By Barbara Ridener, Ph.D.

We have had so many accomplishments by students and faculty, where do I start? Well, you will have to read The DeTaiL to learn about just a few of them. Our faculty continue to excel and to be at the top of their fields, receiving well deserved recognition. Fortunately, they share their knowledge with their students, many of whom have their own accomplishments and recognition. Together, they all contribute to combined departmental success. To those future graduates, you should be proud of the experiences you are having and where you will be upon graduation. We are proud of you!

I can tell that the future of education will be positively changed and shaped by those people who are highlighted in this edition as well as all of those who make the Department of Teaching and Learning one of which I am proud. Have a great 2014! Make a difference!

Letter from the Chair

Seventeen final semester students in Florida Atlantic University (FAU)’s College of Education Department of Teaching and Learning (DTL) undergraduate and graduate programs during the fall 2013 and spring 2014 semesters taught in Palm Beach County and St. Lucie County as teachers of record.

This opportunity was made possible through the Florida Institute for the Advancement of Teaching (FIAT)’s Accelerated Induction into Teaching (AIT). A special form of student teaching, AIT provides students who apply and are approved by FIAT the opportunity to interview for positions with principals of participating school districts. Each candidate must meet strict criteria, including grade point average and recommendation. The AIT student teachers in their last semester of their undergraduate or graduate degree programs landed positions in a variety of grade levels and subject areas depending on their degree program.

The AIT student teachers who taught during the fall 2013 semester in the School District of Palm Beach County were: Jason Borton, grade 5, Heritage Elementary; Alysia Pavilonis, chemistry, Santaluces High School; Mackosha Sparkman, grade 5, Rosenwald Elementary; Kelly Green, grade 5, Highland Elementary; Jeni Hollister, grade 5, Forest Hill Elementary; Corinne Scanlon, grade 5, Highland Elementary; and Kayli Payne, grade 3, Highland Elementary.

Fall 2013 AIT student teachers for St. Lucie Public Schools were: Brittany LaChance, grade 3, Samuel S. Gaines Academy; Samantha Lamora, grade 1, Lawnwood Elementary; Floriberta Reynoso, grade 2, and more.

Kelly Green was a fall 2013 AIT student teacher who graduated FAU in December 2013. She is presently a fifth-grade teacher at Highland Elementary in SDPBC.

(Continued on page 2)
Dr. Barbara Ridener, Chair, Department of Teaching and Learning, talked about “Partnering for Systemic Transformation of Teacher Capacity: iTeach Partnerships” during the Fall 2013 Lunch & Learn Series coordinated by the Division of Research. The Lunch & Learn Series is an opportunity for faculty to “share, eat, enrich and network.” During the presentation, Dr. Ridener shared her reasons and experience in applying for the Florida Department of Education to host an iTeach Partnership.

AIT Student Teachers
(Continued from page 1)
Samuel S. Gaines Academy; Katie Srednaiwa, grade 1, Village Green Environmental Studies School; Megan Heissenberg, grade 4, Palm Pointe Educational Research School @Tradition; and Sarah Christensen-Sharpe, grade 4, Palm Pointe Educational Research School @Tradition.

AIT student teachers for the spring 2014 semester are: Richard Brown, Social Studies, Santaluces High School; Yanet Cabrera, Mathematics, Santaluces High School; and Jimeka Williams, grade 4, Pioneer Park Elementary in SDPBC. Lindsey Laury, Science, St. Lucie West K-8, is teaching in St. Lucie Public Schools.

All of the fall 2013 AIT student teachers graduated from FAU in December 2013 with bachelor's degrees in Elementary Education with the exception of Pavilonis, who received a B.S. in Chemistry Education. According to Jan Andrew-Rudin, University School Assistant Professor and FIAT Director, they all now hold teaching positions. The spring 2014 AIT student teachers are undergraduate Elementary Majors with the exception of undergraduate students Brown, Social Science Education, and Cabrera, Mathematics Education. Laury is a graduate student in the M.Ed. Curriculum & Instruction plus Certification: Biology program. She also was a DTL Graduate Assistant during the fall 2013 semester.

Interested students can apply for this program during the semester before their student teaching semester. For more information, visit http://www.coe.fau.edu/CentersAndPrograms/fiat/ait.aspx.

Dr. Bristor, Dr. Brown Speak at KDP Initiation

On Friday, Nov. 8, 2013, Dr. Valerie J. Bristor, Dean of Florida Atlantic University’s College of Education (COE) welcomed the Kappa Delta Pi (KDP) Rho Omega Chapter. Dr. Susannah Brown, Associate Professor, Teaching and Learning, was the keynote speaker. She spoke about the Kappa Delta Pi ideals and motto: Knowledge, Duty and Power.

During her address, Dr. Brown focused on one of KDP’s ideals: Toil, which is “the will to do the task that must be done to the best of your ability. If one life has been changed, TOIL has not been in vain,” she said. Dr. Brown also talked about KDP leadership positions.

The Banquet and Celebration Initiation was held on the Boca Raton Campus in the Live Oak Pavilion at 6:30 p.m. for KDP’s.

From left are KDP Treasurer Sharmaree Richard, undergraduate elementary education major; Dr. Susannah Brown, DTL Associate Professor; Janna Keply, undergraduate secondary biology education major; Dr. Valerie J. Bristor, COE Dean; and KDP Secretary Corinne Scanlon, undergraduate elementary education major and AIT student teacher during the fall 2013 semester.
Dr. Amirault, Dr. Visser Win a Top AECT Book Award

A book coedited by two Department of Teaching and Learning faculty members was named winner of the Association for Educational and Communications Technology (AECT)’s top award in October 2013. Dr. Ray Amirault, Assistant Professor, and Dr. Yusra Visser, Visiting Assistant Professor, served as editors for their award-winning second-edition book, Trends and Issues in Distance Education: International Perspectives, published in 2012 by IAP Press. Both Dr. Amirault and Dr. Visser also served as either author or co-author of specific chapters in the text. “The entire editorial team, led by Lya Visser [Learning Development Institute] and also with Michael Simonson (Nova Southeastern University), really put a tremendous amount of work into this project,” stated Dr. Amirault. “It’s great to see that the work is being recognized by such an important organization from within our field!” The book won the 2013 AECT Design and Development Outstanding Book Award, considered one of the most prestigious awards AECT gives within the field of instructional design. It is awarded to only one book per year demonstrating outstanding contribution to the field of instructional design and development. In addition, the book won 2nd place for the 2013 AECT IAP Distance Education Book Award, which is given to a book for its contribution in supporting distance education research and practice by describing important aspects of distance education and theory. The book includes contributions from 30 international scholars and presents a diversity of perspectives on how distance education meets learning and human development needs throughout the world.

Dr. Amirault and Dr. Visser teach a variety of graduate and undergraduate courses in instructional design and technological pedagogy for the Department of Teaching and Learning in the College of Education.

Dr. Kumar Earns STEM-Champion Award

On Oct. 8, 2013, Dr. David Devraj Kumar, Professor of Science Education in the Department of Teaching and Learning, was recognized as a STEM-Champion Award recipient during the STEM Expo 2013 in Branson, Mo., according to an Oct. 31, 2013 announcement made by Dr. Valerie J. Bristor, Dean of the College of Education.

Dr. Kumar was the recipient of this award at the college level bestowed by the International STEM Education Association.

The STEM-Champion Awards serve as a standard of excellence for individuals who promote integrated science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. To be named a STEM-Champion Award recipient is to join an elite group of educational innovators.

Dr. Kumar enjoys promoting STEM literacy among youngsters, and he is actively engaged in innovative research and development in nanoscale education integrating STEM disciplines.

In addition to the STEM-Champion Award, he has received numerous awards, including the Sir Ron Nyholm Prize (Lectureship and Medal) of the Royal Society of Chemistry, been invited to present highly regarded endowment lectures, and elected to scientific honor societies. Dr. Kumar is the only science educator ever to serve as the President of The American Institute of Chemists, and since 2012 appointed as the Editor-in-Chief of their refereed scientific journal, The Chemist.

Four DTL Students Recognized at University Honors Ceremony

Four students presently or recently in Department of Teaching and Learning undergraduate programs were honored during Florida Atlantic University (FAU)’s 2013 University Honors Ceremony on Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2013, at 3:00 p.m. in the Grand Palm Room in the Student Union Building on the Boca Raton Campus. They are Alexander L. Edmunds, Julissa Lopez, Alexi K. Rivera and Samantha L. Wilson. The awards ceremony was held for the purpose of honoring those students who have successfully completed the requirements of the University Honors Program.

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From left are University Honors Scholars in the Department of Teaching and Learning: Alexi Rivera, Alexander Edmunds and Julissa Lopez with Dr. Edward E. Pratt, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, and Dr. Valerie J. Bristor, Dean of the College of Education.

All four of these University Honors Scholars are in their junior year at FAU. Edmunds recently switched his major to commercial music from music education. Lopez is an elementary education major with a minor in Spanish. Rivera is a mathematics education major. Wilson is a social science education major.

The University Honors Program at the Boca Raton Campus has been designed to provide students with exceptional and rewarding learning opportunities. The University Honors Program is a two-year program that students begin in their freshman year. It requires students to maintain a 3.0 grade point average (GPA) in Honors courses and a cumulative 3.5 GPA at the conclusion of 60 hours of college credit and fulfill their community service requirement. Interested freshmen can visit: http://www.fau.edu/honorsboca/index.php to learn more.
On Thursday, Dec. 12, 2013 the Department of Teaching & Learning (DTL) students donned their caps and gowns to receive their diplomas during Florida Atlantic University’s College of Education commencement ceremony.

The pomp and circumstance took place in the Carole and Barry Kaye Performing Arts Auditorium on the Boca Raton campus at 1:00 p.m. A total of 168 DTL undergraduate students earned bachelor’s degrees: 157 in Elementary Education, one in Chemistry Education, four in English Education, one in Mathematics Education, four in Music Education and one in Social Science Education.

A total of 21 DTL graduate students earned Master’s in Education degrees in the following majors:

**M.Ed. Elementary Education**

Gulina I. Abdullazyanova
Ashley S. Fisher

**M.Ed. Social Foundations: Educational Psychology**

Catheline R. Andre
Kristina B. Jackson
Amanda T. Manors

**M.Ed. Social Foundations: Instructional Technology**

LaMar D. Calhoun
Erika J. Campbell
Robert A. Pollack
Michael G. Vassell

**M.Ed. Reading Education**

Megan S. Campion
Courtney M. Mitchell
Cassandra L. Pratt
Stephanie B. Seriani
Fatima S. Unnisa
Jessica L. Weinberg
Karen D. Wong

Awaiting to receive their bachelor’s degrees are (from left) Ryan Ross, Heather Carr, Brittany Tessier, Aruanda Yowell and Amanda Sykes. Ross earned the BAE Music Education. Carr, Yowell and Sykes earned the BAE Elementary Education. Tessier earned the B.A. Elementary Education.

Pamela G. Gale
Jamie B. Goldstein
Salim Miller
Emily B. Treiser
Andrea J. Unger

"The Department of Teaching & Learning undergraduate and graduate students participated in FAU’s College of Education commencement ceremony on Dec. 12, 2013.”

KDP Initiation

(Continued from page 2)

new members and their families. A service-oriented chapter, Rho Omega has more than 200 members, from pre-service educators to education professionals. During the event,

Undergraduate elementary education majors Amber Herbst-Laing (left) and Kaila Monsalve (center) were initiated into Kappa Delta Pi’s Rho Omega Chapter on Fri., Nov. 8, 2013, as Dr. Susannah Brown congratulated them.

54 COE students, mostly in programs offered by the Department of Teaching and Learning, were initiated into the chapter. COE undergraduate students must have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better and graduate students must have a GPA of 3.5 or better.

To learn more about the organization, contact KDP Co-Counselors Dr. Lori Dassa, Assistant Professor of Effective Teaching Practices, Teaching and Learning, or Dr. Traci Baxley, Associate Professor, Curriculum, Culture and Educational Inquiry, at ldassa@fau.edu or baxley@fau.edu, respectively.
Spotlight on M.Ed. Elementary Education plus Certification Alumnae

Urrutia Teaches 5th Grade at Parkridge Christian Academy

While Victoria Urrutia was an undergraduate student at Florida Atlantic University (FAU), she had been helping out at a preschool strictly on a volunteer basis. She enjoyed working with children. So she decided to take an elective course in her senior year, Introduction to the Teaching Profession (EDF 2005), which required 15 hours of field experience in a public school classroom setting. That’s when she knew she wanted to become a certified elementary school teacher.

Upon graduation from FAU in May 2009 with a bachelor’s in Public Communications and Criminal Justice, a double major, Urrutia chose to apply to the M.Ed. Elementary Education with ESOL plus Certification program, which contains a student teaching component and leads to eligibility for certification. She landed a graduate assistant position in freshman advising where she enjoyed working with FAU students, confirming she had chosen the right career for her.

The instructors, student teaching, and all of the observation hours were very valuable, noted Urrutia. “I liked that you get actual experience in the classroom. It helped me [learn] how to make accommodations for students with special needs [and] learn how to teach to [students, who have] different learning styles.”

Gianquitti Educates Gifted 2nd Graders in SDPBC

Serra Gianquitti decided family law was not for her after graduating from the University of Florida with a B.S. in Family Youth and Community Science in May 2006 and working for nonprofit organizations that served families and children. So when she saw Florida Atlantic University (FAU)’s Honor’s College in Jupiter, Fla., where her father retired, she inquired about a master’s degree that would prepare her to teach. She was sent to the Graduate College Admissions on the Boca Raton Campus, where she applied on the spot.

Gianquitti valued the hands-on experience provided by two of her field experiences that placed her in a kindergarten and 1st-grade classroom. She was also impressed by the informative instructors, especially those who taught how to teach children’s literature to elementary students. From 2006 until 2008, Gianquitti worked for her brother, who is a lawyer, during the day and took classes in the evening. In January 2008, she began substitute teaching in the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC).

During the spring 2009 semester, Gianquitti did her student teaching. Her clinical educator was “a really seasoned teacher experienced with the Reading and Writing Workshop,” noted Gianquitti. In May 2009, she earned the M.Ed. Elementary Education with ESOL plus Certification.

In August 2009, she landed an interim teaching position at Golden Grove Elementary, teaching 2nd- and 3rd-graders writing, science and social studies, to cover for a teacher who was on maternity leave during the school year.

The following year, she began teaching K-1 gifted students in a split classroom at Palm Beach Gardens Elementary, where she now teaches 2nd grade gifted students. She has taught there for a total of four years so far. She went back to FAU to take courses to add certification for gifted students.

“I still do reading activities that I learned from my courses [at FAU],” said Gianquitti, including “literature circles and reading journals.” Her clinical education teacher from FAU taught her how to implement differentiated instruction during her student teaching, making sure lesson plans included instructions to reach all learners. Gianquitti’s greatest inspiration though is her mother, who is a seasoned middle school language arts teacher in SDPBC, holds two master’s degrees in education and earned National Board Certification.

Volume 3, Issue 2
DTL Students Participate in “Art has Character” Exhibit

Dr. Susannah Brown (left) and Vera Ripp Hirschhorn, M.S., Educational Consultant and author of the book, “Teens are Heroes Tool Challenges, Choices and Character,” show some of the artwork on display during the “Art has Character” Exhibit, held from Nov. 18, 2013 through Nov. 27, 2013 in the College of Nursing Atrium Gallery. The exhibit includes images created by ARE 4313 (Art: Elementary School) students that illustrate how visual arts supports positive interaction for the betterment of others.

Graduate Assistants Alyssa L. Blankenship (left) and Jana M. Chusid (right) join the Department of Teaching and Learning.

DTL Welcomes New Graduate Assistants for Spring 2014

Florida Atlantic University (FAU) graduate students Alyssa L. Blankenship and Jana M. Chusid joined the Department of Teaching and Learning as Graduate Assistants on Jan. 6, 2014.

Blankenship is in the M.Ed. Elementary with ESOL plus Certification program. Chusid is in the M.Ed. Counselor Education: School Counselor program. Both of them graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in psychology on Dec. 13, 2013 from FAU’s C.E. Schmidt College of Science and began their graduate studies in January 2014. Blankenship also has a minor in Sociology.

Prior to transferring to FAU, Blankenship was dually enrolled in Sinclair Community College in Huber Heights, OH, from September 2008 to April 2010. She presently is a Teaching Assistant at Spanish River Christian School in Boca Raton, Fl., providing supervision and care of 21 kindergarteners. From December 2011 to August 2013, Blankenship assisted with office work as a receptionist at Bnai Torah Congregation in Boca Raton, Fl.

Blankenship has also done extensive volunteer work. She presently volunteers in the church nursery coordinating volunteer hours and scheduling the care of infants during church services since October 2011. From August 2011 to April 2012 she served as a Youth Leader for River Pals Ministry, Boca Raton, Fl. In July 2011 she led character education for the mission trip at Refugee Summer Camp in Clarkston, GA, and, from July 2009 to June 2010, she was the Youth Leader for middle to high school girls in Dayton, OH.

Blankenship is a member of the Student Alumni Association (SAA) at FAU, the Psychology Club of FAU, Broward Psychological Association, Phi Eta Sigma and the National Society of Collegiate Scholars.

Chusid earned an A.A. degree in December 2010 while a student at FAU. She presently substitute teaches at Renaissance Charter of Coral Springs and Renaissance Charter at University. Chusid’s professional experience also includes working as a Teller at Citibank from August 2010 to December 2013, and as an After School Counselor at Waters Edge Elementary School from January 2012 to May 2012, both in Boca Raton, Fl. She also was a Customer Service Specialist at Aeropostale in Coral Springs, Fl.

Chusid has First Aid/CPR/AED certification and is a board member of My Act of Random Kindness (M.A.R.K.), a non-profit organization that assists underprivileged children in south Florida. Her extracurricular activities include serving at the Weppner Center for Civic Engagement and Service: Summer Reading Program and the Achievement Centers for Children and Families in 2013. Chusid helped her church staff distribute food boxes to assist families in need in 2009. In the same year, she volunteered at FAU’s Office of Students with Disabilities. In 2007, she was a Summer Camp Classroom Assistant at Temple Beth Orr.
Patterson Scholarship Awarded to 16 Students

The Department of Teaching and Learning in conjunction with Florida Atlantic University’s College of Education announced the James Patterson Teacher Education Scholarship Recipients for the 2014-2015 academic year. A total of 16 undergraduate students have been selected to participate in the program.

These students will benefit from the tutelage of master Reading educators from the School District of Palm Beach County. They will also have an opportunity to meet James Patterson, author and donor of the scholarship, and present their research and ideas for improving literacy in Palm Beach County schools.

Seven of the scholarships were awarded for a second academic school year. All of them are senior undergraduate students majoring in Elementary Education. The second-year Patterson scholars are: Michelle Breiding, Melanie Brown, Patricia Fee, Rebekah Houseal, Melodie Pinsonnault, Brandi Radaker and Hope Wilkerson.

The other nine scholarships were awarded for the first time to junior undergraduate students. The first-year Patterson scholars are: Iphigenie Clairvil, Erica Elsesser, Emily Lackey, Kristen Long, Kelly Motley, Ricardo Vazquez, Victoria Velazquez, Heather Rabina and Sasha Toledo. They are all Elementary Education majors except for Vazquez, who is an English Education major.

The scholarships are awarded to outstanding undergraduate DTL students who desire to improve children’s literacy.

COE to Celebrate 50th Anniversary in October

Alumni and current students of Florida Atlantic University’s College of Education (COE) are invited to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the COE. The exciting events will take place throughout the week of Oct. 11-16, 2014 on the Boca Raton Campus, including the Education Building (pictured at right), ED-47. Keep checking the COE website, www.coe.fau.edu, for more details. Be sure to mark your calendar!

DTL GA to Participate in Nature Education Conference in WPB

On Monday, February 17, 2014, Brenda Boddiger will be a co-presenter at the Roots of Nature: A Friedman Commission for Jewish Education Early Childhood Nature Education Conference from 8:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Arthur I Meyer Jewish Academy. The academy is located at 3261 N. Military Trail, West Palm Beach, FL.

Boddiger is a Graduate Assistant in the Department of Teaching and Learning (DTL) and a graduate student in the M.Ed. Environmental Education program offered by DTL at Florida Atlantic University’s College of Education. She is also a biologist with Ecological Associates, Inc., with experience in sea turtle nest monitoring and various kinds of field study.

She will be presenting along with Dr. Yash Bhagwanji, Associate Professor, Curriculum, Culture and Educational Inquiry in Florida Atlantic University’s College of Education. The title of the presentation is “Learning and Wondering in the Natural Outdoors—Letting Loose, Getting Dirty and Teaching Science!”

This session will offer hands-on, playful tools to help teachers connect their students to natural educational experiences outdoors. Participants will learn and experience techniques through all of their senses outdoors and be prepared to find exciting new ways to teach their students!

The conference sponsor will be the Jack and Harriet Rosenfeld Foundation Program in Jewish Education, University of Miami. The conference will be hosted by the Lorraine and Jack N. Friedman Commission for Jewish Education of the Palm Beaches, a Partner Agency of the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County. For more information call 561-640-0700 or visit www.cjepb.org.
M.Ed. Elementary Education

The master’s degree in Elementary Education provides students with the opportunity to update their skills, collaborate with other educators, as well as become informed of changes in the school system and in the field of education. This program is designed for practicing educators who are already certified (emergency or professional).

The master’s degree in Elementary Education with ESOL plus Certification will prepare students who plan to become elementary school teachers in grades K-6. This program contains a student teaching component and leads to eligibility for Florida Professional Certification. DOE & NCATE approved.

Why is it important to meet with my advisor before completing the Electronic Plan of Study?
Graduate students who complete their Electronic Plan of Study prior to discussing it with their advisor will not have their Plan of Study approved. It is important to meet with your advisor first to ensure courses are taken in the proper sequence and that special instructions are followed.

When is the deadline for filing the Plan of Study?
You must file your Plan of Study before completing half of your coursework for your master’s degree. It is required by the Graduate College.

What if I change courses after filing my Electronic Plan of Study?
You will need to meet with your advisor again and file form 9, Revision to Existing Plan of Study, only one time. You can find the form on the Graduate College website: http://www.fau.edu/graduate/currentstudents/graduateforms/index.php. If you are taking the same courses listed in your Plan of Study and merely changing the semester in which you are taking those courses, then form 9 is not required.