dr. Berg began her career in the classroom, so she believes the best teachers are always learning.

First Impressions of UMass Boston

While the view of the water and the beautiful features of the campus first pulled her in, she was also inspired by the vision for the university to become a research university by 2025. Dr. Berg is motivated and ready to collaborate with colleagues to apt up the program.

Goal for the Next Five Years

Dr. Berg's aim is to take the program to the next level and meet the challenge that Dr. Motely, the Chancellor, has set for us. In her time here, she hopes to turn our leadership program to be the premier program in the Boston area. In doing so, she plans to expand and have an even greater impact that makes a difference in urban education.

A Fun Fact about Dr. Jill Berg

If Dr. Berg had a superpower, she would like to be able to see into the future and into the past. She has often curious about what is coming around the corner and would like to look into the past and stand in certain point in time and see what is was like.
ACHIEVEMENTS

By Students

Teresa Schwarz:
Awarded a 2016 David L Clark Fellowship (awarded by AERA Divisions A&L and UCEA) and the 2016 Thomas G. Feenan Award.

Naia Wilson Akubude:

Michelle Ryan:
Awarded the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award. More details can be found at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/recognition/milken.html

2017 AERA Meeting

The American Educational Research Association is getting ready for the 2017 Annual Meeting and you do not want to miss out.

We encourage you to participate in the 2017 AERA Annual Meeting to be held Thursday, April 27 – Monday, May 1 in San Antonio, TX. Vivian L. Gadsden, AERA President, Angela E. Arzubiaga, Annual Program Co-Chair, James Earl Davis, Annual Program Co-Chair, and the 2017 Program Committee are pleased to announce this year’s Annual Meeting Theme: "Knowledge to Action: Achieving the Promise of Equal Educational Opportunity."

The theme of the 2017 Annual Meeting is a call to examine the critical dimensions of educational opportunity and rigor in research as they pertain to the diversity of issues, populations, and contexts served in and by educational inquiry. These range from young children to their parents and families, from PreK-12 to postsecondary education and adult learning, from affluent districts to financially struggling schools, and from immigrant to low-income communities within urban and rural settings alike.

Find more information at: http://www.aera.net/Events-Meetings

Phone: (202) 238-3200
BEACONS IN BEIJING

This past year four Beacons from the Urban Education program joined Dr. Yan in his annual trip to Beijing. Here you will find some excerpts from their experience there. If you happen to see them, stop them and ask them about their amazing experiences.

Brendan McGrath

“A traveler needs to have an open mind and be able to not only see what it wonderful about a culture’s people and customs, but as well its challenges and frustrations. This trip to China has allowed for opportunities to show both.”

McGrath, Cohort 2015

“When traveling to a foreign country/culture it is easy to make judgments and form opinions about what works well or what does not. I have always thought one cannot make those judgments by only seeing the best of a place or its people. One cannot climb the Eiffel Tower and think all of France and its social political dynamics are resting in that eagle’s view. A traveler needs to have an open mind and be able to not only see what it wonderful about a culture’s people and customs, but as well its challenges and frustrations. This trip to China has allowed for opportunities to show both, albeit in roundabout ways at times, the good and the challenging in China’s education system.

When considering all of our observations of the educational system in China and the themes coming out of the sixteenth conference of “National New Education Experiment Seminar” centered on “Developing Good Habits”, one can observe some amazing things happening in China’s schools. While at the same time we can see new shifts coming from research and wanting to begin to sprout new trends within its school systems for their students. Some of those shifts are involving more Vygotsky pedagogy. In China, education supports the Republic and funnels to the student. The shifts I took away from meeting with researchers were how to reverse that by using the student’s individual needs to support the Republic. These researchers were looking to find a balance between the two. This is a major shift which is a polar opposite to the shifts happening in the US towards standardizing a system to meet the needs for all under one umbrella. “
Cynthia Massillon

“Day 3 of the conference was all about seeing in person the top schools that were implementing the new education reform. There were 5 schools that were open for visitors to walk through, and we were able to attend two. The first was a high school that had 7,000 students enrolled. It is known as one of the best high schools in the province. It has a residential portion where a smaller number on students live there, but overall most students commute. As we walked into the school, we were greeted by a band full of students in uniform marching in place. It was a sight to see! The only thing I could possibly think was ‘how did they get these students to do this with a smile on their face?’ It was a Sunday and it was very hot! I could not imagine convincing thousands of students to come on a non-school day to demonstrate to outsiders how great our school is. Of course, as educators we could convince a few, but there were so many students. It was something truly impressive. No student complained or had a frown on their face. As we continued to explore the school, we were greeted by more students who were excited to show what they were currently working on. The boys were outside playing basketball, soccer or practicing Kung Fu, while the girls were dancing. A bit problematic for me because I would be the girl that would not want to dance and play soccer. It did not seem there were a lot of choice.

After leaving the secondary school, we visited a primary school that was built by a person who once lived in the community. Once we made enough money to be well off, he had this school built and it was obvious that this school was one of the best before even stepping foot into it. It was extremely massive with multiple sections and very inviting with its multicolored buildings. I was already extremely happy because of all the bright colors—I can only imagine how children feel. Once in there, we were able to sit in on an English class that was very interactive and hands-on. The students all seemed to participate and it did not seem to be rote memorization like before. Although there were moments of teaching that seemed still very much teacher based, overall it seemed like a change has been made. I was extremely pleased to see that there was a garden that was being used to its full extent—food, and arts & craft material. Primary school students were using saws to make animals out of wood, while in high school in America we are afraid to give students scissors to cut construction paper. There is a level of trust and belief in their students, which is not always found in American schools.”

“There is a level of trust and belief in their students, which is not always found in American schools.”

Massillon, Cohort 2015
During the 2016 Summer Session, Dr. Krueger-Henney invited students to join her in a second round of the course “Dialogical Learning Communities and Praxis” (EdLdrs 754). Students on this photo (from left): Kandice Sumner (Cohort 2014), Tara Gully-Hightower (Cohort 2013), and Nakeya Watson (Cohort 2015)).

While tracing historicized meanings of “dialogue” and “dialogism” and the extent to which these inform spaces of teaching and learning throughout various postcolonial educational settings, each student also led a body-mind practice central to questioning the intentions and purposes of dialogue in education.

The Office of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Speaker Series (OAG Speaker Series) focuses on issues pertinent to and pressing for “urban education” and the sound instruction of students who have been historically marginalized.

The goal of the series is to serve as a window through which we can engage Boston Public Schools’ diverse stakeholders, brand Boston as a school district dedicated to progressive change, and begin a historic stride towards true equity and the elimination of opportunity and achievement gaps.

All Events are Free! Next ones from 6-8PM

- January 19, 2017
- March 9, 2017
On December 5, 2016, the Urban Education, Leadership, and Policy Studies program was proud to host Dr. Leigh Patel of Boston College at an evening colloquium. Joint-sponsored by the College of Education and Human Development, the Department of Leadership in Education, and the Department of Applied Linguistics, Dr. Patel spoke about her new book, *Decolonizing Educational Research: From Ownership to Answerability* (Routledge). She reflected on the ways in which education research embodies elements of settler colonialism, and how researchers and educators can and should steward learning and knowledge. The event was very well-attended with faculty and students from across the university, who participated in a lively conversation about her work and how it can inform the practice of educators in Boston and many other contexts.

"Belief in superior or inferior races; belief that some people who live across our frontiers or speak a different language from ourselves are the cause of all the trouble in the world, or that our own particular group or class or caste has a right to certain things which are denied to others...all fictions are generated by the imagination."

Leigh Patel, 2016

More Information and current news about Leigh Patel can be found at: http://www.lisapatel.org/
PUBLICATIONS


CONGRATS

Dr. Zeena Zakharia

In August, Dr. Zakharia and her husband Ali Barada welcomed a son Ziad on August 9, 2016, who along with his two-year-old “big” sister Naya, have been keeping them very busy. She is on parental leave until January 2017.

Dr. Tricia Kress

In July, Dr. Tricia Kress welcomed a son Patrick Joseph Igoe. A picture of Patrick in to the right. Please join us in welcoming Ziad and Patrick to the UMass Boston Urban Education Family!