

# Dean's Weekly Newsletter — Archive

## (May 16, 2025 – January 19, 2024)

College of Education, University of Wyoming

Last updated: September 9, 2025

### Spring 2025

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**May 16, 2025**

Dear colleagues,

Congratulations on completing another academic year! I know everyone has put in tremendous effort. Our students continue to aim high, becoming skilled educators, counselors, leaders, and researchers. Our faculty work tirelessly as mentors and scholars, fostering curiosity and growth. I believe our work this year has made a meaningful difference.

As we look ahead, I am excited to spend the summer planning and preparing for an even more productive and impactful fall semester. Since this will be my final weekly update until the new academic year, I am pleased to use this opportunity to highlight the many achievements and honors earned by our students and colleagues across the College of Education in the final of the semester.

**President's Commencement Dinner:** Last night, at the President's Commencement Dinner, Ling Zhang and Clare Gunshenan were recognized for their excellent contributions to the university and made us proud of the College of Education. Clare was awarded the Unsung Hero award for her positive attitude and helpfulness to those around her in the Science and Mathematics Teaching Center. Ling, Assistant Professor in Special Education, was awarded the Presidential Scholarly Achievement Award for Early-Career Faculty, and she is deserving of this honor for her fascinating research on how AI can assist Special Education teachers.

**Outstanding Graduates in Secondary Social Studies:** I am also excited to share that two of our exceptional Secondary Social Studies majors, Jessica Petri and Sophia Destephano, have been recognized as Outstanding Graduates by faculty outside of the College of Education. This remarkable honor is a testament to their hard work, dedication, and academic excellence. Congratulations, and excellent work!

**Todd Reynolds and Mia Williams Selected for UW Faculty Leadership Institute:** Todd Reynolds and Mia Williams have been selected for the inaugural cohort of the University of Wyoming Faculty Leadership Institute. This prestigious program brings together faculty members from across the university to develop their leadership skills and advance their impact on campus. This initiative is especially meaningful for the College of Education, as it was a key project Barbara Hickman worked on during her time as a Presidential Fellow. Learn more about the Faculty Leadership Institute and the achievements of the inaugural cohort

here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/news/2025/05/uw-faculty-leadership-institute-selects-inaugural-cohort.html>

Congratulations to Todd and Mia and many thanks to Barbara for her contributions!

**FCCLA Award to College of Education:** Colby Gull, Managing Director of the Trustees Education Initiative (TEI) and Director of the Wyoming School-University Partnership, has been awarded the National Honorary Member Award from Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). This prestigious national recognition highlights Colby's exceptional leadership, service, and advocacy, which have made a significant impact on students and educators nationwide. Congratulations, Colby, on this remarkable achievement!

Finally, the recipients for the remainder of our internal College of Education awards have been finalized. These awards recognize both our outstanding students and faculty:

- **John P. "Jack" Ellbogen Dean's Fund Student Award Program for Research/Travel (\$1,000 each)**
- Michael Bostick, PhD in Curriculum and Instruction, concentration in Mathematics Education
- Ryan Reichert, Master's student in Curriculum and Instruction
- **John P. "Jack" Ellbogen Dean's Fund Student Award Program for First Year Teachers (\$1,000 each)**
- Bailey Lacovetto, primary agriculture instructor at Soroco Middle/High School
- Marisa Jones, teaching first year in Washakie County School District 1 for the 2025-2026 school year
- **Mary Garland Early Career Fellowship (\$10,000 each)**
- Anne Perry
- Ling Zhang
- Miriam Sanders
- **Patricia McClurg Education Faculty Fellowship (\$7,000)**
- Mark Perkins

Bravo to these wonderful individuals, and I look forward to seeing their future work and success with the support of these awards.

**Mortar Board Awards:** Two of our outstanding College of Education faculty and staff have been recognized with prestigious Mortar Board honors. Levi Moore, Academic Advising Manager in the Education Student Success Center, has received the Mortar Board "Tip of the Cap" Award, recognizing his exceptional commitment to supporting students and their success. Dr. Tiffany Hunt has been honored with the Mortar Board Top Prof Award, celebrating her excellence in teaching, mentorship, and dedication to student learning. Congratulations to both Levi and Dr. Hunt for these well-deserved recognitions.

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It is truly inspiring to see the remarkable achievements and well-deserved honors earned by our students, faculty, and staff this year. Their dedication, talent, and perseverance reflect the best of the College of Education, and I hope you all share my sense of pride in these accomplishments. Hard work truly does pay off.

As we transition into summer, please note that we will pause these weekly updates until the start of the fall semester. Regular updates will resume on Friday, August 22, 2025.

I wish each of you a restful, productive, and rejuvenating summer. Thank you for your continued commitment to excellence. I look forward to reconnecting in the fall for another outstanding academic year.

Jenna

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## **May 9, 2025**

Dear colleagues,

Classes are wrapping up, and there are manifold ceremonies and celebrations across the university to commemorate excellence, including here at the College of Education. While everyone is still busy, I appreciate everyone's time attending these various events to recognize our progress toward the mutual success of each school, the College, and the University at large. The time is ripe to take education in Wyoming to the next stage through well-trained teachers and counselors, high-caliber leaders and administrators, and research-informed tools and best practices. My commitment to supporting the exceptional work of our faculty, staff, and students is more resolute than ever as we strive to elevate education in Wyoming to new heights.

**Ellbogen Excellence Ceremony:** On Wednesday evening, the College of Education hosted its inaugural Ellbogen Excellence Ceremony in the Union Central Ballroom. This event celebrated the transformative impact of the John P. Ellbogen Foundation, who has supported every aspect of our college, from early-career faculty and innovative staff to the John P. Ellbogen Professor of Early Childhood Education and my own deanship. These are just a few examples of how the Ellbogen Foundation advances educational development and research, benefiting our students and the broader Wyoming community. We thank everyone who attended and look forward to hosting this event again.

**College Meeting 2025:** During the final College of Education meeting of spring 2025 on Monday, five faculty members who were promoted to associate professor with tenure were celebrated. Please join me in congratulating William Cain, Jonathan Carrier, Robert Maddox, Mark Perkins, and Mia Williams on this significant achievement. I look forward to celebrating their success at the university-wide recognition event this Fall.

**College Awards 2025:** Recipients of the annual College Awards were also announced. Here are this year's winners:

- Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award for Significant Accomplishments: Allyson Fertig
- Outstanding Graduate Student Award for Significant Accomplishments: Mary Alice Aichele
- Faculty Award for Outstanding Teaching: Tiffany Hunt
- Faculty Award for Outstanding Research and Scholarship: Jonathan Carrier
- Faculty/Staff Award for Service to the Educational Profession: Sarah Rundall

- Faculty/Staff Award for Outstanding Advising: Matt Shelby
- Staff Award for Outstanding Service to the College: Jake Orr
- Award for Outstanding Contributions Toward Improving the Climate of the College: Alex Rickert

Congratulations to these remarkable members of the College for their important work.

**PIE Awards:** Joe Schroer and Joe Russo were also recognized again this year with PIE awards (Promoting Intellectual Engagement). These awards recognize and honor instructors who inspire excitement, inquiry, and autonomy in first-year courses. I am so proud of these brilliant teachers and, on behalf of our students, thank them for their pedagogical excellence.

**Out of Darkness Walk:** Margaret Hudson was also celebrated for successfully coordinating another Out of Darkness Walk for suicide prevention. Her hard work extends beyond the college and truly makes a difference in the lives of students, staff, and faculty. Thank you, Margaret.

**Incoming Faculty:** As I mentioned in my updates a few weeks ago, we also took a moment to cheer for incoming faculty members: JP Han, Jeffrey Anderson, Tracy Spies, and Lucas Dow. I look forward to welcoming these brilliant minds to our College next fall.

**New Staff:** We also applauded Charli Yarchin, who has been at the helm of our Student Success Center as their new Office Associate since earlier in the semester. We appreciate her critical work for the College and offer our support and encouragement anytime.

**Departing Faculty:** We also took a moment to say goodbye to departing faculty member, Rod Thompson, and staff member, Elizabeth McMahan. We appreciate their work for the College and wish them the very best in their next chapters.

**WSUP Presentation:** After that, principals from Rock River School and Whiting High School, Stacie Anfinson and Malinda Garcia, presented alongside two students from each school about a recent "Voices from the Field" event they and their students co-coordinated. It was a learning experience for everyone, and students successfully coordinated logistics and presenters for the event. Through this work, they gained on-the-job skills for event planning and communications, and thought differently about their future careers. Thanks to the Wyoming School-University Partnership for their support of collaborative events like these across Wyoming. They are essential to providing new and fruitful educational opportunities to Wyoming students.

**Daniels Fund Ethics Fellow:** William Cain was recognized as a Daniels Fund Ethics Fellow and is attending the Presidential Luncheon for Daniels Fund Ethics Fellows. His fellowship work has focused on developing ethical frameworks for LDT practitioners working with emerging AI systems and a companion framework for AI prompt engineering—important initiatives that will enhance our understanding of generative AI's ethical and practical implications. I appreciate the efforts of our faculty to continue researching new technologies and the role they should play in education.

**Upcoming Professional Learning Opportunities in August:** Looking ahead, I am excited to share three major professional learning events taking place in Laramie during the first week of August. Each event highlights strong partnerships with the University of Wyoming College of Education, the Wyoming Department of Education, the Wyoming School Boards Association, and other statewide organizations:

- **TeacherCon25 (August 4-5, Gateway Center, University of Wyoming, Laramie)**  
Registration: <https://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/conferences/teachercon25/>  
TeacherCon25, Wyoming's inaugural statewide educator conference, invites educators to honor our past, examine our present, and imagine our future in celebration of America's upcoming 250th birthday.
- **307 Principal Leadership Annual Conference (August 5-6, Laramie)**  
Registration: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfshjKITgdyrdZSnmEULf\\_E9JdYpP8HM8SOHHffnN8GB6DUVA/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfshjKITgdyrdZSnmEULf_E9JdYpP8HM8SOHHffnN8GB6DUVA/viewform)  
This free conference is designed for Wyoming principals, assistant principals, deans of students, and district-level administrators, with sessions on coaching, data analysis, leadership, and more.
- **Education Law and Leadership Conference (August 7-8, Laramie)**  
This event will provide school board members, superintendents, principals, and other school leaders an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the legal landscape of education. Registration details will be available soon.

**Today — Academic Poster Session:** Last, please join us today, May 9, from 9:00 to 9:50 AM in the Education Annex Commons for the EDST 2250 Academic Poster Session. Our students will be presenting their research on a wide range of topics, including working memory, sleep and learning, moral development, and more. This is an excellent opportunity to see their hard work and engage with emerging ideas in education. We hope to see you there!

With that, I wish everyone a great weekend and finals week. I hope everyone makes the most of this beautiful season in Laramie.

Jenna

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## May 2, 2025

Dear colleagues,

I wish everyone a happy May as we await warmer weather (with the occasional snowstorm, of course!)

End-of-year celebrations and study events are being held across campus as students and instructors busily prepare for the conclusion of the spring semester. Floral scents are beginning to waft through the air as students pitch hammocks and lounge on Prexy's Pasture. Here in the college, we continue to work hard and strive for excellence. With this in mind, here are my updates for the week:

**Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps Capstone Event:** A special thanks to Alison Mercier and Leslie Cook for organizing a successful Wyoming RTC Capstone Fair. The Year 2 and 3 cohorts' poster presentations showcased powerful research, creative projects, and firsthand experiences in rural education across Wyoming. Rural schools are the heart of their communities, and the RTC program plays a vital role in preparing educators who are committed to making a lasting impact. These future teachers are not only gaining valuable experience, but they are embracing the opportunity to lead, inspire, and serve in places where their work matters most. Their efforts are not only important, but truly transformational.

**Spring College of Education Advocacy Board Meeting:** Today, we are holding our Spring College of Education Advocacy Board Meeting. This dedicated group of statewide ambassadors plays a vital role in promoting engagement, advocacy, and constructive input for the benefit of the College of Education. Comprised of leaders from education, public service, and industry—including current and former superintendents, policymakers, and UW alumni—the Advocacy Board collaborates closely with the College to advance our mission and initiatives. Please join me in expressing my deepest gratitude to our board members for their strong support and advocacy. To learn more about the Advocacy Board and its members, please visit: <https://www.uwyo.edu/education/alumni-friends/advocacy-board.html>

**TRKE Showcases – May 2 and May 10:** Martha Inouye and Clare Gunshenan will host the closing Showcases for the second Teacher Research Knowledge Exchange (TRKE) cohort on Zoom: Friday, May 2 (4:30–6:00 PM) and Saturday, May 10 (9:00–11:30 AM). TRKE teachers, non-formal educators, and researchers will present their work from the past year. View the flyer for presenter details and registration links:

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAGgCAf9a1A/7-4XAJHkiiWmj3jPlg871Q/view?utm\\_content=DAGgCAf9a1A&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=uniquelinks&utlId=hf03acf1810](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGgCAf9a1A/7-4XAJHkiiWmj3jPlg871Q/view?utm_content=DAGgCAf9a1A&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniquelinks&utlId=hf03acf1810)

**Exploring GenAI in Teacher Ed – Featuring Ling Zhang!** The latest *Journal of Teacher Education* special issue is all about GenAI and its role in educator preparation—and we're thrilled to share that Dr. Ling Zhang co-authored one of the featured articles! Her piece, "Designing GenAI Tools for Personalized Learning Implementation," dives into the potential of multi-agent systems to personalize learning experiences for future classrooms. Her article is a timely, forward-thinking contribution that shows how the College of Education is working hard to shape the future of education tech. Check it out here: <https://doi.org/10.1177/00224871251325109>

**Events Next Week:** Looking at next week, I encourage everyone to attend the final College of Education meeting on Monday from 12-1 PM in the West Union Ballroom. It is intended to be a celebratory event during which we will congratulate faculty members who recently went up for tenure and promotion, recipients of internal college awards and grants, and we will conclude with a presentation from members and friends of the Wyoming School-University Partnership. Did we mention there will be cake?

**Ellbogen Excellence Ceremony:** We are excited to host the inaugural Ellbogen Excellence Ceremony on Wednesday, May 7, from 5:00 to 6:00 PM. This evening reception will feature hors d'oeuvres and offer a platform for faculty and staff to showcase their transformative projects made possible by Ellbogen Foundation support. The event will celebrate the innovative spirit and commitment to educational excellence that these projects represent. We are deeply grateful to the Ellbogen Foundation for their generous and ongoing partnership in advancing the mission of our College.

As we head into the final stretch of the semester, I want to thank each of you for your dedication, thoughtfulness, and hard work. These final weeks are always full of both intensity and celebration: a fitting culmination to all we have achieved together. Whether you are mentoring students through their final projects, leading transformative research, or planning for summer and fall, please know that your efforts are valued and that they reflect the very best of our College. I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming events and finishing the semester strong and together.

Have a wonderful weekend!  
Jenna

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## April 25, 2025

Dear colleagues,

As we close out April and look ahead to the end of the semester, here are a few highlights, opportunities, and celebrations from across the College and our partners:

**Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps Event:** The Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps hosted its third annual STEM Night last week at Rock River School, partnering with Wyoming Ag in the Classroom to lead hands-on, place-based activities for K–6 students. Activities included designing wildlife crossings, learning about local pollinators, and addressing invasive species. This event reflects the creativity and enthusiasm of future educators who are excited to teach in Wyoming’s rural schools and to make STEM learning locally relevant and engaging.

**Technology Education Public Event:** PokeBot V7.01, a public showcase of student-led technology projects, will be held Tuesday, April 29, from 7:00–9:00 p.m. at the Make.IT Makerspace in the Information Technology Building. Among the featured presenters is Olivia Buss, a College of Education junior majoring in Social Studies Education, who will share her project, “Crochet: The 3-D Printing No Machine Can Do.” The event includes additional demonstrations from students in robotics, engineering, and anthropology, and is free and open to the public with registration available for reminders: <https://uwyo.libcal.com/event/13999992>

**College of Education at the 2025 AERA:** College of Education faculty and graduate students shared a wide range of research at the 2025 AERA Annual Meeting in Denver, Colorado. This year’s presentations highlight the depth and variety of scholarship happening across our programs. Here is a impressive selection of presentations:

- *Communities of productivity: Early career academics’ experiences within an academic writing program* — Anne Perry, Margaret Hudson, Mia Williams, Jonathan Carrier, Alison Mercier, and Paul Maddox
- *Sustaining teachers’ learning to teach NGSS-aligned science and engineering: Teachers’ experiences with modest supports* — Martha Inouye
- *Native American voices: Contextually appropriate meaningful education for Indigenous learners* — John Kambutu and Lydia Nganga
- *Concept-focused and procedure-focused instruction on algebra performance of Grade 9 students* — Jihyun Lee
- *The issues of Midwestern and Western superintendents in the United States: The voice of superintendents* — Courtney McKim



- *Identity play in horizon-expanding spaces through critical place-based learning for middle school youth* — Alison Mercier
- *Rural teaching capital: Extending professional capital to rural contexts* — Alison Mercier and Bolaji Akorede
- *Enhancing preservice teachers' mathematical creativity via STEM project-based learning: A mixed methods study* — Fay Quiroz and Miriam Sanders
- *STEM project-based learning in the context of mathematical creativity* — Fay Quiroz and Miriam Sanders
- *Mathematics and science achievement in Texas urban schools: A multilevel multinomial logistic regression analysis* — Miriam Sanders
- *Problem-posing as a means for developing preservice teachers' mathematical creativity* — Miriam Sanders
- *Linguistic diversity in a multilingual state: Preservice teachers' preparedness for working with multilingual learners* — Miriam Sanders
- *Prototyping a multi-agent system to enhance AI-human collaboration IEP development* — Ling Zhang
- *A policy analysis of personalization, individualization, and differentiation for students with disabilities* — Ling Zhang
- *Designing artificial intelligence for students with disabilities: Theoretical considerations for promoting inclusion and equity* — Ling Zhang
- *A comprehensive taxonomy of personalized learning: Integrating research, policy, and practice frameworks* — Ling Zhang

This strong showing reflects the thoughtful, diverse, and impactful research being developed across the College of Education. Excellent work!

**ECTL Seeking Faculty Fellows:** The Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning (ECTL), in partnership with the Graduate School, is seeking faculty fellows to lead required learning communities for graduate teaching assistants beginning in the 2025–2026 academic year. Fellows will facilitate six 90-minute sessions per semester for cohorts of 10–15 GTAs, focusing on best practices in teaching and learning. Applicants must have at least five years of teaching experience and a strong grounding in pedagogy. Stipend: \$1,000 per semester. Applications are due May 9. More information here: <https://forms.office.com/r/QQCDptsAuA> (UWyo login required).

**Yoga in the Classroom:** Joe Schroer, a faculty in the School of Teacher Education, recently kicked off a class discussion on physical activity and the brain with an experiential yoga session in the Half Acre studio—connecting theory to practice through movement and reflection. His students in EDST 2250 will share their own research projects during a poster session on Friday, May 9, from 9:00–9:50 AM in the Education Annex common area. Topics include working memory, sleep and learning, moral development, and more. Faculty and staff are welcome to stop by and support the presentations.

**New WSUP Newsletter:** The Wyoming School-University Partnership (WSUP) shared a number of spring updates, including highlights from the Voices in the Field event in Albany County, where Rock River School hosted 180 students for a student-led day of learning and connection. WSUP also launched its first Wyoming Classroom Connections Tour, giving College of Education students a chance to visit schools across Goshen 1, Laramie 2, Platte 1, and Platte 2. Additional updates include the Goshen County Career Fair, the announcement of



Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps Cohort 4, and opportunities to apply for the Ellbogen First Year Teaching Awards and join the 307 Principal Leadership Academy Cohort 3. More details, including upcoming PD events like TeacherCon 2025 (Aug. 4–5) and the Educator Summit on Global Competency (May 19–20), are available through the full WSUP newsletter: <https://conta.cc/3RqT1Ar>

**Optional Meeting:** The College of Education will hold an optional college-wide meeting on Monday, April 28, from 12:00–1:00 PM in the Education Auditorium. This session will provide space to follow up on and address unanswered questions from faculty and staff. Please note that food and drink are not permitted in the auditorium.

As the pace begins to slow and we look toward summer, I hope you find time to recharge, reorganize, and begin shaping new ideas and stronger plans for the fall.

Have a lovely weekend!

Jenna

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**April 18, 2025**

Dear colleagues,

With the semester reaching its final stretch, I have been thrilled to meet with many faculty and staff in recent weeks to hear about their ongoing work and explore ways I can support them and their ideas. From new research proposals, college initiatives, and plans to boost student recruitment and success efforts, I continue to be impressed by and offer my full support to the creativity and thoughtful planning that shape the work of our college. This week's update offers just a few highlights.

**Distinguished Visiting Speaker:** Yesterday, we had the pleasure of welcoming Stephen Newton, Superintendent of Laramie County School District #1, to campus to deliver a presentation based on his book, *Breaking Down the Schoolhouse Doors*. He talked about ways student teachers and early career educators can maximize their first experiences in classrooms and school buildings to start their careers with drive and momentum. A book signing followed the event, and students, faculty, and staff were thrilled to meet this distinguished educator and author who is also an alumnus of our graduate programs! Thanks, Steve, for coming to Laramie!

**Student Employee Appreciation Week:** Today marks the end of Student Employee Appreciation week! Our student employees and graduate assistants are huge contributors to the success of the College, and I would like us all to take a moment to show them our gratitude today.

**New Faculty Hires:** I am pleased to share that this has been another successful year in recruiting highly accomplished faculty to join our College. Sincere thanks to all search committee members, colleagues, and especially our dedicated staff who played a critical role in supporting the hiring process.

Please join me in welcoming the following new faculty members who will be joining us in the fall:

- **Dr. Jaepil Han** – *Assistant Professor of Mathematics Education*  
Dr. Han is currently serving as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Delaware.
- **Dr. Jeffrey Anderson** – *Wyoming Excellence Chair in Special Education*  
Dr. Anderson is a professor and Chair of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction in the School of Education at Indiana University–Bloomington, where he also directs the Ph.D. program in Special Education.
- **Dr. Tracy Spies** – *Fisher Family Literacy Education Professor*  
Dr. Spies is currently a professor in the Department of Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

*Please note that the faculty ranks for Drs. Anderson and Spies are pending final approvals.* We look forward to the expertise and energy they will bring to our College and to the impact they will have on our students and programs.

Additionally, we are in the process of hiring a fixed-term Professor of Practice in Career and Technical Education (CTE) to succeed Rod Thompson, who will be retiring at the end of this semester. Please join me in extending our sincere appreciation to Rod Thompson for his dedicated service and many contributions to the College.

**Community College Month:** April is Community College Month, and we want to take a moment to recognize and thank our community college partners across Wyoming. These institutions play a vital role in supporting student success, building strong pathways into education careers, and responding to the evolving needs of their communities. From developing programs to expanding access, their work has a profound impact, and we are grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with them in preparing the next generation of educators and leaders.

With gratitude, we acknowledge: Casper College, Central Wyoming College, Eastern Wyoming College, Gillette College, Laramie County Community College, Northwest College, Sheridan College, and Western Wyoming Community College.

**Week of the Young Child:** ECEC also celebrated the Week of the Young Child from April 7 to April 11, which means adorable photos of our ECEC students (above)! The purpose of the Week of the Young Child® is to raise public awareness about the needs of young children and their families, as well as to acknowledge the early childhood programs and services that address those needs. Each day of the week featured special events focused on community, collaboration, and the joy of early childhood learning.

On Music Monday, the Preschoolers, Toddlers, and Infants took part in an exciting musical experience with Mr. Tiger Robison. Tuesday brought a special treat: ice cream sundaes for everyone. On Wednesday, the ECEC enjoyed a true sense of collaboration as nearly 200 friends and family members met for a picnic lunch. Thursday showcased the art show, transforming the center into a beautiful museum filled with children's artwork for a gallery walk. Finally, FUN Friday concluded the week with breakfast and outdoor activities, celebrating and raising awareness for the important work of early childhood education.

**Irish Early Childhood Education Faculty Visit:** It is bittersweet to bid farewell to our wonderful colleagues from Ireland following their visit to Laramie. This past week, the College of Education had the pleasure of hosting Dr. Emer Ring and Dr. Lisha O'Sullivan from Mary Immaculate College in Limerick as part of the International Collaboration Project (ICP).

Special thanks to Marisa Macy, John P. Ellbogen Foundation Professor in Early Childhood Education, for extending the invitation and thoughtfully coordinating their visit.

Drs. Ring and O'Sullivan's time with us fostered rich dialogue around early childhood education, offering opportunities to engage across campus, from presenting to faculty and staff at the UW Gateway Center, to visiting classes and connecting with students, to spending time at the Early Care and Education Center (ECEC).

Thank you to everyone who helped welcome our visitors and contributed to making this exchange so meaningful. We look forward to continuing and deepening our collaboration with Mary Immaculate College in the future.

**New Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps Cohort:** We are proud to share the newest members of Cohort 4 of the Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps (WTMC), a vital Trustees Education Initiative that continues to grow teacher leadership and strengthen support systems for early career educators across the state. These outstanding educators represent a broad range of Wyoming communities and bring with them deep expertise to effectively mentor the next generation of teachers.

This year's cohort includes: Julie Calkins (Laramie County School District #1), Jill Ferguson and Charli Fluty (Park County School District #1), Julia Fineran (Carbon County School District #1), Kayla Freese, Diane Weller, and Sami McRae (Fremont County School District #1), Tiffany Herring and Leslie McLinskey (Carbon County School District #2), Jessica Hofmann and Brenda Morgan (Carbon County School District #1), Sarah Hogan (Sheridan County School District #1), Janet Mundt (Saint Joseph's Children's Home), Hallie Murphy (Goshen County School District #1), Kelli Orr and Dana Romriell (Big Horn County School District #1), Brooklyn Riding (Lincoln County School District #1), Revea Smith (Campbell County School District), Michelle Trahnstrom (Fremont School District #14), and Samantha Worden (Sweetwater County School District #1).

This program continues to thrive because of the exceptional leadership of Colby Gull, Tiffany Hunt, and Leslie Rush. Their unwavering dedication to mentoring excellence continues to shape how the College of Education supports teacher retention and professional growth across Wyoming. I am grateful for their work and offer my full support as the WTMC continues to grow and flourish.

Of course, I would be remiss not to acknowledge Dr. Douglas Reeves, a proud University of Wyoming alumnus, whose generous support makes this important initiative possible.

**Fulbright Update:** Lydia Nganga is currently completing her Fulbright semester at United States International University-Africa in Nairobi, Kenya, where she has engaged in meaningful collaborations on democracy and citizenship education. Her work has fostered cross-cultural partnerships, advanced civic engagement pedagogy, and highlighted the University of Wyoming's commitment to global, inclusive academic exchange. She has led faculty development sessions, guest lectures, and postgraduate workshops, while contributing to major publications, including a forthcoming special issue of *The Journal of Social Studies Research*. As she prepares to return in June, she looks forward to bringing these global insights into the classroom. She poses in the above picture with Dean Martin Njoroge, College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

This work has also resulted in three recent publications in *The Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, exploring topics such as decolonizing education, Indigenous pedagogies, and cross-national perspectives on early childhood education in Kenya and Nepal. I appreciate this commendable work.

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As always, I invite faculty, staff, and other friends of the college to share their news and success stories with me. I see this newsletter as a resource for other channels and outlets in the college, university, and state, and I appreciate your participation. My mission remains the same: to deliver the highest quality education, expand research and initiatives, provide outreach to Wyoming and its most rural areas, and support faculty, staff, and students in their invaluable work.

Have a lovely weekend!

Jenna

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**April 11, 2025**

Dear colleagues,

I have found my walks around campus to be much more pleasant lately, and I hope everyone is finding opportunities to get outside and enjoy the sunshine. While there has been significant news at the university, Wyoming, and national levels that I am sure everyone is following, I appreciate the opportunity to focus on great work and updates from the College. We remain more active than ever in training excellent teachers, counselors, leaders, and scholars, as well as supporting quality education across the state of Wyoming and beyond. Here are this week's updates:

**Science and Mathematics Teaching Center Updates:** The Science and Mathematics Teaching Center (SMTC) is concluding its second cohort of the Teacher Researcher Knowledge Exchange (TRKE) program with a virtual Showcase of Learning. Participants will present the instructional products they have developed over the year. The event is open to the public on May 2 and May 10. This is an excellent collaboration between the College of Education and local teachers to bring Wyoming data into local learning spaces. For details and registration: <https://www.canva.com/design/DAGgCAf9a1A/7-4XAJHkiiWmj3jPlg871Q/view>.

**Upcoming Educator Summit on Global Competency:** The Educator Summit on Global Competency, co-hosted by the College of Education and the Global Engagement Office, will be held May 19–20 on the UW campus. This two-day event offers workshops, panels, and networking for educators looking to deepen their practice around global competencies. Registration is open through April 25 at:

**Upcoming Family and Consumer Sciences Conference:** Registration is also still open for “Bridging Gaps: Collaborative Approaches to Preventing Food, Finances, & Housing Challenges,” a two-day conference scheduled for April 25–26 in Laramie. This event is coordinated by the Wyoming and Colorado Associations of Family & Consumer Sciences and

includes interactive sessions, exhibits, and strategy-building activities. Learn more and register at: <https://forms.gle/AjGsXeMx68R75mnm9>.

**Featured Seminar:** The Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation will host *Applied AI for Business & Education: From Prompts to Powerful Workflows* on April 19 in the College of Business Auditorium. Facilitated by AI strategist Josh Cavalier, the workshop will help participants apply generative AI tools to real-world problems. Lunch provided; laptops required. More at: [www.joshcavalier.ai](http://www.joshcavalier.ai).

**Educational Leadership Updates:** The Educational Leadership program continues to grow under the effective leadership of its faculty members. Faculty highlights include John Heim's appointment, Margaret Hudson's continued scholarship under the Mary Garland Early Career Fellowship, and Barbara Hickman's national recognition and campus leadership. The program has also seen increased enrollment and expanded access through GRE waivers. Through continued collaboration with state partners, the program is sustaining and strengthening the 307 Principal Leadership Academy and Wyoming Principal Mentor Program. It is an exciting time for educational leadership in the College and state.

In related news, Margaret recently published in *School-University Partnerships*. Her paper examines Wyoming's statewide principal development initiative as a model of Collective Impact. Her study documents how cross-sector collaboration, structured mentorship, and shared evaluation have advanced leadership development and retention efforts across the state. This is an excellent development in her growing body of work on principal leadership development.

**Coming Soon! College of Education Events:** There are a couple of events coming up that we invite you to consider: The Three-Minute Thesis Competition will take place Friday, April 11 from 2–3 PM in Education Annex 304 (also available on Zoom). Graduate students will present their education research using just one slide in three minutes.

Then on Thursday, April 17 from 12–2 PM in the Union Family Room, Dr. Stephen V. Newton, Superintendent of Laramie County School District #1, will present "Breaking Down the Schoolhouse Doors," sharing insights from his 30-year career in educational leadership. For questions about either event, contact Alex Rickert ([arickert@uwyo.edu](mailto:arickert@uwyo.edu)).

Thank you for continuing to support and engage with the important work happening across our College. As always, have a great weekend!

Jenna

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## April 4, 2025

Dear colleagues,

Congratulations on making it to April! Just one more full month remaining for the spring semester, and while we are still hoping for spring weather, I am sure a few more weeks of excellent work lie ahead. April will prove to be an especially busy month with a host of events coming to the College of Education. I am looking forward to sharing this week's updates.

**TEI Updates:** I am pleased to share a report from Colby Gull, the Trustees Education Initiative Managing Director, on the progress of several ongoing projects within the unit:

**Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps (WTMC):** WTMC is finalizing the selection of Cohort 4, with full announcements expected by April 12 pending final acceptance documentation. A virtual Spring Retreat was held March 18–19, during which mentors engaged with the Teacher Action Research Project and explored strategies for offering meaningful feedback to their mentees. Planning is also underway for the Summer Mentor Institute, scheduled for June 24–26 in Laramie. Participants will include members of Cohorts 3 and 4, along with Dr. Douglas Reeves and representatives from earlier cohorts, who will share insights on effective mentorship. Finally, The "Mentor Corps Lite" initiative—a condensed version of the WTMC—will conclude this April, after a successful year of collaboration with teachers and administrators statewide.

**High Altitude Pathways (HAP):** HAP is focusing on project-based learning (PBL) in connection with the RIDE initiative and the Profile of a Graduate framework. Eight schools are currently participating, with more details to follow. On March 11, over 300 students from seven high schools attended the Voices in the Field Northwest event at Northwest College, engaging in hands-on career exploration. From March 30 to April 1, around 100 students from five high schools will visit the University of Wyoming to tour campus, experience residence life, and attend academic workshops, including one hosted by Dr. Anne Aydinian-Perry. On March 27, WSUP also led a Voices in the Field event at Rock River School, welcoming around 100 students from Albany County high schools for additional hands-on experiences.

**307 Principal Leadership Academy (PLA):** In February, the 307 Principal Leadership Academy hosted regional events for mentors in Casper and Riverton. Margaret Hudson continues to facilitate this work and will soon announce the next nomination round for new mentors.

Members of the TEI time and the College of Education were also present at other statewide education events. Colby presented a workshop on career exploration at the recent WySCA conference in Casper, while Emily Gull presented findings on college and career readiness needs across Wyoming high schools. Colby and Superintendent Justin Pierantoni (Laramie 2) also led a session for soon-to-be College of Education graduates as they prepared for the UW Teacher Fair. The ACES Office provided mock interviews to help students prepare for their professional transitions.

Finally, Colby spent two days at the State FCCLA Conference in Cheyenne, coordinating the college fair, judging student events, and moderating the quiz bowl. Jody Evans represented the College of Education, speaking with 7–12 grade students interested in teaching. Hannah Powers Rasmussen (College of Agriculture) promoted the FCS Teacher Program, and Mark Perkins moderated the Senior Quiz Bowl.

**Upcoming April Events:** Finally, below is a list of upcoming education events from the College. If you have any events you want to share, please send them to me, and be sure to submit them to our Events Calendar at <https://www.uwyo.edu/education/calendar.html>

**Three-Minute Thesis Competition, Friday, April 11, 2-3 PM, Education Annex**

**304:** Rescheduled from March, we are excited to host this competition where education graduate students get one slide to present interesting education research in three minutes. This

is a competition for prizes, and is also available on Zoom. Reach out to Alex Rickert ([arickert@uwyo.edu](mailto:arickert@uwyo.edu)) for more information.

**Early Years Education from an Irish Perspective, Tuesday, April 15, 1-2:30 PM,**

**Zoom:** Join us for an insightful conversation featuring Dean Emer Ring & Dr. Lisha O'Sullivan from Mary Immaculate College (University of Limerick), Ireland, as they share Irish perspectives on early childhood education practices. Their discussion will cover key topics such as play-based learning, special education, and inclusive pedagogical approaches to support children in diverse learning environments. Contact Marisa Macy ([mmacy2@uwyo.edu](mailto:mmacy2@uwyo.edu)) for more details.

**Breaking Down the Schoolhouse Doors, Thursday, April 17, 12-2 PM, Union Family**

**Room:** Join us for an engaging session with Dr. Stephen V. Newton, Superintendent of Laramie County School District #1, as he discusses leadership in education and shares insights from his 30 years of experience. Dr. Newton is the author of *Leading from the Trenches* and *Breaking Down the Schoolhouse Doors*, and has served as an adjunct professor at the University of Wyoming. In addition to his educational leadership, Dr. Newton is a highly sought-after keynote speaker, consultant, and program review auditor. Contact Alex Rickert ([arickert@uwyo.edu](mailto:arickert@uwyo.edu)) with questions.

**College of Education Optional Follow-Up Meeting, Monday, April 28, 12-1 PM, Education**

**Annex 304:** To wrap up the questions from our March College of Education meeting, we will be hosting a smaller optional meeting. If you would like to attend virtually, please request a Zoom link from your supervisor.

**Wyoming Rural Teacher Mentor Corps Capstone Fair, Tuesday, April 29, from 5-6 PM,**

**Education Annex Downstairs (Literacy Research Center and Clinic):** The Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps is hosting their second annual Capstone Fair on Tuesday, April 29, from 5pm to 6pm in the LRCC (garden level of the Education Annex). We hope you can come and hear about the Year 2+ cohort members present the great things they have been doing this year. This year, the Capstone Fair will include a poster presentation of Year 2+ students' projects. Send your questions to Alison Mercier ([amercier@uwyo.edu](mailto:amercier@uwyo.edu)) .

**College of Education Final Spring Meeting, Monday, May 5, 12-1 PM, Union West**

**Ballroom:** Our final meeting will be a bit more relaxed. There will be a presentation from the Wyoming School-University Partnership and accolades for newly tenured faculty and recipients of internal awards!

**Ellbogen Excellence Ceremony, Wednesday, May 7, from 5-6 PM, Union West**

**Ballroom:** And finally, in gratitude to the John P. Ellbogen Foundation, we will host a final event of the semester to recognize recipients of Ellbogen Foundation-funded awards within the College of Education and allow past and current recipients to talk about their work and its benefits to Wyoming.

I look forward to seeing many of you at these upcoming events, and appreciate your help sharing the information with others. Stay tuned for more good news from our College as the semester winds down. Have a great weekend.

Jenna



**March 28, 2025**

Dear colleagues,

I hope everyone had a fun and restorative Spring Break. April and May promise to be active, engaging, and—dare I say—fun. From events statewide and here on campus to end-of-year recognitions, ceremonies, and celebrations, there is much to look forward to as we continue pushing forward together and advance the mission of the College of Education.

**In Memory of Larry Hatfield:** We were saddened to learn of the passing of Larry Hatfield, former Wyoming Excellence Chair in Mathematics and emeritus faculty member of the College of Education. Larry's contributions to the field of mathematics education and to the University of Wyoming are deeply appreciated, and he leaves behind a meaningful legacy within our community. We send our heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones during this time.

**Featured in UCF Literacy Symposium Newsletter:** A recent article coauthored by Leslie Rush and Todd Reynolds was featured in the March 2025 edition of the *At the Forefront of Literacy Learning* newsletter, published in conjunction with the University of Central Florida's Literacy Symposium. The article, titled "Making Covert Processes Explicit: A Disciplinary Heuristic for Reading Literary Texts," outlines instructional strategies designed to support student engagement with literary texts in English Language Arts classrooms. The piece introduces the Generating, Weaving, and Curating (GWC) heuristic, a disciplinary structure that encourages students to make meaningful interpretations of literature. Congratulations to Leslie and Todd on this recognition of their impactful work.

**New Publication and Edited Volume by Alison Mercier:** Alison Mercier recently published an article in the *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* titled "Preservice teachers' framing and noticing of elementary students' ways of communicating scientific ideas." The exploratory case study, conducted in partnership with Auburn University, explores how preservice teachers can develop more equitable and anti-deficit approaches to recognizing the scientific thinking of elementary students, particularly those from minoritized backgrounds.

In addition, Alison co-edited a new volume published by Springer International titled *Justice-Oriented Science Teaching and Learning: Anchoring Phenomena in Secondary Classrooms*. This timely book offers educators tools to integrate themes of social justice into science instruction through the use of real-world phenomena. Several chapters were authored by members of our College of Education community, including Mia Williams, Emil Eidin, and former graduate students Halie Shea and Brittanie Kuhn. Congratulations to Alison and all contributors on these significant scholarly accomplishments.

**Championing Mental Health Awareness:** The College of Education is proud to serve as a Champion Level Sponsor for the 2025 UWYO Out of the Darkness Campus Walk, supporting suicide prevention and mental health awareness efforts across the state. This year's walk will be held on Saturday, May 3, and serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of community and compassion in addressing mental health challenges. We are honored to stand alongside other university units to encourage continued dialogue and action around mental health at UW and beyond. Sincere thanks to Margaret Hudson for serving as the lead on this important effort.

**Leading Innovation and Digital Education in Teacher Preparation:** Mia Williams recently represented the College of Education at the annual conference of the Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE). She presented as part of a national panel of seven scholars engaged in an ongoing research project focused on technology infusion in teacher preparation. Their presentation, “Leadership Perspectives on Implementing Four Pillars of Technology Infusion in Teacher Preparation Programs,” highlighted administrator insights drawn from student data analyzed in a previous segment of the study. This collaborative effort explores how curriculum, mentoring, fieldwork, and teacher self-efficacy inform preparing future educators to navigate technology integration with thoughtfulness and sustainability.

In addition to sharing her research, Mia was elected as the incoming chair of the Teacher Education Council (TEC) for a three-year term. The Teacher Education Council plays a key role in shaping the direction of SITE and sits as part of the organization's Executive Council, helping to lead SITE's national work in supporting innovation and digital teaching and learning in educator preparation. As part of this leadership role, Mia will participate in the National Technology Leadership Summit (NTLS) in Washington, D.C. each fall, where she will join national leaders in policy, research, and practice to help shape the future of technology use in teacher education. Please join me in congratulating Mia on this well-deserved recognition and her continued impact on the field.

**Counselor Education Programs Maintain Full CACREP Accreditation:** The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) has officially continued full accreditation for all three of the College's counselor education programs through March 31, 2028. Following their midcycle review, CACREP confirmed ongoing accreditation for the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (M.S.), School Counseling (M.S.), and Counselor Education and Supervision (Ph.D.) programs offered in both Laramie and Casper. Special thanks to Paul Maddox II for serving as the lead on this effort and for his steadfast work as CACREP liaison. This recognition reflects the exceptional efforts of faculty and staff in maintaining excellence in counselor preparation.

**Wyoming School-University Partnership March Newsletter:** As we welcome the fresh energy of spring, the Wyoming School-University Partnership is excited to share the latest updates, initiatives, and opportunities that are shaping the future of education in Wyoming. Read about WSUP's presentation at NASUP, get registered for TeacherCon25, and engage in all things education around the state.

Read the newsletter here: <https://conta.cc/3FSaUFv>

View the Facebook post here: <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/19AkRkHCs4/>

And with that, please be well and enjoy our first hint of spring. While more snow is surely on the horizon, so too are sunny days and warm memories. See you next week!

Jenna

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**March 14, 2025**

Dear colleagues,

As we head into Spring Break, I want to thank everyone for the great work so far this semester. I hope you take time to recharge. Here are this week's updates:

**MA Student Collin Binko Receives National Recognition:** We are proud to share that Collin Binko, a student in our MA program in Educational Leadership, has been named a recipient of the prestigious Milken Educator Award — a national honor recognizing exceptional educators and accompanied by a \$25,000 prize. Collin, a fine arts teacher in Jackson, Wyoming, is an outstanding student and a valued member of our program. We are thrilled to see his leadership and dedication to education recognized at this level. Congratulations, Collin! Read more: <https://cowboystatedaily.com/2025/03/12/jackson-teacher-surprised-with-national-milken-educator-award-25-000-prize/>

**Rural Teacher Corps Hosts Annual Teacher Panel and Launches New Science Kits:** Last week, the Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps hosted its third annual Rural Teacher Panel, where members and undergraduate education majors explored rural teaching through conversations with experienced educators. Special thanks to panelists Lisa Lowenfels (Kelly Elementary), Jenna Schultz (Greybull High School), and Bailey Iacovetto (SOROCO High School and WY RTC alum) for sharing their insights and experiences. In addition, Alison Mercier and Rochelle Green have developed Wyoming-focused, phenomenon-driven science kits for second-grade classrooms. After professional development sessions, UW students delivered these kits to 23 classrooms across the state. The team continues to support teachers and is now working on science and literacy integrated kits for Kindergarten and first grade, further enriching local elementary education.

**Faculty Recognition: Anne Perry Receives Early Career Sponsorship:** Congratulations to Anne Aydinian-Perry, Assistant Professor of Secondary Social Studies Education, who was awarded an Early Career registration sponsorship by the Accreditation, Assessment, and Program Evaluation (AAPE) Special Interest Group of AERA for this year's conference. We are proud to see our faculty recognized for their ongoing scholarly engagement and professional contributions. Well done, Anne!

**Call for Chapter Proposals:** Marisa Macy is editing a book on the Reggio Emilia approach with her co-Editors Drs. Emer Ring (Ireland) and Alessandra Landini (Italy). The book is entitled, "Realizing Children's Rights in a Global Context: The Reggio Emilia Approach." IGI Global is the publisher. The Editors are eliciting book chapters if you're interested in submitting a proposal. Here is a link to the publisher for submitting chapter proposals.

<https://www.igi-global.com/publish/call-for-papers/call-details/8684>

**Literacy Research Center and Clinic (LRCC) Update:** The LRCC is advancing its strategic five-year plan to expand literacy education statewide. Key initiatives include launching a Literacy Endorsement Cohort for practicing teachers—prioritizing those near the Wind River Reservation and early career educators—to earn a Wyoming Reading Endorsement through a PTSB-approved certificate. The LRCC is also developing flexible, district-implemented Literacy Professional Development Modules, supported by faculty visits, and continues work on culturally

responsive American Indian Education Act K-3 modules in collaboration with the Wyoming Department of Education and Wind River cultural mentors. In addition, the LRCC is delivering targeted professional development in Sheridan and Wind River, conducting literacy needs assessments in Cheyenne, and providing ongoing consultation to schools in Lander and Teton County. The Literacy Tutoring Clinic has also expanded to serve 24 students with 15 pre-service College of Education tutors, further supporting literacy growth across Wyoming.

**College Meeting Rescheduled for May 5:** The College of Education Meeting on 4/7/25 was canceled to allow attendance of the Staff Recognition Day event from 12-2 PM in the Arena Auditorium. The meeting has been rescheduled to May 5, 2025, in the West Union Ballroom. Stay tuned for more details.

**Spring Break Pause: Weekly Updates Will Return March 28:** As a quick note, we will *pause* our weekly updates next week in observance of Spring Break. We hope everyone takes this time to recharge and enjoy a well-deserved break. Weekly updates will return on Friday, March 28, just in time for the March Board of Trustees meeting and a busy close to the month. Wishing you all a wonderful and restorative week!

Jenna

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## March 7, 2025

Dear colleagues,

I heard that the Cowgirls basketball team celebrated a huge victory against UNLV on Wednesday night, thanks in large part to the College of Education's own Allyson Fertig, a senior in secondary math education from Glendo, WY. Allyson is a shining example of an education student with not only impressive athletic accomplishments, but academic as well. Now, the Cowgirls set their sights on the Mountain West Championship in Las Vegas next weekend. Wyoming will play the winner of Air Force and Utah State at 6 PM, Mountain Time Monday, March 10. Good luck, Allyson — we are cheering for you!

Here are our other updates from the week:

**New Detailed Organizational Chart:** The College of Education Dean's Office is pleased to launch a new detailed organizational chart that provides a comprehensive breakdown of faculty and staff within the college, including names, titles, and links to professional bio pages. As part of this effort, we have also developed bio pages for our staff members, mirroring those previously created for faculty. We are excited to offer this resource to enhance transparency, foster connections, and provide valuable insight into the structure of the college for faculty, staff, and stakeholders alike. You can find the document attached, and it will also be updated on our website's Organizational Chart page: <https://www.uwyo.edu/education/faculty-staff/organizational-chart.html>

**Upcoming Visiting Speaker:** We are pleased to announce an upcoming special event featuring Dr. Stephen V. Newton, Superintendent of Laramie County School District #1, on April 17, 2025, from 12:00 to 2:00 PM in the Union Family Room. With over 30 years of experience in education, Dr. Newton will share valuable insights on navigating the transition from student

teaching to a successful career in the classroom. He is the author of *Leading from the Trenches* and *Breaking Down the Schoolhouse Doors* and has served as a part time lecturer at the University of Wyoming. His expertise as a speaker, consultant, and program review auditor makes this a fantastic opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to gain valuable perspectives. A light lunch will be provided, and we encourage all members of the College of Education community to attend. We hope to see you there!

**Faculty and Staff Evaluation Updates:** Faculty evaluations are now being conducted by me and Associate Deans Buss and Moran. These reviews will be finished before they are due to Academic Affairs by Monday morning, March 17. More information on faculty annual reviews can be found at <https://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/reviews/annual.html>

Additionally, HCM reviews for staff and administrators are due on March 31. For questions regarding HCM reviews, please reach out to Renee Ballard, or learn more about Performance Management at <https://www.uwyo.edu/hr/employee-relations/performance-management/index.html>

**Science and Math Teaching Center (SMTC):** The SMTC continues to advance STEM education across Wyoming. With an \$8,000 gift from donor Gene Strid, SMTC is expanding support for graduate students and professional learning for K-12 educators. The center also celebrated Ingrid Velez's successful Plan B defense, which explored how mentorship influences student skill development and confidence. SMTC outreach efforts remain strong, with initiatives like STEM STRONG and the Teacher-Researcher Knowledge Exchange (TRKE) program engaging educators across the state. Applications for the 2025-2026 TRKE cohort are now open—follow the link below for the flyer. SMTC faculty and students are also contributing to research, with recent publications in *Innovations in Science Teacher Education* and *Science Scope*. Looking ahead, SMTC faculty and staff will present at key national conferences, furthering their mission of excellence in STEM education.

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAGgVAZh-Xs/S1GfUwHs4l1fmGfAc8R8jg/view?utm\\_content=DAGgVAZh-Xs&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=uniquelinks&utlId=h682c5523f5](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGgVAZh-Xs/S1GfUwHs4l1fmGfAc8R8jg/view?utm_content=DAGgVAZh-Xs&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniquelinks&utlId=h682c5523f5)

**College of Education Book Club Update:** The College of Education Book Group facilitated by Leslie Rush and Jonathan Carrier is off to a fantastic start! More than 20 staff, faculty, and administrators have been meeting every other week to discuss readings from *Building Communities of Practice in Higher Education* and explore how concepts from the book might be used in their work. The next Book Group meeting is at 2:30 PM on March 26 in Education Annex 229.

**Ellbogen Summer Institute:** The Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning (ECTL) invites all UW faculty and lecturers to apply for the Summer Institute, taking place May 28-30, 2025, at Saratoga Hot Springs Resort. This retreat-style event offers an opportunity to connect with educators across disciplines, share innovative teaching strategies, and engage in interactive discussions to enhance classroom practices. Participants will enjoy free lodging, meals, and time to relax at the hot springs. Transportation to and from Saratoga is not provided, and all sessions will be held in person. Applications are due by noon **today**. To apply, follow the link or QR code in the attached flyer: <https://www.uwyo.edu/ctl/events/john-p-ellbogen-summer-institute/index.html>

For more information, contact Ashli Tomisich at [ashli.tomisich@uwyo.edu](mailto:ashli.tomisich@uwyo.edu).

Acceptance to Division K's Early Career Pre-conference Seminar: Anne Aydinian-Perry, Assistant Professor of Secondary Social Studies Education, has been selected as one of 30 early-career scholars to participate in the 2025 Division K Pre-Conference Seminar at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting. This highly competitive seminar will take place on April 22 in Denver and will provide an opportunity for participants to engage in focused discussions and mentorship to support their early career development. Congratulations to Anne on this recognition!

**Wyoming Excellence Chair in Special Education Campus Visit:** Thank you to everyone who helped welcome Jeffrey Anderson to campus on March 4 for his interview for the Wyoming Excellence Chair in Special Education position. His research presentation, *From Scholarship to Impact: Advancing Special Education Through Research-Practice Partnerships*, was well attended, and we appreciate the thoughtful engagement from faculty, staff, and students. Your participation and willingness to connect with candidates play a crucial role in our hiring process and in establishing a positive environment for the College.

**College Meeting:** The College of Education faculty and staff meeting took place on Monday, March 3. As previously mentioned, we invited faculty and staff to submit anonymous questions and received 32 thoughtful inquiries on a range of topics. This forum provided a valuable opportunity to engage with the concerns and perspectives of our College community while offering clarity on key areas of interest.

With several questions still remaining, we will continue the discussion at our next College of Education meeting on May 5 in the Union West Ballroom. During this session, we will address the remaining questions and, if time permits, new inquiries. We look forward to another meaningful conversation with all of you.

Thank you all for the work you do to support our students, programs, and each other. From all-star students to the important work and accomplishments of our staff and faculty, the College of Education continues to expand on its mission to prepare excellent teachers, educators, counselors, and leaders. Next week will bring new opportunities to engage, collaborate, and build on this progress. I appreciate your efforts and look forward to what is ahead. I wish you a pleasant, well-deserved weekend.

Jenna

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## February 28, 2025

Dear colleagues,

This week's updates contain a few items that are particularly heartwarming. I had the opportunity to visit with various stakeholders of the College of Education—students, donors, and advocates. Their support and engagement are essential to the college's success, and I always welcome opportunities to hear from everyone from our expansive community.

**Visit with Charlotte and Maron Davis:** Earlier this week, I joined Charlotte and Maron Davis for an afternoon conversation at their lovely home in Laramie. Charlotte and Maron are members of the College of Education Advocacy Board, and Maron had a long and influential career as a biology teacher at Laramie Middle School. Charlotte dedicated 34 years to student life at the University of Wyoming, serving in mentorship roles, including as associate dean of students, and advising countless students.

Charlotte's niece, Sherry Waggoner, a long-time veteran teacher at Linford Elementary School, also joined us and shared an innovative idea: finding ways for College of Education students to help fill substitute teaching needs in Albany County School District while also gaining valuable practicum or internship experience. It is a promising idea that we look forward to exploring in the coming months.

**Conversation with Dave and Kelly Dunham:** I also had the chance to sit down with Dave and Kelly Dunham for breakfast. They are major advocates and supporters of the College of Education and the generous founders of the Dunham Family Fellows program. The Dunham Family Fellows program was designed to support future educators at a critical stage in their journey—during student teaching. Recognizing the financial burdens that student teachers face, the program offers awards that help cover tuition, living expenses, and other costs associated with completing a student-teaching residency. In addition to financial support, fellows participate in a full year of professional development aimed at building leadership skills and fostering connections with state education leaders. The program was created in memory of alumnus Marvin “Lee” Dunham, of Wheatland. Dunham served his hometown school system, Platte County School District 1, for 48 years, mentoring thousands of students and inspiring his peers. Kelly is a member of the College of Education Advocacy Board and Dave is a board member of the Cowboy Joe Club.

Beyond discussing the Dunham Family Fellows program, we also explored additional ways to innovatively support student teachers across Wyoming, especially in addressing affordable housing challenges. It was a productive and thoughtful discussion, and I look forward to working toward solutions in this area.

**Second Spring College Meeting – Monday, March 3:** A reminder that the second spring college meeting will take place on Monday, March 3, from 12:00 to 1:00 PM in the Agriculture Building Auditorium. This meeting will focus on open and anonymous questions submitted by faculty and staff regarding college affairs. I am looking forward to a productive and informative meeting. As a reminder, all faculty and staff are expected to attend in person unless they have an approved reason or are off-campus employees. Please reach out to your school director or supervisor if you would like to request a Zoom link.

**Wyoming Classroom Connections Tours:** The Wyoming Classroom Connections Tours (WCCT) offer a unique opportunity for College of Education faculty and students to engage with K-12 classrooms across Wyoming. These tours are designed to strengthen partnerships with schools and provide firsthand experience of the challenges and successes in Wyoming's education system. Participants will visit schools, observe classroom instruction, and interact with teachers and administrators to gain valuable insights into the state's educational landscape.

The upcoming WCCT will take place at several locations across Wyoming, with the goal of fostering stronger collaboration between the university and local schools. Faculty and students



interested in participating should review the attached flyer for additional details and registration information.

**Cocoa with the Dean:** We had a wonderful time last week at our Cocoa with the Dean event in front of the Education Auditorium and want to share some fun photos from the gathering. A special highlight was Rod Thompson's class stopping by for a well-earned break and some good conversation. I deeply appreciate these events, not only as a chance for me to connect directly with students but also as a way for students to connect with each other and other members of the College of Education community.

I am grateful that this week was filled with more heartwarming moments than usual. While spring is surely on its way to the University of Wyoming, we all know better than to assume we will not see a few more snowy days ahead. However, please be reminded that we have a strong community and support network to brave through any kind of weather. I hope everyone has a lovely weekend.

Jenna

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**February 21, 2025**

Dear colleagues,

I hope everyone is staying warm after this week's snowfall. As we move forward in the rhythm of the semester, I continue to be impressed by the volume of excellent work happening across the College of Education. From major research accomplishments and faculty presentations to student achievements and upcoming engagement opportunities, this week's update is packed with great news.

**College of Education Student Named Fulbright Semifinalist:** Jessica Petri, a senior earning a bachelor's degree in social studies education and political science, has been named a semifinalist for the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA) award in Laos. Petri, who also minors in honors and international relations, is deeply committed to education as a means of empowerment and freedom. She credits her experiences in the College of Education and the School of Politics, Public Affairs, and International Studies for shaping her passion for international education. Petri previously participated in a faculty-led program to Ireland and will spend this spring in Costa Rica through the Consortium for Overseas Student Teaching (COST) program, a global teaching experience proudly supported by the College of Education. Read more about Petri and other UW semifinalists here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/news/2025/02/four-uw-students-semifinalists-for-fulbright-program.html>.

**AI and Special Education: Ling Zhang's Research Featured in eSchoolNews:** Ling Zhang, assistant professor in special education, was recently featured in eSchoolNews for her groundbreaking work on AI-human collaboration in developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Her research highlights CoIEP, a new AI-powered tool designed to streamline the IEP development process and reduce the workload on special education teachers while enhancing the quality of support for students with disabilities. The UW College of Education will pilot CoIEP in Wyoming schools this year, exploring its effectiveness in co-creating and co-evaluating IEPs. Zhang's work underscores the potential of AI to improve efficiency in education

while keeping educators at the center of decision-making. Read the full article here: <https://www.eschoolnews.com/innovative-teaching/2025/02/13/wyoming-enhancing-ai-human-collaboration-iep/>.

**Faculty Research and Grant Initiatives:** Miriam Sanders and her colleagues continue to make significant contributions to STEM education research and teacher recruitment efforts. Sanders, along with Micayla Gooden, Michelle Kwok, Eric Rivera-Rodriguez, and Dawn Parker, had their manuscript, "Teaching Mathematics for Creativity: An Analysis of Pre-Service Teachers' Problem Posing and Digital Mathematical Modeling," accepted for a special issue of *Research in Mathematical Education*—without any revisions, a rare and impressive achievement. Additionally, Sanders, Emil Eidin, and Anne Aydinian-Perry have submitted a proposal, "Filling Forms, Filling Plates, Filling Secondary Classroom Teaching Positions," aimed at recruiting and supporting teachers in high-need Title I schools. Another proposal, "Bridging the Gap: Leveraging Community Colleges to Recruit Secondary STEM Teachers in Rural Serving Institutions," submitted by Sanders, Eidin, Jonathan Carrier, and Mark Perkins, seeks to strengthen the pipeline of secondary science and mathematics teachers in Wyoming.

Sanders also received news that another study, "Comparing Team Structures in Middle School Mathematics: Impacts on Engagement and Social Connections," co-authored with Karen Rambo-Hernandez and Candace Joswick, has been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Educational Research*. Congratulations to Sanders and her colleagues on these outstanding accomplishments!

**College of Education Strategic Taskforce – First Meeting:** The College of Education Strategic Taskforce will hold its first meeting on Monday, February 24, from 9:30-11:00 AM in Ed Annex 207. This meeting will introduce the taskforce, outline key initiatives, and allow participants to break into groups to begin discussing next steps. With 34 members already involved and more to come, this taskforce will play an important role in shaping the future of the College of Education. A second meeting will be scheduled for those unable to attend, ensuring broad participation as this important work begins.

**Mark Perkins to Present at AAQEP Quality Assurance Symposium:** Mark Perkins, assistant dean of assessment, data, and accreditation, will present at the *Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) Quality Assurance Symposium* in Phoenix, AZ, on April 3-4. His peer-reviewed presentation, "Harnessing Data Science Tools for Effective Accreditation Surveys," will explore innovative approaches to using data science in accreditation processes.

**February Edition of the WSUP Newsletter Now Available:** The latest edition of the *Wyoming School-University Partnership (WSUP) Newsletter* is now available, featuring updates on public education legislation, professional development opportunities, and student resources. This month's issue highlights upcoming 307 Principal Leadership Academy (PLA) Trainings, including the Wyoming Administrators Empowering Wyoming Administrators PLC Training on April 7 in Casper and the Language and Literacy Leaders Symposium on June 9 in Laramie. Read the full newsletter here: <https://conta.cc/4i2WvV1>.

**Staff Recognition Day – Call for Nominations:** The University of Wyoming's Staff Recognition Day will take place on Monday, April 7, from 12:00-2:00 PM in the Arena Auditorium. This year's theme, *Recognition Roundup*, invites staff to come together for an afternoon of appreciation, fun, and camaraderie. President Seidel has granted 2.5 hours of release time for the event. The

Recognition Committee is now accepting nominations for awards, with a total of \$41,750 in cash and cash equivalents to be distributed. Nominations are due by March 5, and details can be found here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/staffsenate/awards.html>. College of Education faculty and staff are encouraged to recognize and nominate our dedicated staff members for these well-deserved honors! We will cancel our April College of Education meeting to celebrate and recognize the invaluable contributions of our staff.

**Nominate a Colleague for the UWF Stewardship Award:** The UW Foundation Donor Relations team is now accepting nominations for the annual Stewardship Award, which recognizes faculty and staff who excel in donor stewardship through personalized and meaningful engagement. Nominations are due Monday, March 24th, and winners will be announced at the President's Commencement Dinner. College of Education faculty and staff are encouraged to consider nominating a colleague who exemplifies outstanding stewardship. Submit nominations here: [https://gopokes.formstack.com/forms/stewardship\\_award](https://gopokes.formstack.com/forms/stewardship_award).

**Final Day to Submit Graduate Student and Faculty Award Nominations:** Today, February 21, is the final day to submit nominations for the University of Wyoming's graduate student and faculty awards. These awards recognize excellence in mentorship, teaching, and research, including the Distinguished Graduate Faculty Mentor Award, John P. Ellbogen Outstanding Graduate Assistant Teaching Award, Mid-Career and Early-Career Graduate Faculty Mentor Awards, Outstanding Master's Thesis Award, and Outstanding Dissertation Award. Nominations, including all supporting materials, must be submitted electronically to the School of Graduate Education at [bbartz@uwyo.edu](mailto:bbartz@uwyo.edu). Learn more here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/uwgrad/faculty-staff/award-information.html>.

As always, thank you for the incredible work you do to support our students, advance research, and strengthen partnerships across Wyoming and beyond. This update reflects just a small portion of the impactful work happening in our college every day. I look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming events and continuing to celebrate the achievements of our faculty, staff, and students. Stay warm, and have a wonderful weekend!

Jenna

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**February 14, 2025**

Dear colleagues,

I hope this message finds you well as we move further into February. This time of year marks the beginning of "recognition season," when we see calls for awards across campus—soon to be followed by well-deserved celebrations of excellence. It signals an important time to reflect on the outstanding contributions of our faculty and staff to the university and to student success, as well as to recognize the achievements of our students. I encourage everyone to take a moment to submit nominations, celebrate colleagues, and showcase the best of our students.

**UW Achieves Prestigious Carnegie R1 Research Status:** I am thrilled to share that the University of Wyoming has been designated as an R1 university by the American Council on Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, placing UW among the top research institutions in the nation. This achievement reflects UW's commitment to

research excellence, innovation, and economic development while enhancing the value of a UW degree and attracting top-tier faculty and students. The university's research enterprise has grown significantly, with \$166 million in annual research expenditures—an increase of 78 percent since 2021—and nearly 100 Ph.D. graduates each year. This milestone reinforces the importance of research across all disciplines, including the groundbreaking work being done in education, learning sciences, and interdisciplinary collaboration within our college.

To learn more, visit: <https://www.uwyo.edu/news/2025/02/uw-ascends-to-highest-level-of-research-universities.html>

**Celebrating Career and Technical Education in Wyoming:** On Monday, Governor Mark Gordon signed a proclamation recognizing the importance of Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Wyoming. It was inspiring to join high school CTE students, educators, legislators, and other stakeholders in celebrating the impact of these programs on workforce development and student success.

I was pleased to attend alongside Levi Moore, Jody Evans, Rob Hill, Colby Gull, and Marsha Gull. We also had the opportunity to connect with College of Education alumna and former WACTE president, Megan Garnhart. Among the students in attendance are future College of Education CTE teacher candidates, and it was a great opportunity to meet them and learn more about their goals and opinions.

**LDT Students Publish on AI and Doctoral Education:** Learning, Design, and Technology (LDT) EdD students Carrie Kell and Brian Kraeer, along with their advisor and committee chair William Cain, have published a new article in *Impacting Education*, the CPED journal on EdD educational practices and research. Titled "Can AI Facilitate a Human-Centric Approach to Writing a Problem of Practice Dissertation? Insights from Doctoral Students," their paper explores the evolving role of generative AI in doctoral education. Their work highlights key themes of the problem of practice, inquiry as practice, and mentoring, contributing to ongoing discussions about AI's integration into higher education.

**LDT Student Reva Lobatos Receives National Teaching Award:** Another of our LDT EdD students, Reva Lobatos, will travel to Washington, D.C., this week to receive the prestigious Horace Mann Award for Teaching Excellence from the NEA Foundation. A second-grade educator at Fremont County School District #25 in Riverton, Wyoming, Reva is one of only five honorees nationwide to receive this award. She will be honored at the Salute to Excellence in Education gala on February 14, receive \$10,000, and be considered for the NEA Member Benefits Award—one of public education's highest honors.

These recognitions showcase the outstanding scholarship and professional excellence of our students and faculty. Congratulations to Carrie, Brian, and Reva!

**Call for Proposals: Spring 2025 Faculty and Student Awards:** The College of Education is now accepting proposals for the Ellbogen Dean's Fund Student Award Program, the Mary Garland Early Career Fellowship, and the Patricia McClurg Education Faculty Fellowship. These awards provide valuable support for faculty and students engaged in impactful research and scholarly activities.

For more details, view the full calls for proposals here:  
John P. "Jack" Ellbogen Dean's Fund Student Award

Program: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PwF\\_FcXsRGLnatybiwhcR9eirVB\\_ISdV/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PwF_FcXsRGLnatybiwhcR9eirVB_ISdV/view)  
Mary Garland Early Career  
Fellowship: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EQohMuaj4QcbDmCd8ONje11crfIPSk9R/view>  
Patricia McClurg Education Faculty  
Fellowship: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SqNeQkqGICFYZSM0-wplXb1twoKOCT-/view>

All proposals must be submitted to Jake Orr ([jorr2@uwyo.edu](mailto:jorr2@uwyo.edu)) in the Associate Dean's Office by 5:00 PM on April 23, 2025. If you have any questions as you begin drafting your proposals, please reach out to Jake, Associate Dean Alan Buss ([abuss@uwyo.edu](mailto:abuss@uwyo.edu)), or Associate Dean Pete Moran ([moranpw@uwyo.edu](mailto:moranpw@uwyo.edu)).

**Celebrating Excellence: Jake Orr and Levi Moore Recognized in "Tip of the Hat":** A big shoutout to Jake Orr and Levi Moore, who were recently recognized in the "Tip of the Hat" for their helpfulness and dedication to the College of Education. Levi's deep knowledge and kindness make him an incredible resource for students and colleagues, while Jake's organization and reliability help keep everything running smoothly in the Dean's Office.

These small recognitions go a long way in fostering a supportive and appreciative work environment. I encourage everyone to take a moment to recognize a colleague who makes a difference. Let's continue building a culture of celebrating each other's contributions!

To submit a nomination, visit: <https://www.uwyo.edu/staffsenate/awards.html>

**Hot Chocolate with the Dean – February 18:** Take a moment to warm up next Tuesday, February 18, from 9:00–10:00 AM. Join me in front of the Education Auditorium to connect with students over a cup of hot chocolate, a snack, and friendly conversation.

I hope to see you there!

As we step into this season of recognition, I encourage all of us to celebrate our colleagues and students. Whether through formal awards, small acknowledgments, or simply pointing out great work, these gestures reinforce the collaborative community we continue to build in the College of Education. Take advantage of this time to highlight the positive work happening around us.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend!

Jenna

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## February 7, 2025

Dear colleagues,

I hope you had a productive week and had a chance to enjoy the unusually warm weather in Laramie.

Here are the latest updates from the College of Education:

**Spring College Meeting:** On Monday, the College of Education held its first spring 2025 college meeting. Tara Evans, Vice President and General Counsel, kicked off the meeting with an informative discussion on recent legislative developments and their potential impact on the



university. Barbara Hickman, Associate Professor in Educational Leadership, followed with a breakdown of upcoming bills related to education in Wyoming.

**College Awards 2025 – Call for Nominations:** The time has come to recognize the accomplishments of faculty, staff, and students in the College of Education. Nominations are now open for the 2025 College Awards, and we encourage faculty, staff, and students to take a moment to acknowledge their colleagues and peers who have gone above and beyond. All submissions must be sent to Jake Orr ([jorr2@uwyo.edu](mailto:jorr2@uwyo.edu)) in the Associate Dean's Office by 5:00 PM on March 31, 2025. For full details and nomination guidelines, visit: [College Awards](#).

**Call for Faculty Awards 2025:** The Office of Academic Affairs and the Faculty Senate's Faculty Development Committee are accepting nominations for the John P. Ellbogen Meritorious Classroom Teaching Award, George Duke Humphrey Distinguished Faculty Award, Hollon Family Award for Teaching Excellence in Off-Campus Programs, John P. Ellbogen Lifetime Teaching Award, and the "Laramigo" Award for Community Engagement. These awards recognize excellence in teaching, scholarship, service, and community engagement. Nomination packets are due by February 28, 2025, and should be submitted electronically to [facultyaffairs@uwyo.edu](mailto:facultyaffairs@uwyo.edu). Please take a moment to recognize and nominate a deserving colleague in the College of Education for their outstanding contributions. For full award descriptions and nomination requirements, visit: <http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/awards/faculty/index.html>.

**National School Counseling Week 2025:** As we conclude National School Counseling Week (Feb. 3-7, 2025), we recognize the vital role school counselors play in supporting student success and well-being. This year's theme, "School Counseling: Helping Students Thrive," highlights the profound impact counselors have in guiding students academically, socially, and in career planning. Sponsored by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), this week serves as a reminder of the expertise school counselors bring to our education system. To learn more and explore available resources, visit: <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Events-Professional-Development/Events/National-School-Counseling-Week>.

**Community Event:** Relative Theatrics' *The Niceties* opens at the Gryphon Theatre in the Laramie Plains Civic Center. Produced in collaboration with the UW Honors College, the production includes a special post-show talkback facilitated by College of Education faculty member Steve Bialostok on Thursday, February 13. This discussion, open to the public regardless of performance attendance, invites attendees to engage with the play's themes and historical context.

**Student Success Center Update:** The Student Success Center is in the process of hiring a new Office Associate following Kelsie Tarver's departure earlier this year. While we will miss Kelsie, we are excited for her as she moves on to a great new opportunity and wish her all the best. Interviews for her replacement will begin next week, with the goal of filling the position before fall 2025 advising starts on March 24. The team is also finalizing the screening of 147 residency applications for students entering their residency semester in spring 2026. Additionally, preparations are underway for New Admitted Student Days and fall 2025 registration. Transfer Admitted Student Day will take place on March 29, followed by New Admitted Student Days on April 8, April 15, April 22, and April 26. Faculty and staff interested in assisting with these events are encouraged to reach out to Jody Evans ([jody.evans@uwyo.edu](mailto:jody.evans@uwyo.edu)) or the Student Success Center team.

**AI in Education Committee:** Artificial Intelligence is rapidly transforming education, influencing how students learn and how educators teach, research, and assess outcomes. To proactively explore AI's impact, the College of Education is forming a committee, led by Mia Williams, Assistant Professor in CLAD, to critically examine AI's implications, support faculty and students, and develop forward-thinking research and policies. This initiative aims to ensure AI is integrated ethically and effectively to enhance human-centered learning. If you are interested in participating, please complete the interest survey: [https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cV1mc5JNi8IYbMW](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cV1mc5JNi8IYbMW). Mia will follow up with next steps.

**Stay Connected with the College of Education:** We remind and encourage everyone to follow the College of Education on social media to stay informed about news, events, and achievements. Connect with us on your preferred platform:

X: <https://x.com/uwyocoed?lang=en&mx=2>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/school/university-of-wyoming-college-of-education/posts/?feedView=all>

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/uwyo\\_ed/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/uwyo_ed/?hl=en)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WyoCollegeOfEd/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCikM7A50XrUNhje7bEyfyg>

Thank you all for your continued hard work. Have a wonderful weekend, and stay warm, everyone!

Jenna

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## January 31, 2025

Dear colleagues,

We are closing out January with icy sidewalks, cold temperatures, and a legislative session in full swing. Meanwhile, here in the College of Education, we have been keeping busy with faculty candidate visits, lively research presentations, and important initiatives taking shape. This week, we welcomed four candidates to campus—two for the Wyoming Excellence Chair in Special Education and two for the Fisher Family Literacy Professor position. The research presentations were well attended, and I want to thank everyone who took time to engage with the candidates and showcase the strength of our community.

Some of us from the College attended Senior Vice Provost Tami Benham Deal's retirement gathering yesterday afternoon. Dr. Benham Deal has been a key figure on campus for over three decades and has guided UW, including the College of Education, through many transitions and challenges. As we look ahead, we will miss her presence and leadership on



campus, but we celebrate her remarkable career and extend our congratulations on a well-deserved retirement.

With that, below are this week's updates.

**Reminder on the University and Political Neutrality:** As political conversations continue to shape education in Wyoming and beyond, many of us may find ourselves reflecting on how these changes impact our work and the broader community. While the College of Education, as part of the University of Wyoming, remains institutionally neutral in political matters, we value an environment where students, faculty, and staff—as private citizens—can engage in thoughtful dialogue and civic engagement. Faculty and staff are sometimes called upon to share expertise on educational issues, including in legislative settings, and when policies directly affect the university, UW's Office of Governmental Affairs ensures that institutional interests are represented. For those interested in following legislative developments, you can visit the Wyoming Legislature website here: <https://www.wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2025>. More information about UW's commitment to political neutrality and constructive dialogue can be found here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/govcom/index.html>.

**Program Coordinator Appointments:** The current and incoming Directors of the School of Teacher Education, Scott Chamberlin and Todd Reynolds and, have appointed the following program coordinators for select STE programs:

- Alison Mercier – Curriculum and Instruction
- Anne Perry – Secondary Education
- Joe Schroer – Education Foundation
- Nikki Baldwin – Early Childhood Education
- Alison Mercier – Science Graduate Education
- Scott Chamberlin – Elementary Education until a permanent appointment is made

I appreciate their commitment and contributions to supporting and advancing our programs.

**Updates from the Wyoming School-University Partnership:** The Wyoming School-University Partnership (WSUP) continues its commitment to Wyoming school districts. The Partnership's Governing Board recently voted to support the Wyoming Association of Secondary School Principals (WASSP) Apprenticeship Program, a Department of Labor-registered initiative that pairs aspiring principals with experienced mentors and potential funding opportunities. Additionally, WSUP's Senior Project Coordinator, Nicholas Jesse—a University of Wyoming Communication and Journalism (COJO) alumnus—was recently featured in the COJO Department's newsletter for his contributions to education and the Laramie community. To stay updated on WSUP initiatives, subscribe to their newsletter here: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/d7S5vKN/WSUP>, or view the full January update here: <https://conta.cc/4jrJHsR>.

**Faculty Recognition, PCA Travel Grant:** Anne Aydinian-Perry, Assistant Professor of Secondary Social Studies Education, has been awarded the Peter Rollins Travel Grant for Early-Career Scholars by the Popular Culture Association. This prestigious grant will support her travel to the PCA's annual conference, where she will present her research. Travel grants

are highly competitive, and this recognition highlights the strength of Anne's work and contributions to the field. Congratulations, Anne, on this well-earned honor!

**Student Recognition, Chi Sigma Iota Leadership Fellowship:** Sonah Kho, a doctoral student in Counselor Education & Supervision, has been selected as a 2025-2026 Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) Leadership Fellow. Sonah, who currently serves as the Secretary for UW's CSI chapter, Mu Nu Tau, will participate in national CSI Leadership Fellowship activities beginning May 1. This is an outstanding national recognition within an esteemed international honor society for professional counselors. Congratulations, Sonah!

**College of Education Strategic Task Force:** The College of Education is launching a Strategic Task Force to drive continuous improvement and growth across key areas of our college. I have asked Mark Perkins, Assistant Dean of Assessment, Data, and Accreditation, to lead this effort. The task force will focus on initiatives such as recruitment and retention, advising optimization, course and program assessment, and excellence in instruction. Faculty and staff from across the college are invited to participate, and students will also be engaged throughout the process. If you are interested in contributing your insights and expertise, please complete this brief survey: [https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_0MM5fNKc2GN3q3s](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0MM5fNKc2GN3q3s).

So far, 21 members of the College of Education have signed up! Mark will share further details and an initial meeting date soon.

**Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps, Cohort 4 Nominations:** The call for nominations for Cohort 4 of the Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps (WTMC) closes today, Friday, January 31, at 4:30 p.m. WTMC provides high-quality mentorship training to support early-career educators across the state. If you know a teacher who would make an excellent mentor, please consider submitting a nomination before the deadline: [https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6QFWDzLIKxbZexo](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6QFWDzLIKxbZexo).

**Call for Proposals, Educator Summit on Global Competency:** The University of Wyoming College of Education and Education Abroad are now accepting proposals for the Educator Summit on Global Competency, a 1.5-day conference to be held May 19-20, 2025, in Laramie. Proposals are encouraged from educators and administrators at all levels, with a submission deadline of February 14, 2025. More details can be found on the conference website: <https://www.uwyo.edu/education/conferences/educator-summit/>. An invitation to attend the summit will follow.

**College of Education Meeting Next Monday:** The first College of Education meeting of spring 2025 will be held next Monday in the Union Family Room (second floor) from 12-1 PM. Following some general announcements, Barbara Hickman, Associate Professor in Educational Leadership Program in CLAD will lead a discussion titled "I'm with the Banned and Other Tales of the Legislative Session." While there is a hybrid option for employees at UW-Casper or who have an approved remote work arrangement, all main campus employees are expected to attend in person. I am looking forward to a productive and informative meeting.

Thank you all for your continued engagement and commitment to the success of our students, programs, and broader education community in Wyoming and beyond. As we move forward into

February, I look forward to seeing the great work that will come from these initiatives and recognitions. Wishing you all a wonderful weekend.

Jenna

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## January 24, 2025

Dear colleagues,

I hope everyone had a restful and rejuvenating winter break. As we begin the spring 2025 semester, it is my privilege to welcome you back and to resume sharing my weekly updates. I am excited for the important work we will accomplish together in the College of Education.

Echoing President Seidel's statement from last fall and again last week, the College of Education remains deeply committed to enhancing our service to our students and the state of Wyoming. This includes preparing our students with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive as educators and counselors, while also addressing the unique challenges and opportunities in Wyoming's educational landscape. Through our teaching, research, service, and partnerships, we aim to support rural schools, strengthen workforce development, and ensure that our programs directly contribute to the success of our state's communities and its future.

This semester, we will also propel our efforts in continuous improvement, collaboration, clear communication, and professional growth as we work toward these shared goals.

Below are this week's updates.

**Annual Reviews for Faculty and Staff:** Faculty annual reviews are now in progress. School Directors are reviewing cases, and they will be meeting with faculty to discuss evaluations. Once this stage is complete, Associate Deans Alan Buss and Pete Moran will conduct dean-level annual evaluations, with final submissions to Academic Affairs due by March 17, 2025. Faculty members who have questions about reappointment, tenure, or promotion should contact their School Director. The College of Education reappointment, tenure, and promotion guidelines can be found here: [https://www.uwyo.edu/education/files/documents/coed-reappointment-tenure-promotion-guidelines\\_5.13.24.pdf](https://www.uwyo.edu/education/files/documents/coed-reappointment-tenure-promotion-guidelines_5.13.24.pdf)

Annual reviews for staff will be conducted in the WyoCloud HCM system. Staff members who have questions about their annual review should contact their supervisor. More information about staff evaluations, including guidelines and timelines, is available on the HR website: <https://www.uwyo.edu/hr/employee-relations/performance-management/index.html>.

**2025 Wyoming Legislative Session:** The 68th session of the Wyoming Legislature commenced on January 14 and is scheduled to adjourn on March 7. University of Wyoming employees are encouraged to review UW Regulation 12-4, which provides guidelines for engaging with elected officials, agencies, and authorities.

As citizens of Wyoming and members of the university community, UW employees have the right to express their personal beliefs and viewpoints. That said, please remember to avoid speaking on behalf of the university unless you have been specifically asked to do so. Employees asked to provide expertise or testimony to the Legislature must coordinate these

requests with their supervisors and Vice President for Governmental Affairs and Community Engagement, Mike Smith, at [msmith21@uwyo.edu](mailto:msmith21@uwyo.edu).

For additional resources and information on citizen engagement in the legislative process, please visit the Wyoming Legislature's website and explore the "Citizen Engagement" tab.

Also, as I shared with you last week, the 2025 General Session Bills are now available on the Wyoming Legislature website: <https://www.wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2025>. Over the next month, legislators will discuss policies that may be implemented in the state. Many of these bills are relevant to education, so I encourage you to explore the site and review any topics that interest you.

**Celebration of Excellence in Research and Innovation:** Last night, the University of Wyoming Research and Economic Development Division hosted the Celebration of Excellence in Research and Innovation, an event recognizing exceptional research achievements across the university. This occasion honored faculty and college accomplishments and presented four university-wide awards for outstanding research contributions.

I am proud to share that Emanuel "Emil" Eidin, Assistant Professor of Secondary Science Education (STE), was recognized for Excellence in Research and Innovation. Emil's research focuses on integrating computational systems thinking tools to prepare students to address complex problems that encompass social, scientific, and ethical dimensions.

Included in the last photo below from the evening are UW Trustee Brad LaCroix and Emil's son, who joined in celebrating this milestone.

Congratulations, Emil, on your outstanding research achievements! We look forward to witnessing your continued excellence and contributions to the field.

**Professional Appointment:** Miriam Sanders, Assistant Professor in Secondary Mathematics Education (STE), has been accepted into the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (AMTE) Service, Teaching, and Research (STaR) Fellows program. This early career induction program supports tenure-track faculty in mathematics education through professional development, networking, and leadership training. The program includes a summer institute in Park City, Utah, ongoing online development, and a pre-conference at the 2026 AMTE annual meeting. This is an impressive achievement that highlights Miriam's dedication to advancing mathematics education and her commitment to professional growth. We are excited to see how her participation in this program will further enrich her work and positively impact her students, colleagues, and the broader field of mathematics education. Congratulations, Miriam!

**Faculty Research and Grant Award:** Ling Zhang, Assistant Professor in Special Education (CLAD), has published a new article, "Personalization, Individualization, and Differentiation: What Do They Mean and How Do They Differ for Students with Disabilities?" in *Exceptionality*. The study examines how personalization, individualization, and differentiation are referenced in U.S. education law and explores their implications for creating equitable learning environments for students with disabilities.

Ling Zhang has also received a \$50,000 subaward from EIDU, a non-profit education organization in Germany, to develop and test a personalization algorithm for automating the sequence of learning content on a mobile learning platform. This project, supported by the

Gates Foundation, will focus on delivering interactive and personalized learning experiences for students and teachers in Kenya.

Ling's work exemplifies a powerful blend of research excellence and a commitment to improving educational outcomes on both local and global scales. We are proud to celebrate her accomplishments and look forward to seeing the positive impact of her efforts. Congratulations, Ling!

**Indian Education for All Internship:** The Buffalo Bill Center of the West is seeking an Indian Education for All Intern for summer 2025. This internship provides an opportunity to engage with Native education outreach and support culturally sustaining pedagogy. The application deadline is March 1, 2025. More details can be found at the following links:

Internship Information: <https://centerofthewest.org/learn/internships/>

Indian Education for All Intern Details: [https://centerofthewest.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2025-Internship\\_IEFA.pdf](https://centerofthewest.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2025-Internship_IEFA.pdf)

**Spring 2025 College of Education Book Group:** Leslie Rush (STE) and Jonathan Carrier (CLAD) are organizing a book group for College of Education faculty and staff this spring. The group will read and discuss *Building Communities of Practice in Higher Education: Co-creating, Collaborating and Enriching Working Cultures*, edited by Camila Devis-Rozental and Susanne Rose Clarke. Meetings will be held in person on campus every two weeks, with a Zoom option available upon request.

This work aligns perfectly with the College's commitment to propelling our efforts in continuous improvement, collaboration, clear communication, and professional growth. Many thanks to Leslie and Jonathan for their leadership and dedication in facilitating and supporting these meaningful conversations and opportunities for growth.

If you are interested, please fill out the survey by February 7, 2025, so that books can be ordered. The first meeting will take place during the week of February 17, 2025.

Survey link: [https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_3kLrDnk9RaT25am](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3kLrDnk9RaT25am)

**Teaching Support Reminder:** The Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning (ECTL) offers a wealth of resources and support for faculty and graduate assistants looking to enhance their teaching. From workshops and consultations to funding opportunities, the ECTL provides invaluable tools for fostering effective and innovative instruction. For those looking to refine their teaching practices or explore new approaches, the ECTL is an incredible resource. More information can be found at <https://www.uwyo.edu/ctl/index.html>.

Finally, as part of our commitment to continuous improvement, I will be sharing an announcement next week with details about the College of Education Strategic Taskforce. This initiative will provide all faculty and staff members with the opportunity to voice their opinions and contribute their insights on a variety of important matters within our College. Please stay tuned!

I look forward to all that we will accomplish together this semester. As always, please feel free to share any updates or announcements for future weekly updates.

Have a warm weekend!

## Fall 2024

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**December 13, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

As finals week wraps up, it seems that many updates are flooding in. I will keep my introduction brief this week so we can enjoy campus events for the holidays, university updates, and some accomplishments from members of the College of Education.

**UW Libraries Alt-Textbook Grant Award:** Congratulations to Anne Perry and Miriam Sanders for receiving the UW Libraries Open Educational Resource (OER) Textbook Creation Grant! Their funded project, “Secondary Mathematics and Social Studies Methods: Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy,” will focus on equity-centered instruction in mathematics and social studies education. The textbook will train pre-service teachers to incorporate the **Indian**

**Education for All** Wyoming state standards introduced by House Bill 76. Anne and Miriam will develop this innovative resource through Pressbooks, making it openly accessible for future educators. Well done, Anne and Miriam!

**Exploring AI in Special Education:** Ling Zhang, Assistant Professor of Special Education, and her colleagues—Richard Carter, former College of Education faculty member and now the Ted S. Hasselbring Chair of Special Education Technology at Indiana University, Yuting Liu, and Peng Peng—have published a new article, “Let’s CHAT About Artificial Intelligence for Students With Disabilities: A Systematic Literature Review and Meta-Analysis.” The study examines the long history of AI supporting students with disabilities, applying cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) to analyze the dynamic relationships between technology, students, and their learning communities. Well done, Ling and team!

**Literacy Research Association (LRA):** Associate Professor Todd Reynolds represented the College of Education in multiple capacities at this year’s LRA conference in Atlanta, Georgia. He presented two studies: “What if Replication is Plagiarism? How Viewing English as a Discipline Should Change How We Teach,” which explores the early development of English as a discipline and its ongoing impact on instruction, and “I’m Not Afraid to Take My Time and Actually Understand It: Strengths and Challenges When Reading Literary Texts,” a collaboration with Drs. Leslie Rush, Jodi Holschuh, and Jodi Lampi, examining preservice teachers’ and developmental literacy students’ experiences with literary texts.

Additionally, Todd was named the Area Chair for Text Analysis, Adult, Children’s, and Young Adults Literature (Area 9). In this role, he will collaborate with other area chairs and Conference Chair Cindy Brock to organize sessions for next year’s conference. Cindy Brock, the Wyoming Excellence Chair in Literacy Education, currently serves as the President-Elect of the Literacy Research Association and is set to serve as its President during the 2025-26 term.



Todd and his research team also recently had an article accepted in the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. Titled "Making Covert Processes Explicit: A Disciplinary Heuristic for Reading Literary Text," the article outlines instructional strategies to help students develop interpretations of literary texts through collaborative discussions and asset-based approaches. Excellent work!

**NAGC Outstanding Dissertation Award:** Anna Payne, Assistant Professor of Mathematics Education, was recognized with the 2024 Outstanding Dissertation Award by the National Association of Gifted Children's Research & Evaluation Network. Her dissertation, "Mathematics Teachers' Likelihood of Recommending Subject-Specific Acceleration: A Conceptual Replication Study," was completed in 2023 at Baylor University under the guidance of Drs. Todd Kettler and Trena Wilkerson. Congratulations, Anna!

**J. Michael Parker Award:** Thilina Wickramaarachchi, a PhD candidate in the Curriculum and Instruction (Literacy) program, received the prestigious J. Michael Parker Award at the 2024 Literacy Research Association Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. The award recognizes research in adult literacy and encourages work with diverse populations in formal and community settings. Thilina's paper, "The Bilingual/Biliteracy Journey of an Adult ESL Learner: Insights From a Student-Generated Funds of Knowledge Approach," explores the bilingual and biliteracy experiences of an adult ESL learner. The study highlights "difficult knowledge," "first language knowledge," "English knowledge," and "other knowledge" as student-generated funds of knowledge that challenge deficit views of adult immigrant students both in and out of ESL classrooms. Congratulations, Thilina, on this well-deserved honor!

**WYSCA Annual Conference Seeking Presenters:** The **Wyoming School Counselor Association (WYSCA)** is looking for presenters for its 2025 Annual Conference, which will be held in Casper at the Ramkota Inn on **February 19-20**. Graduate students in all K-12 educational areas are encouraged to submit presentations and take advantage of this opportunity to connect with professionals from across Wyoming's school mental health community. For more details, visit the WYSCA website at <https://wysca.wildapricot.org/>

**UW Staff Senate Holiday Market:** The annual Holiday Market will take place today, Friday, December 13, from 9 AM to 5 PM at the UW Conference Center attached to the Hilton Garden Inn. President Seidel has granted 1.5 hours of release time for staff to participate; please coordinate with your supervisor.

**Organization Chart:** The Office of the Dean has completed the 2024 version of the College of Education General Organization Chart. This document illustrates the administrative structure of the college and can serve as a resource. Please find the PDF attached. We are also in the process of creating a more detailed organization chart that includes individual names. This version will be shared as soon as it is complete.

**Dean's Table:** I recently had a dinner meeting with College of Education students - including Paige Jaramillo (Elementary Education/Early Childhood), Cambria Davis (Elementary Education), Sammi Markwardt (Secondary Social Studies Education), Ava Collins (Elementary Education), and Alexis Vaille (Elementary Education) - to discuss the semester's progress and their study. Jim Mathis, a University of Wyoming Board of Trustee member and the Owner/President of WyoTech, also stopped by to join our conversation. Trustee Mathis shared his perspective on the critical role educators play across all content areas and levels, sparking an engaging discussion with the students about the future of education and strategies to support



student success. It was a meaningful and insightful gathering, and I look forward to more opportunities to connect with our students and hear more about their lives and experiences at UW CoE.

**Dean's Gratitude Banquet:** This evening, the College of Education will host the Dean's Gratitude Banquet, a celebration of all members and supporters of the College of Education, as well as an opportunity to look ahead to the coming year. The event will be held at the Alice Hardie Stevens Center on the Ivinson Mansion lot from 5:30 to 8:00 PM. Faculty, staff, advocacy board members, donors, and other collaborators are invited to join us as we honor their contributions and recognize their impact. The evening will also include a few family-friendly activities for everyone to enjoy.

**Winter Commencement Reminder:** And, with a quick turnaround, we will see you all at the Winter 2024 Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, December 14, at 10:00 AM in the Arena Auditorium, celebrating both graduate and undergraduate students. Some reminders: Faculty who are participating in the processional must arrive in regalia. Faculty hooding doctoral or master's students should arrive at the Fieldhouse by 8:00 AM for formal hooding and photographs. Faculty who are not hooding students should arrive by 8:45 AM for lineup. All members are highly encouraged to attend.

**Weekly Updates Resuming in January:** With the semester now complete, I will pause my weekly updates for a few weeks during winter break and plan to resume at the start of the spring semester on January 24. In the meantime, please feel free to send me any updates, and I will be sure to include them in my welcome-back message in January.

Until then, I wish everyone a warm and productive remainder of their December and early January.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

Jenna

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## December 6, 2024

Dear colleagues,

Welcome back from Thanksgiving break. As we transition into the final stretch of the semester, the pace on campus has noticeably changed. Students are preparing for exams, final projects are coming together, and faculty and staff are providing crucial support during this busy time.

This is also a time to reflect on the semester's progress. From collaborative research initiatives to impactful community engagement and academic achievements, the College of Education continues to advance its mission to serve Wyoming in meaningful ways. As the holiday season

approaches, it is an opportunity to both acknowledge these efforts and prepare for the new opportunities awaiting us in the coming year.

With that, here are this week's updates:

**Final Fall 2024 College Meeting:** The College of Education faculty and staff convened on Monday, December 2, for the final college meeting of the semester. Colby Gull, Trustees Education Initiative (TEI) Managing Director, gave a presentation on the various components and initiatives of TEI and illustrated how these activities fit alongside the work of faculty and staff both within the university and throughout Wyoming. Stella Nowell and Mary Todd, Assistant Lecturers in Literacy Education, walked us through their work revising and updating key literacy courses to ensure alignment while still allowing some flexibility for different instructors' approaches. Finally, I shared an update on my role as the John P. "Jack" Ellbogen Dean and how it functions as an entity that balances relationships with stakeholder groups within the college, across the university, and throughout Wyoming to fulfill the primary mission of Wyoming's flagship land-grant university to serve the state. These meetings have come to serve as forums to highlight the array of pieces that comprise our college and, ultimately, inspire better cooperation and collaboration across units.

If you need a refresher on TEI, be sure to check out the new TEI website at <https://www.uwyo.edu/tei/>

**Learning Science Undergraduate Research Poster Session:** Today, December 6, join us for the UW EDST 2250 Learning Science Undergraduate Research Poster Session at 11:00 AM in the Ed Annex Main Lobby. This exciting event highlights the innovative research of our talented undergraduate students, with projects exploring learning styles, the role of video games in education, social-emotional intelligence, and more.

Come support our students as they share their insights and contribute to the growing field of Learning Science. We look forward to seeing you there!

**Bright Start Early Childhood Intervention Conference:** Marisa Macy, the John P. Ellbogen Foundation Professor of Early Childhood Education, recently participated in a keynote symposium at the Annual Bright Start Early Childhood Intervention Conference in London, UK. This event, hosted by the Bright Start Early Childhood Foundation, focused on "The LINK Forum on Authentic Assessment for Early Childhood Intervention: International & Interdisciplinary Voices."

The 2-hour forum brought together experts from 18 countries to discuss topics such as eligibility, program planning, progress monitoring, parent engagement, and virtual assessment in early childhood programs. Marisa co-presented alongside international colleagues, sharing research and approaches to assessment practices. The symposium engaged over 130 participants, both in person and virtually, through WordCloud formats to encourage discussion and collaboration.

**Wyoming School-University Partnership (WSUP) Updates:** The Wyoming School-University Partnership's latest monthly newsletter highlights several important developments. Burlington and Rocky Mountain High Schools in Big Horn County School District #1 were recognized as Schools of Distinction at the College for Every Student Brilliant Pathways Conference for their achievements in college and career readiness. The WSUP team also presented at the College

for Every Student National Conference on topics ranging from career readiness to non-traditional pathways. Looking ahead, the next WSUP Governing Board meeting will take place virtually on January 15, 2024.

**Social Studies Research and Teaching Highlights:** I have a few recent social studies items to include this week. A team, including Anne Aydinian-Perry, Assistant Professor in Secondary Social Studies Education, received funding through the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse's Integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities grant. Their project explores the use of generative AI to develop curriculum addressing the historical impacts of race riots in the United States, employing multiple layers of analysis to assess its efficacy.

In addition, Anne presented at the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) conference in Boston and focused on topics like teaching bias and omission in history and exploring barriers to voting through student-led inquiry.

**Dean's Gratitude Banquet:** Next Friday, December 13, the College of Education will host the Dean's Gratitude Banquet, celebrating all contributors to the College of Education in 2024 and looking forward to the next year. The event will be held at the Alice Hardie Stevens Center on the Iverson Mansion lot from 5:30-8:00 PM. Faculty, staff, advocacy board members, donors, and other collaborators are welcome and will be celebrated and highlighted during this event, and there will also be a few family-friendly activities to enjoy. If you would like to attend, please feel free to send me an email letting me know.

**Winter Commencement Reminder:** The Winter 2024 Commencement Ceremony will take place on Saturday, December 14, at 10:00 AM in the Arena Auditorium, celebrating both graduate and undergraduate students. Faculty who are participating in the processional must arrive in regalia. Faculty hooding doctoral or master's students should arrive at the Fieldhouse by 8:00 AM for formal hooding and photographs. Faculty who are not hooding students should arrive by 8:45 AM for lineup.

There will be a rehearsal for volunteers, faculty, and marshals on Friday, December 13, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM in the Arena Auditorium. Attendance is encouraged to ensure smooth proceedings and to familiarize yourself with the ceremony layout and responsibilities. All members are highly encouraged to attend.

**Why Your Attendance Matters:** Commencement is one of the most significant milestones in our students' lives. It represents the culmination of their hard work, dedication, and achievements. Your presence shows our collective support for their success and makes this moment even more meaningful. By attending, you honor their accomplishments and strengthen the sense of community within our college.

Thank you for prioritizing this important event. 🎓

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As the semester nears its end, I encourage you to stay focused and maintain your efforts. This is a critical time for our students and the college, requiring attention to detail and discipline. Please ensure your work reflects the high standards we set for ourselves and instills confidence in those we serve. At the same time, please remember to take care of yourselves, and balance your dedication to excellence with the self-care needed to sustain your well-being and effectiveness during this busy period.

**November 22, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

And just like that, the Thanksgiving season has arrived, and the semester is drawing to a close. As our students prepare for final examinations, papers, presentations, and practicum placements, I hope all of us to find time to see our families and loved ones, reflect on the semester, and prepare ourselves for a busy rest of the semester. This season also offers an opportunity to express our gratitude for what we have at the College of Education: a dynamic community of learners and educators, strong collaborations with school districts and community colleges across Wyoming, and an incredible group of donors, friends, and supporters who share our mission of enriching the lives of Wyoming citizens through education.

It was an active week on campus with several interesting updates:

**College of Education Distinguished Speaker:** The Dean's Office was thrilled to welcome Mandy Smoker Broaddus to campus yesterday to present on Wyoming's Indian Education for All Act. Since 2021, the act requires that K-12 schools offer social studies curricula that teach all Wyoming students about the history, traditional culture, and contemporary contributions of Wyoming and regional Native American tribes. Wyoming Social Studies Content and Performance Standards have been updated accordingly.

The talk and discussion were educative and dove deeper into other states' Indian Education for All acts and similar efforts by other dozens of other states like Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Oklahoma. After the discussion, Mandy was treated to a tour of UW's Native American Education, Research and Cultural Center by College of Education student Darwin St Clair. It was an excellent event!

Learn more about the Act and access materials and teaching resources about Wyoming's two main tribes, the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapahoe, as well as other regional Native American tribes on the Wyoming Department of Education website:

<https://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/native-american-education/#:~:text=The%20bill%2C%20which%20became%20law,known%20at%20each%20grade%20level.>

**Board of Trustees Meeting:** This week was also the Board of Trustees (BoT) monthly meeting from Wednesday to Friday. Important topics were discussed, and you can continue to stay up to date on the agenda, report, and public meeting minutes by visiting the Board of Trustees website at <https://www.uwyo.edu/trustees/2024-meeting-agendas-materials-and-minutes/november-20-22-2024-meeting.html>

**Wyoming's Future Farmers of America (FFA) Fall Conference:** Fifteen Agricultural Education ATA members made an impact at the Wyoming FFA Fall FIRE Conference in Casper this past weekend. These outstanding students led six different leadership and career development workshops, reaching over 600 freshman and sophomore FFA members through

engaging, hands-on activities. The energy was contagious as students facilitated activities ranging from soil analysis to team-building exercises, inspiring the next generation of agricultural leaders. Four student teachers also participated alongside their mentor teachers, using this opportunity to grow professionally and lay the groundwork for a successful spring semester.

**Wyoming Education Leaders Conference:** Margaret Hudson and John Heim, both faculty members in the School of Counseling, Leadership, Advocacy and Design, attended the Wyoming Education Leaders Conference, held November 10–12 in Casper. This event brought together leaders from the Wyoming Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals (WAEMSP), Wyoming Association of Secondary School Principals (WASSP), Wyoming Council of Administrators of Special Education (WCASE), and Wyoming Curriculum Directors Association (WCDA).

During the conference, principal mentors from cohort one of the Wyoming Principal Mentor Program were recognized for achieving national principal mentor certification and completing professional development through the College of Education. Margaret Hudson and John Heim co-presented a session on the program in collaboration with partners from the Wyoming Department of Education.

Thank you all for everything you do!

Jenna

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## November 15, 2024

Dear colleagues,

This week's updates continue to highlight the outstanding work that reflects our shared commitment to serving Wyoming and the broader educational community. Through school district and community college outreach, undergraduate and graduate student work, faculty research, staff contributions, and dedicated support for student success, these efforts define a College of Education that exemplifies leadership and drives educational progress forward.

**Dunham Family Fellows Capitol Visit:** The 2024-25 Dunham Family Fellows recently visited the Wyoming State Capitol and the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) for a valuable field trip. During the visit, the fellows toured the Capitol with former Senate President Tony Ross and had the opportunity to engage in discussions with Governor Mark Gordon and Senate President Ogden Driskill. They also met with Wanda Maloney, Chief Policy Officer at the WDE, to gain insights into the department's work and Wyoming's education policy landscape. I am grateful to our colleagues who assisted with and enjoyed accompanying the trip, making it a memorable experience for the fellows.

The Dunham Family Fellows program, generously supported by Dave and Kelly Dunham of Sheridan, provides essential financial assistance during student teaching and fosters the growth of future teacher leaders. We are very grateful to Kelly, who recently joined the College of Education Advocacy Board, and to Dave, who serves on the Cowboy Joe Club—a fundraising organization for University of Wyoming athletics—for their dedication and vision in supporting

the next generation of educators. This year's cohort includes Samantha Chernogorec, Sophia Destefano, McKailyn Malles, Michael Newton, and Rachel Sanchez, who are eager to carry forward this legacy of educational leadership.

**Reminder: Education Speaker Series with Mandy Smoker Broaddus:** A reminder that the College of Education will host a Distinguished Speaker on November 21, featuring Mandy Smoker Broaddus, former Montana Poet Laureate and advocate for Indian Education for All. Mandy will present on Wyoming's Indian Education for All Act from 12–2 PM in the Education Auditorium. The Act, passed in 2018 and implemented in 2021, requires Wyoming K-12 schools to include social studies curriculum about Native American history, government, culture and contemporary contributions. This event is open to the public. Please see the attached poster for further details.

**Upcoming Book Announcement:** Congratulations to Steve Bialostok, Professor in the School of Teacher Education, on securing a book contract with the University of Nebraska Press! His forthcoming book, *Playing to the End: Older Black Men Creating Black Place in an Era of Change*, will be part of the Anthropology of Contemporary America Series and is expected to be released next fall.

**Literacy Research Center and Clinic (LRCC) Update:** The Literacy Research Center and Clinic (LRCC) continues to stay active in the state. Following literacy needs assessments in school districts statewide, LRCC faculty have delivered professional development in Sheridan and Pavillion, with additional sessions planned for Wheatland High School. Faculty are also consulting with districts in Jackson Hole, Lander, and Cheyenne. Additionally, with more than double the student enrollment from last fall, the LRCC tutoring clinic continues to increase its capacity and outreach. LRCC faculty will also present at the Wyoming School Board Association Conference, the National Council for Teachers of English Conference in Boston, and the Literacy Research Association Conference in Atlanta. The LRCC plans to wrap up the semester by completing and implementing the LRCC's next five-year strategic plan.

**2023 Lantz Distinguished Professorship Update: Wind River Reservation Project:** As the 2023 Lantz Distinguished Professor, Lydiah Nganga expresses her gratitude to the Everett D. and Elizabeth Lantz Distinguished Professorship, which supports her two-year project on the Wind River Reservation. This project focuses on best practices and professional development in Culturally Relevant Pedagogies (CRP) for Native American students and has fostered collaboration among educators, community members, and the College of Education. Highlights include four professional development sessions attended by more than fifty participants, with findings presented at NCSS and AERA. Upcoming goals include additional sessions on trauma-informed practices and a "Celebrating Native American Education" initiative.

**Graduate Defense Announcements:** As we progress through the semester, several graduate students are preparing to present their Plan B defenses on diverse research topics in science, mathematics, and education. Below is a snapshot of upcoming defenses, and more presentations may follow:

- Britnee Geringer (STE)
- Project: *"Trauma-Informed Practice in Early Childhood Education Professional Development Curriculum Guide"*



- Date & Time: Friday, November 8, 2024, at 3:00 PM  
(Zoom: <https://uwyo.zoom.us/j/441883181>)
- Megan Allen & Shawna Mattson (SMTC)
- Projects: Megan Allen: *"Balancing Clarity and Inquiry"* | Shawna Mattson: *"Bridging the Gap: Collaborative Professionalism"*
- Date & Time: Thursday, November 14, 2024, from 3:00 - 4:00 PM (Hill Hall 256,  
Zoom: <https://uwyo.zoom.us/j/91260996792>)
- Dusty Toppenberg (SMTC)
- Project: *"How Student Beliefs about Anthropogenic Climate Change Develop after a Socioscientific Issue Unit"*
- Date & Time: Friday, November 22, 2024, from 1:30 - 3:30 PM (Hill Hall 256,  
Zoom: <https://uwyo.zoom.us/j/96449204682>)

**Fall 2024 Commencement Preparation:** With Winter 2024 commencement approaching, faculty, staff, and volunteers are encouraged to review final details to ensure a smooth ceremony. Rehearsal will be held on Thursday, December 13, from 10:00 AM to noon in the Arena Auditorium. The commencement ceremony will begin at 10:00 AM on Saturday, December 14, in the Arena Auditorium. Faculty hooding master's students should arrive at 8:00 AM, and those not involved in hooding may arrive by 8:45 AM. Faculty accompanying doctoral students will gather in the Fieldhouse for the processional and on-stage hooding. I hope to see everyone there to celebrate our students!

**Student Trivia Activity:** On Wednesday, November 13, members of the Dean's Office and the Student Success Center hosted a trivia activity for College of Education students, with prizes and snacks. Students answered questions on key student knowledge—such as reciting their W numbers, understanding what an "IR" is, and knowing how to book appointments with advisors. Students enjoyed testing their knowledge and grabbing a snack between classes.

**Governor's Business Forum:** From November 12-14, I attended the Governor's Business Forum at the UW Marian H. Rochelle Gateway Center. UW proudly partnered in this event to advance Wyoming's economic growth. This year's forum included a presentation on "Economic Forecast & Trends Impacting Wyoming's Growth," moderated by College of Education Advocacy Board member Josh Law, which focused on essential factors shaping the state's economic future. Panels also explored workforce growth, tax policy, housing, and technology, providing valuable insights for Wyoming's industries and communities.

**Strengthening Partnerships with Community Colleges:** Last Tuesday, I joined a dinner with the Presidents of Wyoming's community colleges—including Casper College, Northwest College, Western Wyoming Community College, Sheridan College, Gillette College, and Central Wyoming College—to discuss our collaborative efforts in student recruitment and the streamlining of educational pathways. Also in attendance were Ben Moritz, Executive Director of the Wyoming Community College Commission, Laurel Ballard, Chief Academic and Student Services Officer of the Commission, along with our colleague Rob Hill and former College of Education colleague Curtis Biggs. This gathering provided a valuable opportunity to explore strategies for enhancing student recruitment and access and building stronger pathways to student success across Wyoming.

**Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Updates:** The College of Education cases for reappointment, tenure, and promotion (RTP) have progressed to the College Committee, with

ballots currently being collected. The cases will soon move to the Dean's review before being forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs in preparation for the University RTP meeting. Annual reviews for faculty are also underway, with completion targeted for mid-December in preparation for the mid-January deadline to submit. For more information on Annual Reviews, please visit the Academic Affairs website at <https://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/academic-personnel/reviews/annual.html>

**Board of Trustees Meeting:** Next week, from November 20-22, the University will welcome the Board of Trustees for their monthly meeting. I encourage everyone to tune in. To learn more about the meeting and review the agenda and materials, please visit <https://www.uwyo.edu/trustees/2024-meeting-agendas-materials-and-minutes/november-20-22-2024-meeting.html>

Thank you for reviewing this week's updates. I encourage everyone to keep up the exemplary work that is essential to our College's mission and future. I look forward to sharing more good news in the weeks ahead. Thank you for all that you do!

Jenna

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## November 1, 2024

Dear colleagues,

I hope everyone stayed warm and safe as Laramie and much of the state saw the season's first snow, just in time for Halloween! The dean's office was cheered (and scared!) by the University of Wyoming Lab School Halloween parade earlier this week, and we were ready in the hallway with a bowl of candy.

Associate Deans Pete Moran and Alan Buss and School Directors Courtney McKim and Scott Chamberlin also hosted a small get-together for College of Education staff and faculty yesterday to share some snacks, show off our costumes, and connect with colleagues. I appreciate the warmth and camaraderie that these holiday moments bring, allowing us to unwind and build our friendships.

Now, with festivities aside, here are my weekly updates.

**Mentoring Conference Graduate Student Presentations:** Following my recent update on the University of New Mexico's Mentoring Conference, I am pleased to share more about two of our exceptional Higher Education Administration Ed.D. students, Esperansa Aguilera and Ashley Garhart. They presented their research at the conference, where their sessions on inclusive mentoring practices and DEIJ in leadership were very well received. Additionally, both papers are scheduled for publication this December in *The Chronicle of Mentoring and Coaching*. Congratulations to these scholars for their excellent research!

**School District Visits:** This week, I set aside some time to brave Wyoming's wintry roads and visit Uinta County School District #4 (Mountain View), Uinta County School District #6 (Lyman), and Lincoln County School District #1 (Kemmerer). These visits allowed me to connect with principals and superintendents to deepen my understanding of the needs of Wyoming's smaller rural school districts and explore potential collaboration opportunities. It was also a great

pleasure to reconnect with our graduates now teaching at Kemmerer High School, including Amanda Aione, Class of 2013, and Sharon Reetz, Class of 2015.

**WSUP Newsletter:** A new monthly newsletter was published by the Wyoming School-University Partnership with important news about Education in Wyoming. Please check it out and subscribe to keep up to date on different news from across Wyoming: <https://conta.cc/3NDdJes>

**Elementary Literacy Curriculum Development Update:** Mary Todd and Stella Nowell, Assistant Lecturers in Literacy, are implementing a comprehensive update across elementary literacy courses, creating a consistent structure for topics, assignments, and assessments. For EDEL 4309 - Upper Elementary Literacy Methods, they developed a shared Canvas “sandbox” and have been collaborating with Robyn Chivers from the Casper campus to ensure all students receive cohesive instruction across modalities. This initiative includes developing new course shells for EDEL 2140 - Teaching Literacy in Elementary and EDEL 3720 - Literacy Difficulties and selecting updated textbooks to complement current resources. Mary is also working with Amy Encinger, Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education, on EDEC 4209 - Early Literacy Methods to update course texts and better align practicum timing with coursework. This effort will ensure that faculty, including new instructors, have a cohesive framework for delivering core topics, enhancing the learning experience for our students across all sections.

**Mental Health in Today’s Schools:** With all the shifts in education and increased needs following COVID, it can be challenging to keep track of the mental health (MH) resources available to students and the many specialized professionals who deliver these vital supports. Lindsey Nichols, Associate Professor of Counseling, has been hard at work with national experts, including some of our own colleagues here in Wyoming, on a book under contract that delves into the essential, often distinct roles of MH professionals within school settings. The book aims to clarify the differences and connections among school counselors, social workers, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, special educators, and more, helping a wide range of readers—parents, teachers, administrators, graduate students, and even policymakers—gain a clear understanding of each role’s contributions to student well-being. Designed as an accessible guide rather than a textbook, the book combines professional insights with case studies, highlighting best practices and reliable resources. We look forward to seeing this book as an invaluable addition to educational resources next academic year—stay tuned!

**Advancing Rural Education at National Forum:** Assistant Professor of Elementary Science Education, Alison Mercier, recently attended the National Forum to Advance Rural Education in Savannah, GA. She co-presented with Leslie Cook from Teton Science Schools and three undergraduate education majors—Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps members Jacob Jelesiewicz, Kialie Staggs, and Torin Chavez. Their presentation, titled “Nurturing Place-Based Community Engagement Through a University-Rural School Partnership,” highlighted the collaboration between the College of Education’s Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps, Rock River School, and Teton Science Schools. The Rural Teacher Corps members shared insights on community engagement, place-based education, and the essential role of partnerships in the success of rural schools.

**CoEd Faculty Member Elected to Serve on the NRMERA Executive Board:** William Cain, Assistant Professor of Learning, Design, and Technology, has been elected to serve as the

University of Wyoming's delegate on the Northern Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association (NRMERA) Executive Board. This election took place during the General Session of NRMERA's 2024 Conference in Lake Tahoe, where he also presented his latest research, *Cognitive Partners in Design: Using Generative AI in a Graduate-level Learning, Design, and Technology Course*. His work investigates innovative methods for incorporating generative AI into collaborative online learning experiences for graduate students. Please contact William for information on current and upcoming NRMERA events and/or visit the NRMERA website at <https://www.nrmera.org>. Please join me in congratulating and thanking William for his commitment to service on the NRMERA Executive Board.

**Faculty Search Updates:** The College of Education has made progress in multiple faculty searches. Associate Dean Alan Buss reported that the search committee for the Assistant Professor of Mathematics Education has begun the interview phase after screening initial applicants. For the Fisher Family Literacy Education Professor position, co-chairs Kim Gustafson and Cindy Brock reported that the search committee has selected candidates for first-round Zoom interviews scheduled for next week, with plans to invite finalists to campus shortly thereafter. Finally, Associate Dean Pete Moran shared that the search committee for the Wyoming Excellence Chair in Special Education will hold its initial review meeting next week. Thank you to all search committee members for their ongoing commitment to these important searches.

**Next College of Education Meeting:** The next College meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 4, from 12:00 to 1:00 PM in Coe Library, Room 506. Various faculty and staff will present program updates and other relevant topics. In-person attendance is required unless an exception is sought from and granted by a School Director. We look forward to seeing the College of Education staff and faculty early next week.

Election Day will also be held next Tuesday, November 5. Please check with your supervisors about possible release time arrangements so you can cast your vote. Toward the end of next week, I will be taking a couple of days to catch up on various tasks and will resume sharing my weekly updates on Friday, November 15. I look forward to reconnecting with everyone then.

Thank you all for another great week, and Go Pokes!

Jenna

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## October 25, 2024

Dear colleagues,

This week, I write to all of you after returning from school district visits to Sweetwater #1 (Rock Springs) and Sweetwater #2 (Green River).

I had the opportunity to meet with Superintendent Craig Barringer, Assistant Superintendent and Human Resources Director Jason Fuss, and Assistant Superintendent of Special Services Alan

Demaret in Sweetwater County School District #2. Our discussions were productive and meaningful, focusing on strategies to inspire more students to pursue teaching careers and exploring ways we might collaborate effectively to achieve this goal. During my visit to the high school, I had the pleasure of meeting several of our own graduates. I was pleased to learn from the Superintendent's team that our graduates are recognized as some of the most well-prepared, competent, and capable educators in their district!

While visiting Sweetwater County School District #1, I had the opportunity to meet with Superintendent Joseph Libby. We engaged in a valuable discussion about how we can support students in becoming better prepared for university and explored potential avenues for collaboration to make that happen. Superintendent Libby and Rock Springs High School Principal Ben Straka graciously gave me a tour, where I had the pleasure of meeting several of our own graduates. Here is a photo of Tim Cassidy, a woodshop teacher and alumnus from the College of Education, class of '87, whom they described as one of their best educators and a true master teacher!

**Giving Day 2024:** To start, I am filled with gratitude toward our alumni, faculty and staff, friends, parents, students, businesses, corporations, foundations, and the Board of Trustees who generously donated, supported, and promoted the College of Education campaigns during this year's Giving Day, held from noon on October 23 to noon on October 24. Here are the funds we established this year:

- Counselor Education Program Campaign
- College of Education Ambassadors Campaign
- Career and Technical Education Campaign
- The Dean's Excellence Fund
- Mu Nu Tau Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) Campaign
- Science and Mathematics Teaching Center Campaign
- Student Teacher Support Fund Campaign
- UW Early Care and Education Center (ECEC) Campaign

While totals are not yet finalized, it appears that the College of Education smashed our goal of attracting 280 donors with over 450 generous contributions. Equally impressively, we surpassed our ambitious goal of raising \$100,000 in donations! I am especially moved by Wyoming's resounding support for education—the profession that, as Mary Garland, President of the John P. Ellbogen Foundation and a valued friend of our college, often says, makes all other professions possible. Go Pokes!

**Student Success Update:** Christi Thompson, Assistant Dean of Student Success, has just finalized a proposal for a new process that will allow students to receive credit for prior and experiential learning, supporting their progress toward degree completion. In addition, she is verifying the accuracy of our data for Educational Testing Service reporting, particularly for Title II, which includes Praxis testing data to be available early next year. Christi is also collaborating with Director of the School of Teacher Education Scott Chamberlin, along with Rob Black and Wanda Maloney from the Wyoming Department of Education, Scott Ratliff, Shawn Reese from Think Wyoming, Heather Bender, Joe Russo, Michael DeNobile, and others to integrate Indian Education for All content into our pre-service education programs.

**Practicum Updates:** I wanted to take a moment to share some great news from Sarah Rundall, our College of Education Placement Coordinator, regarding this semester's practicum placements. Sarah has been hard at work coordinating with school districts to ensure that our students have valuable learning experiences, and I am pleased to report that 130 students have been placed in 163 different practicum placements across Practicum 1, Practicum 3, and Early Childhood Literacy Methods.

Here's a quick breakdown of what that looks like:

- Practicum 1: 29 students, totaling 58 placements
- Practicum 3: 58 students, with 58 placements
- Early Childhood Literacy Methods: 49 students, resulting in 53 placements
- There were also 6 students who were placed in both Practicum 3 and Early Childhood Literacy Methods, making for 6 additional placements.

For those who may need a refresher:

- Practicum 1 involves students observing both elementary and secondary classrooms.
- Practicum 3 allows students to observe and participate in classrooms that align with their programs of study.
- Early Childhood Literacy Methods focuses on students working in PreK-3rd grade classrooms to develop early literacy skills.

A big thank you to Sarah and to our school district partners for making these placements possible. These experiences are crucial for the development of our students and their future impact in the field of education!

**Bringing Computer Science and AI to Rural Classrooms:** Mia Williams, Assistant Professor in Learning, Design, and Technology, is spearheading an innovative project to integrate computer science and emerging technologies (i.e. AI) into rural classrooms across Wyoming. With support from the School of Computing Fellowship, Dr. Williams has brought together a team of K-12 teachers, teacher educators, and UW students. Together, they are developing creative classroom materials and assessment tools to help educators seamlessly incorporate computer science principles into a range of subjects across K-12. This initiative aims to foster critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and digital literacy among students. The team will pilot these resources in classrooms this spring. I look forward to hearing about the progress and impact of this exciting work.

**Secondary Social Studies Education Program Update:** Anne Aydinian-Perry, Assistant Professor in the Secondary Social Studies Ed program, has been focusing on research and program development on top of teaching classes like EDST: 1200 Practicum I. She has been collaborating with Miriam Sanders, Assistant Professor in Secondary Mathematics Education, to write a UW Libraries Alternative Textbook grant for their respective Methods classes to integrate Indigenous funds of knowledge and other culturally sustaining pedagogy into their courses and are also aiming for a "Re-Storying the West" grant sub-award. She is also pleased to report that her book chapter "Gone Country: Life on the World War II Homefront for Evacuee Children" which discusses integrating film (here *Grave of the Fireflies*) with primary and secondary sources to teach history, is being published in early 2025. Outstanding!



**Faculty and Staff Presentations at the Mentoring Conference:** Anne is also busy presenting her research at conferences and was one of many CoE staff and faculty to attend the Mentoring Conference at the University of New Mexico.

**Secondary Science Education Program Update:** Emil Eidin, Assistant Professor of Secondary Science Education, has been productive. He recently had a paper accepted with minor revisions to the *Journal of Interdisciplinary STEM Education* and is collaborating with Michigan State University and the Concord Consortium on an NSF grant submission due in November. He also submitted an IRB for educational interventions he plans to implement in his science methods course, focusing on three key areas: computational modeling, AI in education, and socio-scientific issues. These interventions involve collaborations with colleagues from Columbia University, Washington State University, and Anne Aydinian-Perry, and aim to investigate the impact of these emerging topics on science teaching.

**Education Speaker Series:** The College of Education is excited to announce its inaugural Speaker Series, beginning with Mandy Smoker Broaddus, former Montana Poet Laureate and advocate for Indian Education for All, who will present on Wyoming's Indian Education for All Act. The presentation will be held on November 21 from 12–2 PM in the Education Auditorium and is open to the public. Further details will be shared soon.

**Counseling Program Information Session:** If your students or others you know are interested in exploring a career that makes a positive impact in the community, I highly suggest recommending they attend the upcoming Information Session on the Counseling Program. This session offers a valuable opportunity to learn more about the field of counseling and its potential to make a meaningful difference. Join the information session next week on October 30 from 12-1 PM in Half Acre Classroom, Room 115 (West Entrance). For more details, please refer to the attached flyer. Cowboys care!

**New Grant Update:** Marisa Macy, the John P. Ellbogen Foundation Professor of Early Childhood Education, along with her colleagues, has been awarded a grant from the Woodcock Institute. The grant will support a study on a curriculum-based assessment tool co-authored by Marisa, called the Assessment, Evaluation, & Programming System (AEPS), designed for children from birth to age six. The project, titled "Detecting Cross-cultural Differential Item Functioning of a School Readiness Measure: A Pilot Study in Head Start," aims to explore how early childhood assessments can be culturally and linguistically relevant for children and their families. The research will utilize item response theory and other methods to examine the test constructs, with the goal of understanding how to improve assessment practices. The findings are expected to have significant implications for authentic assessments that incorporate integrated family involvement!

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My updates have been growing in length as more members and partners of the College of Education continue to send me news about their work. This week is no exception, and I appreciate your time spent reviewing and sharing our news. I am proud of the College of Education's work and our commitment to engaging students and collaborators at UW and across the state and beyond. As the cooler weather settles in, I wish everyone a warm, cozy, and pleasant weekend ahead!

**October 18, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

A new chill in the air is a reminder to pull out our warm clothes as we go about campus. The College of Education remains focused on its vision to serve the state of Wyoming and prepare first-rate teachers, educators, leaders, and counselors. Every program we offer, every partner school district, every community college, every educational agency, and each and every student matter to us, adding purpose and meaning to our work and scholarship.

Despite the colder weather, our newest team members in the College of Education are already hitting their stride. I will start this week's updates by highlighting some of their recent accomplishments.

**Secondary Mathematics Program Updates:** Miriam Sanders, Assistant Professor in Mathematics Education, has begun recruitment discussions with colleagues aimed at strengthening the College's secondary math and science programs. In addition, Miriam has been busy presenting at national conferences. She led a workshop at the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) in September and is preparing to present at the Psychology of Mathematics Education-North America (PME-NA) in November. Miriam also recently submitted a proposal with colleague Anne Perry to the *Re-Storying the West* Faculty Subaward call, with results expected by month's end. Finally, Miriam is co-editing a special issue of the *Journal of Urban Education & Policy Annals*, which is set for publication in January.

**English as a Second Language (ESL) Endorsement and Graduate Certificate Program Updates:** Dixie Brackman, ESL Assistant Lecturer and ESL Program Coordinator, recently met with district representatives who discussed the growing need for qualified ESL teachers in Wyoming. Our ESL program continues to be in demand. She is also collaborating with Antoinette Hallam from the Wyoming Department of Education to find ways to better support current ESL teachers, as the state looks to strengthen resources for ESL students.

**Science and Mathematics Teaching Center (SMTC) Updates:** The Science and Math Teaching Center (SMTC) kicked off Fall 2024 by welcoming a new director, Jessie Marcolini, who has quickly hit the ground running, staying busy and productive with a range of initiatives. Ana Houseal and Clare Gunshenan have worked with K-12 teachers in Converse County on science learning and progression, while Anna Payne collaborated with Wyoming Virtual Academy teachers to enhance questioning strategies. Martha Inouye and Clare launched a NSF grant-supported program called the Teacher-Researcher Knowledge Exchange with 30 educators and researchers, and will co-present at the WY Innovations Conference in October. In fact, their presentation is based on research published in *Science Scope* (check it out at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08872376.2024.2363117>).

Martha also began a second cohort of NSF-supported online PD for 3-5th grade teachers. There are 23 returning and 19 new teachers from WY collaborating with over 140 teachers across CA, WY, ND, and MT. Learn more about her program at [https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD\\_ID=2201249&HistoricalAwards=false](https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=2201249&HistoricalAwards=false)

The SMTC is also revitalizing its Affiliate Faculty program—any interested faculty can contact Jessie Marcolini at [jmarcoli@uwyo.edu](mailto:jmarcoli@uwyo.edu) to inquire about collaborating.

**New Counseling Publication:** Brittney Phillips, Assistant Professor in Counseling, recently learned that her and her colleagues' journal article, "Examining the Factor Structure and Psychometric Properties of the Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire among College Students in the Southeastern United States," has been accepted for publication in the *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*. Congratulations!

**College of Education Giving Day:** Giving Day 2024 takes place from noon on October 23 to noon on October 24. We invite you to spread the word about one or more College of Education campaigns:

- Career and Technical Education Campaign
- College of Education Ambassadors Campaign
- Counselor Education Program Campaign
- Dean's Excellence Fund
- Mu Nu Tau Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) Campaign
- Science and Mathematics Teaching Center Campaign
- Student Teacher Support Fund
- UW Early Care and Education Center (ECEC) Campaign
- WellSpring Counseling Clinic Campaign.

In addition, special challenges are in place: 280 donors will unlock a \$10,000 gift to the College of Education from an anonymous donor, and 25 donors will unlock a \$5,000 gift to Career and Technical Education, generously provided by J-J. Help spread the word by forwarding this message to ten friends to celebrate "*The Power of 10!*"

Learn more about the College of Education campaign at <https://bit.ly/4f6qZUp>

**College of Education Trivia Table:** The team at the Dean's Office is directing extra energy toward engaging and supporting students this semester, and Jake Orr, Project Coordinator, and Paige Jaramillo, Office Aide, spent some time last week stationed in the Education Annex near the popcorn machine between classes to ask some education majors some trivia questions. The questions mainly focused on our programs, like "Q: Who should you contact to initiate your background check to begin practicum experiences? A: Britany Kathan from the Student Success Center." Next time, they hope to track the success rate of the questions to better understand possible knowledge gaps, but were pleased that every student left the table with a prize.

**Graduate Student Paperwork Workshops:** Jake Orr also hosted two online Graduate Student Paperwork Workshops. These workshops provide graduate students an opportunity to learn about graduate forms and graduation requirements. We had some very important questions, and the workshop had some strong engagement.

**Secondary Education Undergraduate Program and Graduate Certificate Updates:** Todd Reynolds, Associate Professor of Secondary Education, is working with other UW colleges on Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to set a 51-hour ceiling on content courses for concurrent majors. Discussions are also underway to add an English as a Second Language (ESL) course for all secondary education majors, a need identified by the Association for

Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) and internal data. Faculty are reviewing methods courses to determine potential changes in prerequisites or course hours. The goal is to finalize MOUs, introduce the ESL requirement, and explore additional program adjustments over the coming year.

The Secondary Education team is also reviewing the graduate certificate program, addressing issues tied to the Emergency Authorization licenses from the Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB) and exploring options to strengthen both the undergraduate program and meet statewide needs.

Todd also has two upcoming presentations at the Literacy Research Association (LRA) conference—one on disciplinary literacy in English and another on the history of English in high school curricula. Additionally, he has an article in press, reflecting on his virtual methods class from Fall 2020. Nice work to Todd!

### **Wyoming Early Childhood Professional Learning Collaborative (WYECPLC)**

**Partnership:** The Wyoming Early Childhood Professional Learning Collaborative (WYECPLC), a Trustees Education Initiative (TEI) outreach initiative in the College of Education, partners with early childhood programs across the state to provide mentoring, coaching, and professional learning opportunities for program leaders and teachers. This work focuses on elevating quality and building capacity within childcare programs by supporting leaders in local communities. An example of this process of capacity building is a new collaboration with Valley Village Childcare in Saratoga, WY. Members of the WYECPLC team recently met with the Valley Village Childcare board to discuss opportunities for collaboration and begin crafting a professional development plan for their teaching team. A WYECPLC Learning Specialist is providing coaching for the center director and supporting her as she mentors teachers and plans professional development. The center director and teachers will join in learning communities with other educators and directors from across the state, tapping into a dynamic network of support. As the partnership grows, Valley Village Childcare will become a placement site for College of Education early childhood education students to complete practicum placements and internships, adding to the network of quality programs across the state.

**UW Ag Education Students Gain Experience in Classroom:** A collaborative hands-on practicum in UW's "Agriculture Education Methods" class was recently featured in the UW News. Secondary education students are working with middle schoolers from the UW Lab School to explore agricultural education through practical activities. As part of the program, students participated in the "Marshmallow Challenge," where they built towers using spaghetti, tape, and string. Impressively, two of the three teams surpassed the average height from research studies. The program emphasizes developing career-ready skills, such as teamwork and communication, which are critical for success in both the classroom and future careers. Read more at <https://www.uwyo.edu/news/2024/10/uw-ag-education-students-gain-experience-in-classroom.html>

**Professional Clothing Drive at the Student Success Center:** Kelsie Tarver, Office Associate at the Education Student Success Center (ESSC), is leading a professional clothing drive. Anyone with extra professional attire that they have been thinking of donating should consider bringing their items by the ESSC in McWhinnie Hall room 100. Education students are expected to dress professionally whenever stepping into classrooms or learning spaces, and some

students would appreciate the extra clothing to supplement their closets. We appreciate everyone's help with the professional clothing drive!

**Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) Update:** RTP cases are well underway. Only the School of Counseling, Leadership, Advocacy, and Design (CLAD) has promotion cases this year, and they were reviewed and voted on by the CLAD faculty at the end of September. Currently, they are being reviewed by the School Director and will pass to the College RTP Committee for review at the College RTP Meeting on November 11, 2024. After their votes are submitted, I will review the cases and forward them with my recommendations to Academic Affairs before Winter Closure.

**Graduation and Regalia Reminders:** As Winter 2024 commencement approaches, Britany Kathan from the Education Student Success Center reminds faculty of key details for the ceremony on Saturday, December 14th at 10:00 AM in the Arena Auditorium. Faculty participating in hooding master's or doctoral students should arrive at the Fieldhouse by 8:00 AM. All other faculty should arrive by 8:45 AM. A rehearsal for faculty, volunteers, and marshals will be held on December 13th from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM in the Arena Auditorium. Additional information on parking and commencement details can be found on the commencement webpage: <https://www.uwyo.edu/commencement/index.html>

Faculty will also need to order regalia, and can find the "Faculty Information" link by visiting this page: [https://www.uwyostore.com/graduation\\_info.asp?](https://www.uwyostore.com/graduation_info.asp?)

I find it hard to believe that we are already thinking about 2024 winter commencement when it feels like the semester has just started. But, looking back, this is already my eighth weekly update of the semester. As the semester continues forward, I remind all of us to work hard, have fun, and take care of ourselves and each other.

If you have updates to share, please send them my way. I will see you all next week!

Go pokes!

Jenna

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## October 11, 2024

Dear colleagues,

This week, I likely set a personal record for the miles traveled in two days while visiting four school districts: Park County #16 (Meeteetse), Big Horn County #2 (Lovell), Washakie County #2 (Ten Sleep), and Fremont County #24 (Shoshoni). It was a pleasure to meet with the superintendents and district staff, learn about the unique qualities of their educational communities, and explore opportunities for continued collaboration. Additionally, I traveled to Powell and Riverton to meet with President Lisa Watson of Northwest College and President Brad Tyndall of Central Wyoming College. Our discussions centered around co-recruitment strategies and streamlining the transfer process. I look forward to continuing these valuable conversations as we strengthen partnerships with both school districts and community colleges.

**307 Principal Leadership Academy:** Colby Gull, Managing Director of the Trustees Education Initiative, joined me during part of my travels, as he and Margaret Hudson, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership, met with principals participating in the Principal Mentor Program in Cody and Riverton. The program plays a role in the larger 307 Principal Leadership Academy, a collaborative initiative between the Wyoming Department of Education and the UW College of Education to support professional development of new and experienced Wyoming principals. Principal mentors received instruction on the mentoring framework for instruction, which was developed by Margaret, Jane Hellenburg, and Chris Harder. Principal mentors will meet again in November at the Wyoming Leadership Conference in Casper.

**District Residency Connections Fair:** All of our roads crossed again starting yesterday at the District Residency Connections Fair. This event, coordinated by the Wyoming School-University Partnership and the College of Education, represents an opportunity for freshmen, sophomores, and juniors in our Education programs to meet representatives from Wyoming school districts and learn more about what it is like to student-teach and, possibly, to teach there professionally. School districts also view it as an opportunity to meet our students and attract the best to their districts and schools for both student teaching and full-time teaching positions. It was a pleasure to meet the districts and representatives from other Wyoming Educational Organizations, like the Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB), the Wyoming Educational Association (WEA), and the Student Wyoming Education Association (SWEA).

**Updates from the Wyoming Excellence Chairs:** This week, I would like to provide updates from the College of Education's three Wyoming Excellence Chairs in Education. These state-funded endowed faculty positions, supported by the Excellence in Higher Education Endowment Fund, are designed to promote excellence in research and instruction, thereby enhancing the university's educational quality and reputation in alignment with the University of Wyoming's [strategic plan](#). The College of Education is statutorily allocated four Wyoming Excellence Chair positions. Currently, we have two Wyoming Excellence Chairs in Literacy Education and one in Mathematics Education. As announced last week, we have just launched a search for the fourth Wyoming Excellence Chair in Special Education. Here are the latest updates from the three current chairs:

- **Richard Kitchen, Wyoming Excellence Chair in Mathematics Education:** The EdD degree program in mathematics education that was launched three years ago has its first graduates: Drs. Chuck Butler and Michelle Tutor graduated in Spring 2024, and Jennifer Kellner and Michelle Sanchez are on track to finish the program this academic year. Dr. Butler is a STEM Education leader in Memphis, Tennessee. Dr. Tutor works in the Kentucky Department of Education and is leading math education recovery efforts in Kentucky. Jennifer Kellner is the Dean of STEM, Health & Education at Central Wyoming College and is leading efforts to reform developmental mathematics at CWC. Michelle Sanchez works for the Los Alamos National Laboratory Math & Science Academy. She is currently a New Mexico State Math Finalist for The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST).
- **Cindy Brock, Wyoming Excellence Chair in Literacy Education:** Cindy, as vice president of the Literacy Research Association (LRA) and associate chair for the 2024 LRA conference, is working with conference chair Fenice Boyd to promote collaborative literacy efforts. They have invited teachers, administrators, and state department



colleagues from Wyoming and beyond as special speakers to share their expertise at the upcoming conference. Cindy was also a featured speaker at the Australia Literacy Educators' Association conference in Adelaide, South Australia, where she presented on disciplinary literacy at the elementary level. In addition to her conference leadership roles, Cindy has co-edited two international books. She collaborated with Drs. Beryl Exley and Irabinna Rigney on a 2024 book highlighting global literacy learning opportunities, which was featured at the Australia Literacy Educators' Association conference. Alongside Drs. McVee, Van Langenhove, and Christensen, she also co-edited the *Routledge International Handbook of Positioning Theory*, published in 2025. Cindy and a UW doctoral student presented at the International Positioning Theory Conference in Finland in July 2024.

- **Leslie Rush, Wyoming Excellence Chair in Literacy Education:** In collaboration with Marshall George, a professor in English education at Hunter College (CUNY), Leslie submitted a book proposal to the National Council of Teachers of English. This proposed book will provide a historical analysis of the professional organization English Language Arts Teacher Educators (ELATE), an affiliate organization of NCTE. Leslie is collaborating with WDE's Claudia Ladd to establish a secondary level literacy community of practice group, designed to support middle and high school literacy coaches, intervention teachers, and others engaged in adolescent literacy work.
- **Both Leslie and Cindy** are actively involved in advancing literacy education across Wyoming. They are providing professional learning opportunities for teachers in Lander, Sheridan, and Pavillion, and have served on the Wyoming Department of Education's English Language Arts standards review committee. Additionally, they are collaborating on a panel for the upcoming Literacy Research Association conference, focused on strengthening partnerships between higher education and state education departments. Together with Todd Reynolds, they also have a book proposal under review with Routledge, highlighting innovative approaches to literacy in rural contexts.

**Lunch with Students:** In between everything else that is going on, some College of Education students and I sat down to have lunch together at the Washakie Dining Center near the dorms. It was lovely to meet students on their turf and learn more about things that mattered to them, such as preparing for their practicum experiences, considering which districts (or countries!) in which they would like to student-teach, and preparing for the Praxis examination. These students are going to be remarkable educators, and I hope to meet with them and other students in the coming weeks.

**College Meeting:** On Monday, the College of Education held its first meeting of the fall 2024 semester in the Union Family Room. The primary purpose of the meeting was to welcome our 16 new faculty members, with introductions exchanged among new and current faculty and staff. Neil Theobald, Executive Professor, also shared a presentation on the University of Wyoming's budget and the significance of fundraising efforts for the College. The gathering provided a meaningful start to the semester, fostering connections and sharing essential information.

**ECTL Assessment Learning Community:** The Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning, an important partner to the College of Education, is hosting an Assessment Learning Community. This initiative invites teams of 2-4 people from across campus to engage in meaningful discussions about student learning assessment. Participants will explore program assessment strategies, develop curriculum maps, and build a culture of assessment using two key texts. The

community will also include a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Workshop to help educators rigorously examine and improve their teaching practices through research.

**ChatGPT Webinar from Harvard Business Publishing Education:** Barbara Hickman, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership, also recently attended a webinar about using ChatGPT (a generative AI model) to support teaching. The webinar provided practical insights on how educators can integrate AI tools into their work, offering a simple introduction for those new to AI technology. For faculty who may be hesitant, this resource could demystify AI and demonstrate how it can save time. Barbara has the recording and encourages faculty to reach out if they're interested in viewing it by emailing her at [bhickma3@uwyo.edu](mailto:bhickma3@uwyo.edu)

This concludes my weekly updates. Thank you for taking the time to read through this week's updates and for your ongoing efforts to support our students and the College. If you have any updates you would like me to include in future weekly updates, please feel free to share them with me. Go Pokes!

Jenna

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## October 4, 2024

Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to share updates on another week of good work from the College of Education both on campus and across the state.

**307 Principal Leadership Academy:** Barbara Hickman and Margaret Hudson traveled to Cheyenne on Wednesday to meet with principal mentors participating in the 307 Principal Leadership Academy (PLA) and the Wyoming Principal Mentor Program. This is part of several regional meetings that will be held for the Academy, and there were a variety of activities and presentations preceding a group dinner. Challenges with school leadership are among the leading reasons teachers in Wyoming leave the profession, and the College of Education is proud to collaborate with the Wyoming Department of Education to address this by supporting principal development through the 307 PLA program.

**AI in Special Education Projects:** Ling Zhang, our new Assistant Professor of Special Education, has achieved significant milestones in her research connecting AI with Special Education. Her manuscript, "Let's CHAT About Artificial Intelligence for Students with Disabilities: A Systematic Literature Review and Meta-Analysis," was accepted for publication in the *Review of Educational Research*—a top-tier journal with an impact factor of 11.2. This meta-analysis examined 29 global studies and found AI-based interventions to have a medium effect on improving learning outcomes for students with disabilities. Ling is also leading an ongoing project developing a multi-agent system, CoIEP, designed to enhance AI-human collaboration in creating high-quality, legally compliant Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Early evaluations suggest that CoIEP could reduce the workload of special education professionals while ensuring compliance with IDEA mandates. Future studies will refine the system to meet state-specific requirements and address teacher training needs in Wyoming. Her proposal, *AI-Human Collaboration for Constructing IEP Goals and Specially Designed Instruction*:

*Developing a Multi-Agent System*, was also accepted at the 2025 Council for Exceptional Children Convention and Expo.

**Cowboy victory:** A huge win for the Cowboys this weekend at UWyo's Homecoming game. I met College of Education alumni from the Career and Technical Education program and also Wyoming Teachers of the Year from across the state. We recognized and congratulated College of Education alumni Jamie Cordonier (BS 1971, MA 1974) and Dave Davis (BS 1988). These honors commemorate their tremendous work preparing Wyoming's next generation of skilled trade workers.

**Getting ready for the game at the ECEC:** The Early Care and Education Center (ECEC) celebrated UW Homecoming with Spirit Week. Children and staff enjoyed fun themes each day. To conclude the week, they hosted a family event, bringing our community together to share the POKE PRIDE! The celebration included games, treats, raffle prizes, and a special visit from the UW Men's and Women's Basketball team, and Cowboy Joe the Pony. The school spirit was strong across campus!

**Visit to Converse County School District and Douglas High School:** Yesterday, I had the opportunity to spend the day visiting the schools in Converse County School District #1. Superintendent Paige Fenton-Hughes graciously guided me on a tour, offering valuable insights into their strategic planning. She explained how their strong focus on continuous improvement drives their yearlong budget planning, ensuring resources are effectively aligned with their goals. I also had the privilege of meeting Steve Walker, the district's Human Resources Director, who shared that 25% of CCSD #1's teachers are graduates of our College of Education. It was a true pleasure to meet several of these alumni, all of whom are doing outstanding work in their schools.

**Faculty Searches:** We have launched three faculty searches, and the committees for each have been established. Hiring new faculty is one of the most important responsibilities we have at the university, as it directly impacts the quality of education, innovation, and student success. The thoughtful and thorough work of these search committees is critical to ensuring we bring in top-tier individuals who align with the mission and values of our college. I am very appreciative of their service. Below are the details for each committee:

- Fisher Family Associate/Full Professor in Literacy Education: Co-chaired by Kimberly Gustafson and Cindy Brock, with Leslie Rush serving as a member.
- Wyoming Excellence Chair and Professor of Special Education: Chaired by Pete Moran, with Tiffany Hunt and Nikki Baldwin as members.
- Assistant Professor in Mathematics Education: Chaired by Alan Buss, with Miriam Sanders and Nikki Baldwin also serving on the committee.

**College of Education Honoree at Legacy Award Luncheon:** Senior Vice Provost Tami Benham-Deal presented Nicholas Jesse, Wyoming School-University Partnership Senior Project Coordinator, with his Laramigo award announced last spring on behalf of the provost. The award honors extensive service both to the University of Wyoming and to the state, and Nicholas' impressive record of advocacy and volunteerism marked him as the first staff member to receive the award. Nicholas received handshakes and congratulations from various UW alumni who attended the luncheon.

**Afternoon snack with the dean:** Last Friday, the Dean's Office hosted a second "Afternoon Snack with the Dean" while we still have beautiful weather for outdoor events. Beneath the colorful fall leaves, faculty and staff from across the college gathered to catch up, share stories, and speculate on the outcome of the upcoming Homecoming match. I appreciate everyone who made time to attend and enjoyed the opportunity to connect.

**Center for Rural Community Resilience and Innovation Campus Community**

**Forum:** Yesterday, the Center for Rural Community Resilience and Innovation hosted a Campus Community Forum to bring together expertise on rural development from across disciplines and areas of expertise. Two of our faculty members, Barbara Hickman and Rosemary McBride, gave presentations titled "Rural School and District Leadership: Rewards, Realities, and Challenges" and "THRIVE: Cultivating Rural Resilience Through Ag Ed Innovation" respectively. I am excited that the College of Education could be part of this important event and grateful to both Barbara and Rosemary for representing the college with such excellence.

**District Connections Residency Fair:** A final reminder that the District Connection Residency Fair will be held next Thursday and Friday (October 10 and 11). Please find the flyer for the event attached to this email, and we hope to see all of you there!

**College of Education First Fall 2024 Meeting:** The first College of Education meeting of fall 2024 will be held on Monday from 12-1 PM in the Union Family Room. Faculty and staff will convene to introduce and meet new and returning members of the college and hear updates and announcements.

**Lunch with the dean:** Today, I will be having lunch with several undergraduate students from the College of Education at the Washakie Dining Center. In addition to introducing ourselves and getting to know each other better, I am excited to hear their thoughts on our programs, their studies, and their perspectives on the teaching profession as pre-service teachers. I am particularly looking forward to learning how we can further support them throughout their academic journey. I will share a photo of our lunch in my update next week.

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I wish everyone a pleasant weekend as we enjoy the final moments of fall. Please look forward to more updates next Friday. Go Pokes!

Jenna

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**September 27, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

I write to you after a wonderful evening at the Gateway Center celebrating faculty from the College of Education and other colleges during the Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion

Recognition Ceremony. Faculty who obtained tenure, were promoted, and who received five-year fixed-term rolling contracts were congratulated, including Barbara Hickman, Jihyun Lee, Todd Reynolds, Marisa Macy, Joe Schroer, Rochelle McCoy, and Kim Gustafson. Associate Dean Alan Buss also attended to show support for our faculty.

Tenure, promotion, and reappointment represent fundamental pillars of higher education, as they pertain to the dedication, scholarly contributions, and impact that faculty members have on their fields, students, and institutions. These milestones not only signify individual achievement but also strengthen the academic community, fostering an environment of excellence, stability, and continued growth. I will also echo the Provost's and President's comments during their welcome addresses last night that, while impactful research is important, our greatest legacy as academics is the contribution we make to the lives of the students we mentor.

On this high note, here are my updates from an especially excellent week:

**Wyoming Charter School Authorizing Board:** Last week, Associate Dean, Alan Buss traveled to both Cody and Alpine as part of his role on the Wyoming Charter School Authorizing Board. This summer, the board received two applications for new non-district charter schools: the Vitalis Charter Academy in Cody and the American Preparatory Academy of Alpine. The Vitalis Charter Academy plans to serve K-6 students in Park, Big Horn, Washakie, and Hot Springs counties through a combination of in-person, home-based, and virtual instruction. Meanwhile, the American Preparatory Academy of Alpine aims to provide in-person instruction for K-8 students in northwest Lincoln County. As part of the application review process, the board is conducting interviews with the proposed charter boards and holding public hearings. In consultation with experts from the Wyoming Department of Education and the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, the board will make final determinations by October 10.

**Governing Council for the American Counseling Association:** Amanda DeDiego, Associate Professor of Counseling, recently traveled to Washington, D.C., in her role on the Governing Council for the American Counseling Association. As part of their meeting, the council participated in "Hill Day," where they met with legislators to advocate for permanent telehealth provisions under federal Medicare and Medicaid systems. Amanda also had the opportunity to meet with the Wyoming delegation—Senators Barrasso and Lummis, and Representative Hageman—along with legislators from Colorado and California. Their discussions focused on telehealth and strategies to address workforce shortages for mental health and school counselors, particularly in rural communities. Key solutions included advocating for funding to support student loan reimbursement programs for counselors working in rural schools and agencies. Kudos to Amanda for her dedicated advocacy on behalf of Wyoming!

**Wyoming School-University Partnership Newsletter:** The Wyoming School-University Partnership, an office which serves as the apparatus for the University and Wyoming school districts to partner and collaborate for the betterment of Wyoming education, publishes a regular newsletter highlighting education news and upcoming events across the state. You can check out the September issue of the newsletter here: <https://conta.cc/3XTQT89>

**College of Education Program Featured in the UWyo Magazine:** The fall issue of UWyo Magazine is out, focusing on changemakers and those making a difference. I am excited to

share that the section about programs that make a difference highlights the Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps (WyRTC)! Led by Alison Mercier, Assistant Professor of Elementary Education, the WyRTC provides pre-service teachers with valuable mentorship and guidance on how to thrive in Wyoming's rural school environments. You can access UWyo Magazine and read more, including the article about the WyRTC on page 40, here:

- Flipbook: [https://issuu.com/uwyo/docs/uwyo261\\_web](https://issuu.com/uwyo/docs/uwyo261_web)
- Website: <https://www.uwyo.edu/uwyo/current/index.html>

**Student Success Update:** Christi Thompson, Assistant Dean of Student Success, is working closely with the Education Student Success Center (ESSC) to ensure that all incoming freshmen have a completion plan in Degree Works. This initiative will allow students to clearly see how their academic plans align with degree requirements from the start of their university journey. Christi has also collaborated with the Registrar's Office and the Vice President of Academic Affairs to enable the transfer of credits from accredited technical schools and programs to the University of Wyoming. These credits can be applied toward the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degrees in Career & Technical Education (CTE) and Organizational Leadership, provided the technical school meets the necessary accreditation and federal aid eligibility requirements. This is a significant achievement, strengthening partnerships with Wyoming community colleges and supporting the development of future Wyoming CTE teachers.

**Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps Fall Retreat and Completion Ceremony:** The Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps (WTMC) is a training program within the Trustees Education Initiative (TEI) at the College of Education, aimed at reducing the attrition rate of early career teachers by providing high-quality, well-trained mentors. Since its inception in 2022, WTMC has trained 65 teacher mentors from 25 school districts, equipping them with skills in the 5 Pillars of Mentoring to enhance the support and experiences of new teachers.

This week, the WTMC hosted its Fall Retreat at the University of Wyoming – Casper, where all mentors gathered to showcase their work. The event highlighted the Mentor Fellows' Teacher Action Research Project presentations, demonstrating the impactful contributions of the mentors in education. It was a privilege to witness firsthand the thoughtful presentations and the meaningful work being accomplished by these dedicated mentors.

**Afternoon Snack with the Dean this afternoon :** The Office of the Dean invites students, faculty, and staff to join us under one of the shaded areas in front of the Education Building this afternoon from 3:30-4:30 PM for an afternoon snack and some good conversation. We always appreciate the chance to connect and hope to see everyone there.

Thank you to everyone for another excellent week. Tomorrow is Homecoming, and I hope everyone enjoys the game and cheers for the Cowboys. Fingers crossed for a victory!

See you all on Monday. Go Pokes!

Jenna

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**September 20, 2024**



Dear colleagues,

I hope everyone has had a productive and eventful week. By this time in the fall semester, most of us have solidified our goals for the next few weeks leading up to December, and we can begin focusing on our longer-term projects. All of us have plenty to occupy us as we settle down for colder weather. Here are a few updates.

**Graduate Program Support:** The Office of the Dean and Associates Deans always strive to offer quality undergraduate education, but also a valuable experience to our graduate students. There are several updates on support for our graduate programs below.

- **Marketing:** Cody Schofield, the College of Education Communications and Marketing Specialist, has been busy working with the rest of the Dean's Office to plan a new graduate program marketing campaign to highlight all of the graduate degrees in the College of Education. He invites current graduate students to submit 30-second videos of themselves highlighting why they chose to pursue a graduate degree at the UW College of Education or other topics. Please encourage our graduate students to participate. Interested students can email Cody Schofield ([cschofi3@uwyo.edu](mailto:cschofi3@uwyo.edu)) to work on their video and submit it for publication.
- **Engagement:** Jake Orr, Project Coordinator in the Office of the Associate Deans, led a campaign last week to bring some fun to the college with a trivia activity for both on-campus students and online students. Students can visit the Dean's Office in Education Building, room 6, every second Friday of the month from 9:50 AM to 10:30 AM to answer trivia questions and win prizes. Online students can take an online quiz to win a prize.
- **Curriculum & Instruction:** Associate Dean Pete Moran convened a meeting for the Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) graduate programs earlier this week. Many thanks to Todd Reynolds, Associate Professor of English Education, for stepping up to serve as the C&I coordinator. During the meeting, minor changes to the LTED program were proposed and voted on. Discussions also included potentially transitioning the C&I MA program into a "professional program." Revisions to core courses and updates to the MA handbook were also on the agenda, with a call for volunteers to join working groups.

**Update from the Assistant Dean of Assessment, Data, and Accreditation:** The College of Education is actively collecting and analyzing performance data, thanks to the efforts led by Mark Perkins, Assistant Dean of Assessment, Data, and Accreditation. Recently, the Office of Assessment, Data, and Accreditation supported Paul Maddox, Assistant Professor in Counselor Education, with the CACREP midterm review, using R to extract gradebook data and map key performance indicators. Additionally, Mark Perkins is collaborating with Assistant Dean of Student Success Education, Christi Thompson on analyzing student pathways for those who leave the teaching degree track, investigating whether they transfer to other UW programs, move to different universities, or exit higher education altogether. The office is also working with academic advisors to enhance degree audits and improve advising efficiency. Finally, Mark is attending the AAQEP conference on data storytelling to refine their strategies for communicating data. The Office of Assessment, Data, and Accreditation continues to make significant progress in improving data collection and maintenance structures within the College, and we look forward to further updates.

**Update from the Education Student Success Center (ESSC):** The Student Success Center was busy at the Campus Pass event on September 7, where Levi Moore, Senior Academic Advisor, and Jody Evans, Manager of the Education Student Success Center, represented the College of Education. They engaged with over 300 prospective students, having productive and meaningful conversations with both students and parents about various education programs, including CTE, physics, and math. We are also excited to announce Levi Moore's promotion to Senior Academic Advising Professional—a well-deserved recognition of his dedication to our students. Lastly, the COE Student Success Center is wrapping up follow-up meetings with Saddle Up participants to gather feedback. If you participated in Saddle Up, please be sure to complete the Student Success and Graduation Office survey at [https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eqxiwParY5v07D8](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eqxiwParY5v07D8)

**Afternoon Snack with the Dean Next Friday, September 27:** Similar to a previous event hosted at the start of the semester, the Office of the Dean invites College of Education students, faculty, and staff to join us under one of the shaded areas in front of the Education Building on Friday, September 27, from 3:30-4:30 PM for an afternoon snack and some good conversation. We appreciate the chance to connect and hope to see everyone there.

**Early Childhood Education Update:** Marisa Macy, the John P. Ellbogen Foundation Professor of Early Childhood Education, is planning a delegation from the University of Wyoming to visit childcare centers in Reggio Emilia, Italy, and learn more about the Reggio Emilia Early Childhood Approach. Colleagues interested in gathering with others to talk about experiential learning on location in Italy can reach out to Dr. Macy at [mmacy2@uwyo.edu](mailto:mmacy2@uwyo.edu) to learn more.

**Taylor Reynolds, a "Natural at Teaching":** Kelly Dunham, a dedicated advocate and friend of the College, recently shared the wonderful news that Taylor Reynolds, a former student teacher at Sheridan High School, has stepped into a full-time teaching role this fall following the retirement of the previous Career and Technical Education teacher. Despite being just 21, Taylor's natural teaching talent has truly shone. She now teaches Welding, Mechanics, and Veterinary Science and has already made a significant impact on her students and the Future Farmers of America program. Sheridan High School is fortunate to have her, and we are incredibly proud of her accomplishments!

**Ambassador Event on Friday, September 13:** The College of Education Student Ambassadors hosted a recruiting event on Friday, September 13, outside McWhinnie Hall, supported by Elizabeth McMahan, Director of Student Teaching. The event featured an array of treats to help refresh their fellow classmates after a long week. Students had the opportunity to sign up for a chance to win a backpack filled with swag and supplies. The Ambassadors also reached out to and encouraged students from majors outside the College to get involved. They are currently recruiting Education majors to join their next meeting on Tuesday, September 16, at 5 PM.

**Wyoming's Future of Learning Retreat Meeting:** Education leaders participating in the Wyoming Future of Learning Initiative, including our team in the College of Education Dean's Office, congregated in Casper earlier this week to meet with other partners for a retreat meeting. Conversations focused on the future of the initiative and goals for educational development and expansion in Wyoming.

### **Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Wyoming 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards and Recognition**

**Breakfast:** I also had the pleasure to attend the Awards and Recognition Breakfast at the Ford

Wyoming Center in Casper on Wednesday. The event was a powerful reminder of the incredible impact the Boys and Girls Clubs have on youth across Wyoming. With over 54 years of service, the organization continues to provide essential after-school and out-of-school engagement at 11 Club sites across 4 counties, focusing on Academic Success, Healthy Lifestyles, and Good Character and Citizenship. I was also proud to see the Western Thunder Marching Band representing UW for the event!

Thanks for reviewing this week's updates. I hope everyone has a relaxing weekend and cheers for the University of Wyoming Cowboys in Texas! I will see everyone next week.

Jenna

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## September 13, 2024

Dear colleagues,

Football season has kicked off and there are even more exciting events and activities across campus and Laramie. As we enjoy the beautiful fall season and all that it has to offer, the College of Education continues to dedicate time to work both individually and as a college across the state of Wyoming. There is much exciting work in this week's updates, so please read on.

**Dunham Family Fellows Brunch:** Last Saturday, the College of Education proudly celebrated the 2024 cohort of Dunham Family Fellows with a special brunch, meet-and-greet, and recognition ceremony. President Seidel and Provost Carman also attended this important occasion. Thanks to the continued generosity of Dave and Kelly Dunham, this award—established in 2022—provides critical financial support to student teachers, helping to alleviate the significant financial challenges that often come with securing housing and managing finances during their teaching residency. We are profoundly grateful for the Dunham family's ongoing commitment to supporting our future educators.

**Dr. Douglas Reeves' Visit to Campus:** Late last week, the College of Education also welcomed a visit from a valued friend and supporter, Dr. Douglas Reeves. As the author of more than 40 books and 100 articles on education and leadership, Dr. Reeves graciously met with graduate students and new faculty within our college to offer advice on academic research and writing. In reflecting on his meetings, he shared a helpful guide, "Time-Saving Ideas for Busy Academic Writers," which I am attaching here. Please read through it! Dr. Reeves was grateful for the opportunity to interact with our students and faculty, and we are also immensely thankful for his mentorship and support of the college!

**College Advocacy Board Fall Meeting:** This morning, I will be joining the College of Education Advocacy Board as it convenes on campus for its fall meeting. Meeting twice per year, the members of the College of Education Advocacy Board serve as statewide ambassadors, representing the College to its constituents and stakeholders. They promote engagement, advocacy, and constructive input for the benefit of the College of Education. We are grateful to the Board for its support and expertise. Learn more about the Advocacy Board Members here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/education/alumni-friends/advocacy-board.html>

**Trustees Education Initiative (TEI):** I also want to take a moment to highlight the Trustees Education Initiative (TEI), and its important role within the College of Education. Established in 2016, TEI has become a concentrated effort from the College of Education and the UW Board of Trustees to support educational development and evolution across Wyoming. Through a collaborative approach with partners across the state and industries, the Trustees Education Initiative is making a significant and positive impact on Wyoming's educational landscape. We are grateful to the Board of Trustees, our new TEI Chair, Dr. David Fall, and former TEI Chair, Dave Bostrom, for their ongoing support of the College of Education in better serving the state of Wyoming. Learn more about TEI here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/tei/>

**Trustees Education Initiative Receives Grant to Fund Project-Based Learning in Wyoming:** In collaboration with Wyoming's Future of Learning Partnership, Project-Based Learning (PBL) is gaining momentum in Wyoming, with a fall statewide program being launched in four school districts. Thanks to a generous grant from the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE). The College of Education is working with PBL expert John Spencer, offering teachers and administrators the opportunity to take classes, attend workshops, implement projects, and receive mentorship to effectively integrate PBL into their schools and classrooms.

Colby Gull, our Trustees Education Initiative Managing Director and the lead managing director of the grant, highlights the collaborative nature of this effort, stating, "This partnership among the Wyoming Department of Education, Teton County School District 1, Fremont County School District 24, Washakie County School District 2, Park County School District 16, and the College of Education demonstrates the power of collaboration in Wyoming education!"

A highlight of this fall's program is the opportunity to visit six leading PBL schools across four states, including Tesla STEM School in Redmond, Washington—ranked as one of the top schools in the country. These visits will allow educators to witness PBL in action and gain valuable insights.

Jessica Marcolini, Director of the Science and Math Teaching Center, and Rob Hill, Professor of Practice in CTE, will accompany the tours to observe and participate. By the end of the program in December, educators will have developed the skills and confidence needed to implement PBL, and they will present their own research and experiences with this innovative teaching approach.

Check out the press release from the WDE: <https://edu.wyoming.gov/wyomings-future-of-learning-partnership-launches-statewide-training-on-project-based-learning-through-wde/>

**Literacy Research Center and Clinic (LRCC) Update:** The Literacy Research Center and Clinic (LRCC) is having a productive fall. The LRCC held its annual tutoring orientation and reported a record number of applications, resulting in 17 tutors for 19 students. The program continues to grow and expand statewide.

LRCC faculty and staff are also making a significant impact. Cindy Brock and Sara Pommarane are leading professional development at Wind River Elementary, and Cindy will co-present with Wind River teachers at the Literacy Research Association conference in December. Leslie Rush and Cindy are collaborating with Teton County School District on school improvement projects, while Leslie is also consulting with schools in Lander, Cody, and Cheyenne, alongside Todd Reynolds.

Additionally, Kim Gustafson and Cindy are developing K-3 education modules on American Indian Education in partnership with the Wyoming Department of Education, with plans to pilot them in classrooms across the state. LRCC faculty will also travel to Sheridan to conduct a needs assessment for Wyoming's first Catholic school to offer a STREAM program, followed by professional development sessions. Thanks to the LRCC team and collaborators for their dedicated efforts in promoting high literacy rates across Wyoming!

**Laramie Plainsmen Visit the UW Lab School for Performance:** On Wednesday morning, September 11, the band, cheerleaders, and football team from the Laramie Plainsmen visited the UW Lab School to include Lab School students in their homecoming celebrations. It was a great coming-together of students from different parts of Albany County School District and the University of Wyoming, and all of us at the college also appreciated the music and fanfare!

**Dean's Vision and Archived Weekly Updates:** Finally, as we continue the momentum of the semester, I hope everyone remains grounded and focused on the common mission of the College of Education and the University. As dean, I remain committed to serving the state of Wyoming and beyond in ways that continue to improve the lives of both children and adults through education. You can learn more about my vision for the College of Education and review previous weekly updates by visiting the Office of the Dean page on our website.: <https://www.uwyo.edu/education/deans-office/office-of-the-dean.html>

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As football season and fall events continue to energize campus, I hope you all find time to enjoy the vibrant community we are part of while continuing the important work we do. Stay tuned for next week's round of updates!

Have a wonderful weekend!

Jenna

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## September 6, 2024

Dear colleagues,

I hope everyone is enjoying the newly bustling sidewalks of Prexy's Pasture and the fervor of students, staff, and faculty in fall semester mode. I am not surprised to see that the College has hit the ground running yet again!

This week, I would like to begin with a bookmarked update from the summer, some updates from this week, and some resources for our faculty and staff to keep in mind as we progress through the semester. Please have a look below.

**4th Annual Kindergarten Summit:** Nikki Baldwin, Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Education in the School of Teacher Education, and her team from the Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network (WYECON) hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Kindergarten Summit in July and had 30 kindergarten teachers from eight school districts across the state in attendance. The focus was on supporting literacy using play-based learning tools. The Wyoming Early Childhood



Professional Learning Collaborative also held a retreat on August 18-20. This included the six team members who live across the state and work as Learning Specialists providing free professional learning for early childhood educators in Wyoming. The team planned online and in-person training, coaching and mentoring activities for the 2024-2025 school year.

Across the board, the College of Education has made astounding progress in Early Childhood Education development across Wyoming, thanks largely to WYECON. We also welcomed two new Early Childhood Education faculty members, Marisa Macy and Amy Encinger, and look forward to increasing our outreach and impact on campus and across the state and beyond.

**Virtual WASA Presentation:** This week, College of Education faculty members, Mark Perkins and Rob Hill, accompanied me to present research about Career and Technical Education in Wyoming to the Wyoming Association of School Administrators (WASA). You can check out their website here: <https://www.wasa-wy.org/>

The College of Education is deeply committed to partnering closely with educational leaders at WASA and other partner educational organizations and agencies across Wyoming to develop educational and supportive access, professionals, and resources for the state.

**New Faculty Receives Federal Grant:** Our newest faculty are also rocking already! Amy Encinger, whom I mentioned above, on behalf of the University of Wyoming have already received a federal grant of \$96,517 from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation. The funded project is titled "Predictors of Native American Children's Social Emotional Outcomes: A Strengths-Based Approach" to conduct secondary data analysis. A huge round of applause for Dr. Encinger who begins the next leg of her career at the University of Wyoming on a very good note.

**Check Out the Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning (ECTL):** I wanted to be sure to remind everyone that there are many excellent resources for all faculty, no matter their level of teaching experience, at the Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning (ECTL). In particular, I would like to highlight the learning communities that faculty can join, such as the Assessment Learning Community, which faculty can still apply to join before October 15. Learning more about this and other pedagogical professional development (such as resources for Graduate Teaching Assistants) at their website: <https://www.uwyo.edu/ctl/>

**New College of Education "At-a-Glance":** Our newest faculty have already seen this during their College of Education orientation, but I am excited to share a new "At-a-Glance" document developed to give a quick overview of the College of Education. This can be printed on a letter-sized sheet of paper, folded, and quickly shared. You can access the print-quality PDF here:

 [8.5x11\\_overview.pdf](#)

**Upcoming District Residency Connections Fair for Students:** The College of Education Annual District Residency Connections Fair will be held on October 10-11 in the Union Building. The fair aims to give students a chance to make contacts within school districts across Wyoming and learn more about opportunities to teach there. They also have an opportunity to meet students in the Student Wyoming Educators Association (SWEA) and other educational organizations. We will announce more information in the coming weeks.

**College of Education Events Calendar:** Have you ever wondered how you can get the word out to the College of Education and beyond about your upcoming event or workshop? Not only

can you send your news to me for weekly updates, send emails directly to [coed-facstaff@lists.uwyo.edu](mailto:coed-facstaff@lists.uwyo.edu) to send out to the College, but you can also submit your events to be published on the College of Education online calendar. Submit your event and view the calendar here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/education/calendar.html>

**Staff and Faculty Printable Directory:** And, finally, a quick announcement for those within the College – the printable Faculty and Staff Directory has been updated for fall 2024. This is a helpful document to have at your desk in case you need to call or find your colleagues to collaborate. I hope you make frequent use of it:

 [Faculty & Staff Directory.xlsx](#)

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From federal grants, student events, and new faculty achievements to resources designed to enhance teaching and learning, there is so much to explore and celebrate. The semester is just starting to ramp up, and I appreciate everyone's hard work to sustain this exciting momentum moving forward!

Jenna

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**August 30, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

Happy fall semester and wonderful work on finishing the first week of classes! I hope everyone has successfully adjusted to the pace of the academic year as our students reappear on Prexy's Pasture and fill campus with energy and excitement. The University of Wyoming is a very special place, and I hope you will enjoy the last few weeks of summer weather as we buckle up for busy months ahead.

As I conclude the first week of my third semester as the John P. "Jack" Ellbogen Dean of the College of Education, I see with more clarity than ever the important work that we do at the university for the greater good of Wyoming and beyond. Our students are making a difference across the state in preparing the next generation for new technologies, modern problems, and modern solutions.

All of us play an invaluable role in delivering a high-quality education to our students, expanding Wyoming's educational and counseling access and resources, and generating knowledge in the fields of counseling and education.

Reflecting on these weekly updates, I see them as becoming an important opportunity to share not only internal announcements and reminders, but to deliver news about the college to a broader audience that cares about and supports our work. With that, it is time to resume the weekly updates for fall 2024.

**Saddle Up:** Saddle Up was carried out for its third year on campus, and it was more fun than ever. The week before classes start, new freshman students come to campus to settle in, learn



about campus, and saddle up for the semester. Campus was bustling with outdoor activities, resource fairs, workshops, seminars, and new students having a blast. Within the schedule, our college had several opportunities to engage new Education majors and orient them to the program and successful student behaviors. A huge shout-out to the Education Student Success Center (ESSC) team for their expert work in welcoming our students and introducing them to their next four years and, eventually, their future careers in Education.

I truly appreciated the panel discussions that ESSC organized for students, which allowed them to learn more about our faculty, programs, and what it is like to teach for a profession.

**New Faculty Members:** It was also a delight to meet and work with sixteen new faculty members joining us this fall. In a few short weeks, they have brought remarkable energy and expertise and I am looking forward to seeing their continued contributions to the success of the College. Here is a reminder of our new faculty, their positions, and their areas of expertise:

- CLAD Faculty
- Special Education Assistant Professor: Ling Zhang
- Counseling Program Assistant Professor: Ty Tedmon-Jones
- Counseling Program Assistant Professor: Brittney Phillips
- Special Education Assistant Lecturer: Jennifer Krause
- Special Education Assistant Professor: Tiffany Hunt
- Educational Research & Higher Education Assistant Lecturer: David Des Armier
- Educational Leadership Assistant Lecturer: John Heim
- STE Faculty:
- Science and Math Teaching Center Director: Jessica Marcolini
- Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education: Amy Encinger
- Elementary Literacy Education Assistant Lecturer: Stella Nowell
- Secondary Mathematics Education Assistant Professor: Miriam Sanders
- John P. Ellbogen Foundation Professor of Early Childhood Education: Marisa Macy
- ESL Assistant Lecturer: Dixie Brackman
- CTE Professor of Practice: Robert Hill
- Literacy Education Assistant Lecturer: Mary Todd
- Literacy Education Assistant Lecturer: Joseph Russo

We are eager to continue to get to know these new members of the college better in the coming weeks, and I invite everyone to do their best to support and collaborate with them.

**New Faculty Orientations:** There were many new faculty at the University of Wyoming this year. As always, to ensure that faculty hit the ground running, the University hosted a faculty orientation over two days to introduce them to UW's various systems, protocols, and resources.

Following the university-wide orientation, Associate Deans at the College of Education hosted college-specific orientation sessions to learn more about our own internal structure, procedures, and support network.

I also plan to share more resources with information about the College of Education, our structure and programs, and all of the important work we do in the coming weeks. Stay tuned.

**College-Wide Meetings:** Department/School meetings have been announced, and our College-Wide Meetings will also resume in October to allow some time for everyone to settle in. Further details will be announced, and here are the dates for college meetings:

- Monday, October 7, from 12-1 PM
- Monday, November 4, from 12-1 PM
- Monday, December 2, from 12-1 PM

These meetings represent important opportunities for the College to come together and discuss timely topics. All faculty and staff are expected to make every effort to attend in person unless they work off campus or have an approved reason. UW-on-campus faculty wishing to attend virtually must reach out to their school directors for approval.

**Cookies with the Dean:** Throughout the semester, I would like to hold impromptu and scheduled events to engage faculty and staff in an informal setting. On Wednesday afternoon, taking advantage of the nice weather, the Dean's Office set up base in front of the College of Education building to welcome staff and faculty on campus for a cookie, a cold soft drink, and some casual conversation. Many staff and faculty took a moment from their busy schedules to grab a refreshment. We look forward to planning more events like this throughout the semester.

**UW ECEC NAEYC Accreditation:** The Early Care and Education Center (ECEC) has successfully earned accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This prestigious accreditation is awarded to early education programs that meet NAEYC's rigorous standards and provide high-quality early learning environments. The process involved a comprehensive self-study, quality-improvement initiatives, and an on-site review by NAEYC assessors. This achievement places the ECEC among an elite group of programs nationwide recognized for their excellence in early childhood education. Congratulations, and nice work, ECEC team!

**New Faculty Searches:** Finally, I am pleased to announce that we are beginning searches for three new faculty members to begin in fall 2025. We will be seeking a new Assistant Professor in Mathematics Education, Fisher Family Literacy Professor, and Wyoming Excellence Chair in Special Education. I look forward to sharing further updates about the search committees, finalists, and campus visits in the spring.

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Thank you all for your dedication and enthusiasm as we embark on another promising academic year. Our collective efforts are shaping the future of education here in Wyoming and beyond. Whether it be our students, faculty, staff, or alumni, we have much to be proud of. I encourage everyone to continue fostering connections and making the most of the opportunities ahead.

As always, please reach out if you have any questions or news to share. Let's together make this semester an outstanding one!

Jenna

## Spring 2024

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**May 17, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

Campus has been beautiful this week. There is a floral scent in the air as trees bud and blossom, and the balmy temperatures have enticed us all to throw open our windows and take our time when strolling across campus. With the spring semester wrapped up, I am pleased to send another weekly update on spring celebrations.

**“Laramigo” Award Winner:** The College of Education faculty and staff have received an astounding number of awards this spring. Our True Grit award winner, Nicholas Jesse, has been recognized for a second honor: the “Laramigo” Award for Community Engagement. This award goes to UW faculty or staff who show exemplary service to UW as well as demonstrate service to the Laramie community. Nicholas is not only an exceptional CoE member as the senior project coordinator of the Wyoming School-University Partnership, but he is committed to serving the community of Laramie. With an impressive portfolio of volunteer work, he currently serves as the chair of a local non-profit, Laramie PrideFest. Congratulations and thank you, Nicholas!

**Graduation Success:** The University of Wyoming successfully conducted its graduate and undergraduate ceremonies last Saturday, May 11, at the Arena-Auditorium. As usual, it was a spectacular event and a true honor to watch those among our 104 bachelor’s degree recipients and a stunning 117 master’s and doctoral degree recipients walk across the stage. Many thanks to the CoE Student Success Center team and a very special and many thanks to Britany Kathan for her hard work as the college’s commencement coordinator. Please check out several heartwarming and proud graduation photos of our students on the College of Education’s social media

UW-Casper graduation was also a tremendous success. The commencement was packed with supporters of graduates, and President Seidel, in his speech, mentioned that it was one of the most impressively enthusiastic groups of people he has seen at any commencement he has attended. A special recognition and thanks to Dr. Brent Pickett, the UW-Casper Dean, and his team for their outstanding academic excellence and dedicated hard work.

**College of Education Advocacy Board Meeting:** Next Monday, May 20, the College of Education Advocacy Board will convene here on campus for its spring meeting. The mission of the University of Wyoming College of Education Advocacy Board is to serve statewide as ambassadors, representing the College to its constituents and stakeholders to promote advocacy and provide critical feedback for the benefit of the College of Education. Sincere gratitude to the board members for their valuable service and support of the college.

**Departures from the College:** I have a final, bittersweet announcement before we begin our summer semester. Drs. Richard Carter and Ali Bicer have both accepted new faculty positions and will not be returning to the UW College of Education next fall. Richard has accepted the Ted S. Hasselbring Chair of Special Education Technology position at Indiana University, and Ali

has accepted a position as Associate Professor of Math Education at Texas A&M University. On behalf of the College of Education, we will miss you both and wish you the best in these next steps in your careers. Thank you for all your contributions during your time at UW.

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I hope everyone has a rejuvenating summer as many of our faculty conclude their academic year, and our staff enjoy the calmer and beautiful summer campus. Our administrative team will continue our work on campus and beyond, so please feel free to stop by and say hello. I will be pausing my weekly updates until the beginning of the next academic year in August when everyone has returned for the fall semester. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication!

Jenna

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**May 10, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

Congratulations! We have made it to the conclusion of another academic year, and I am proud of our students, faculty, staff, and supporters for all of their hard work and accomplishments thus far.

Last night, I had the privilege to attend the President's Commencement Dinner, where we celebrated honorary doctoral recipients Greg Hill and Noah Hull. I was struck by the remarkable work of these individuals in Wyoming business and healthcare and was moved by their speeches. Cottonwoods appeared in several metaphors, and I could not help but be reminded of our own college when considering these hearty, resilient trees. Even when the winds are strong or we have not seen rain in weeks, we remain rooted in place and we face forward fearlessly.

There was also good news for the college. Our faculty, Barbara Hickman, was given an Ellbogen Meritorious Classroom Teaching Award. Ana Houseal and Ali Bicer were also recognized with Presidential Scholarly Achievement Awards for Tenured Faculty, and Alison Mercier was honored with a Presidential Scholarly Achievement Award for Promising Early-Career Faculty.

At the President's Commencement Dinner, I also had the pleasure of visiting with Dave and Kelly Dunham, friends and supporters of the College of Education. You might remember, Dave and Kelly are the creators of the Dunham Family Fellows program to support developing future teacher leaders in Wyoming.

2023-2024 was the year in which I served as the John P. "Jack" Ellbogen Interim Dean and now as the John P. "Jack" Ellbogen Dean of the College of Education, and it has been an honor. Our faculty, staff, and students faced many challenges and brought back many successes and honors to our college. I look forward to the great things that await us next fall.

As we tiptoe – cautiously – into summer, I am excited to share a few updates with all of you from last week:

**College of Education Meeting:** Our final College of Education meeting was well-attended with over 60 attendees, including a guest scholar from the University of Southern Queensland. It was a celebratory meeting as we announced the recipients of the College of Education Staff, Faculty, and Graduate Student Awards:

- Faculty Award for Outstanding Teaching: Alison Mercier
- Faculty Award for Outstanding Research and Scholarship: Amanda DeDiego
- Faculty Award for Outstanding Service to the Educational Profession: Martha Inouye
- Faculty/Staff Award for Outstanding Advising: Levi Moore
- Staff Award for Outstanding Service to the College: Britany Kathan
- Award for Outstanding Contributions Toward Improving the Climate of the College: Lindsey Nichols
- Outstanding Graduate Student Award for Significant Accomplishments: Brittanie Kuhn

Congratulations to these outstanding individuals for their important contributions to the College of Education.

We also celebrated the successful conclusion of ten faculty searches:

- Special Education Assistant Professor: Ling Zhang
- Science and Math Teaching Center Director: Jessica Marcolini
- Counseling Program Assistant Professor: Ty Tedmon-Jones
- Counseling Program Assistant Professor: Brittney Phillips
- Special Education Assistant Lecturer: Jennifer Krause
- Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education: Amy Encinger
- Special Education Assistant Professor: Tiffany Hunt
- Elementary Literacy Education Assistant Lecturer: Stella Nowell
- Secondary Mathematics Education Assistant Professor: Miriam Sanders
- John P. Ellbogen Foundation Professor of Early Childhood Education: Marisa Macy

I look forward to welcoming these talented professors and lecturers to our ranks in the fall and am eager to see what they accomplish. As announced during the College of Education meeting earlier this week, we will be welcoming additional fixed-term lecturers. I will share more details as their appointments are finalized.

**Spring Commencement:** A final reminder that the commencement ceremony for graduate students will be held tomorrow, May 11, from 12:15 PM in the Arena Auditorium. The College of Education will honor its undergraduate students during the afternoon undergraduate ceremony, beginning at 3:30 PM in the arena auditorium. Faculty and staff participating in the ceremonies should report to the Fieldhouse at 11:15 AM and 2:30 PM respectively, one hour before each ceremony begins.

I will then make my way to Casper to celebrate our UW-Casper graduates at the Casper Commencement at the Best Western in downtown Casper on May 12 at 2:30 PM. It will be a busy, but felicitous Mother's Day weekend!

**Spring Wyoming Curriculum Directors Conference:** Earlier this week, on Tuesday, May 7, Christi Thompson, Colby Gull, Rob Hill, and I had the privilege of presenting our college's

current initiatives at the Wyoming Curriculum Directors Conference in Casper. The group was particularly engaged with our discussion on the Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps (WTMC), which will soon begin training its third cohort. The presentation sparked a lot of insightful questions from the audience.

Megan Degenfelder, the Wyoming Superintendent of Public Instruction, also presented her vision of education in Wyoming and highlighted the Wyoming Department of Education's partnership with the College of Education to work on the Wyoming Principal Leadership Academy. We continue to strive toward our land-grant university mission of serving the state of Wyoming.

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Once again, excellent work to everyone. This morning, I will venture to the UW Gateway Center and present during the Board of Trustees March Meeting Executive Session. It has been an honor to have our trustees in Laramie during this momentous week and weekend.

I look forward to seeing everyone on Saturday and Sunday, and, again, extend my sincere congratulations and appreciation.

Jenna

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**May 3, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

I am writing to you this week from Riverton where I am attending the RIDE Student-Centered Learning Statewide Celebration of Learning at Central Wyoming College. I am joined by Pete Moran, Alan Buss, Mia Williams, Jake Orr, Alex Rickert, and Leslie Rush from the College of Education.

I came to Riverton after visiting Powell yesterday with Rob Hill, our CTE outreach consultant. The welcoming colleagues at Northwest College offered us a tour of their excellent facilities for AutoCAD drafting, welding, healthcare training, photography, and graphic design, to name a few. Wyoming's community colleges truly lead the way for workforce development and quality, affordable, and accessible education across Wyoming, and we have much to learn from them.

**Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps Capstone Fair:** Here in Laramie, the Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps year 2 cohort did a remarkable job presenting their research and experiences in rural education last year, and the event attracted an impressive audience! From student farms to aspen bark sourdough, and an array of other place-based perspectives, these students demonstrated expert insight into the best parts of small-town education in Wyoming. I have high expectations for these students as they venture into their careers as rural educators, and I eagerly await next year's presentations. Many thanks to our faculty Alison Mercier and Leslie Cook, the head of Professional Learning at Teton Science Schools for leading this important work!

Check out the full Facebook album

here: <https://www.facebook.com/WyoCollegeOfEd/posts/pfbid0ooYokfuHzL7HnvNq6Ks9iGU87Ni2pWr4Lji1V7tLubdUcqNNXjtGfCoG6UcZVeY4I>

**Drone Education Network:** April concluded the 2024 UW Drone Racing Season. Tim Slater, our Wyoming Excellence Chair in Science Education, led a team coordinating the state-wide UW Drone Education Network. Celebrating CTE and STEAM, recent drone racing educational events included March 23 at Eastern Wyoming College, April 13 at Casper College, and the WY Space Grant Consortium-sponsored statewide championship on April 20 at Northwest College. For the fourth year in a row, Slater and his team served as coordinators and judges for the Wyoming SkillsUSA Drone Precision Flight event in Casper on April 23. Kicking off the new season this summer, the UW Drone Education program will conduct week-long camps at the Wyoming Boys School in Worland, the Wyoming Girls School in Sheridan, and in Fremont #14. To learn more about the competitions, please see the program website at [drone-challenges.org](https://drone-challenges.org) or contact Tim Slater at [idrone@uwyo.edu](mailto: drone@uwyo.edu).

**College Meeting Next Monday (May 6):** A reminder that the College Meeting will be held next Monday, May 6, from 12-1 PM in Coe Library 506. During the meeting, we will discuss the next round of revisions to the College of Education Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion guidelines, and we will also celebrate the recipients of the College of Education faculty, staff, and graduate student awards. To conclude, we will announce new faculty that will be joining us in the fall and offer our best wishes to any faculty that might be departing at the end of spring.

**Commencement on May 11:** A reminder to faculty and staff helpers for both the graduate and undergraduate commencement ceremonies, please be sure to report to the Fieldhouse by 11:15 AM on Saturday, May 11. I am ready for round two of carrying the College of Education gonfalon and joining our students in celebrating their accomplishments and taking this next step in their lives.

I am also planning to attend the UW-Casper commencement ceremony on May 12 at 2:30 at the Best Western hotel in downtown Casper.

**Board of Trustees Meeting Next Week:** A reminder that next week is a Board of Trustees regular meeting week, which is always a busy time, especially since Monday and Tuesday will also consist of budget hearings for different units and colleges across campus. I will be presenting on behalf of our college on May 6. Kimbely Montez, our director of business operations, and Anaya Yates, our business manager will also be joining me at the budget hearing on May 6. If you are curious about the remaining schedule or agenda, you can follow this link: <https://www.uwyo.edu/trustees/2024-meeting-agendas-materials-and-minutes/may-8-10-2024-meeting.html>

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Good luck to everyone next week with final examinations. I look forward to checking in again next Friday.

Jenna



**April 26, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

I hope everyone has had another great week. I have been traveling around the state to witness and support the excellent work our partner school districts and organizations are conducting throughout Wyoming. Just yesterday, I had the pleasure of touring Worland High School alongside Christi Thompson, Assistant Dean of Student Success, and Colby Gull, Managing Director of the Trustees Education Initiative and Director of the Wyoming School-University Partnership. Attached is a picture from our visit, featuring the principal of Worland High School and one of their outstanding teachers:

On that note, I have a full weekly update to share with you all – and the update is overflowing with great news!

**Jody Evans is Employee of the First Quarter:** Jody Evans, College of Education Student Success Center Manager, was chosen as the 2024 employee of the first quarter! Amply deserving of this award, Jody expertly leads a critical center at the college to deliver advising and other services to our students to ensure their continued success. Congratulations, Jody!

**Staff Recognition Day Awards:** During the Staff Recognition Day event last week on April 16, other staff members Nicholas Jesse and Alex Rickert received the True Grit Award and the Unsung Hero Award respectively for their tireless and dedicated work the past year. Sarah Rundall was also recognized for her tenth anniversary at the University of Wyoming. Our staff play a critical role in the success of the college and university. Bravo on the excellent work!

**Presidential Scholarly Achievement Awards:** Three College of Education faculty were also celebrated for their achievement in research as recipients of the Presidential Scholarly Achievement Awards. Ali Bicer and Ana Houseal received Presidential Scholarly Achievement Awards for tenured faculty at associate or full professor ranks. Alison Mercier received President Scholarly Achievement Awards for early-career faculty. Congratulations to these exemplary faculty for their work in advancing research in education.

**Fulbright Scholar Award:** Lydiah Nganga has been selected as the Fulbright US Scholar for 2024-2025 for Kenya. This fellowship will allow Dr. Nganga to conduct research abroad next year. Excellent work advancing international research and development!

**Third Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps Cohort Announced:** The third cohort of the Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps has been announced, establishing this program even more prominently as it endeavors to improve teacher retention in Wyoming. This year's cohort features 31 educators who come from a variety of content areas and backgrounds and will become well-equipped mentors to rising teachers in the state. You can learn more about the new cohort here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/news/2024/04/uw-names-third-cohort-of-wyoming-teacher-mentor-corps.html>

**Rural Teacher Corps STEM Night:** Last Thursday, April 18, the 16 members of the Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps hosted the Second Annual STEM Night for the K-5 community at Rock River School. Rural Teacher Corps members (elementary and secondary education majors) have been planning and rehearsing place-based STEM activities for the elementary students

and families of Rock River School. As Rural Teacher Corps members have planned their activities, they have also worked with mentor teachers at Rock River to receive feedback on their plans and advice about working with families and running community events. STEM Night was a huge success! Not only did the Rock River community enjoy an engaging community event, but the Rural Teacher Corps members gained experience working with families, facilitating place-based education experiences, and engaging children in STEM inquiry. Led by Alison Mercier, a member of our faculty, the Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps is a joint venture between the College of Education and the Teton Science Schools. It is designed for education majors interested in pursuing teaching in rural communities after graduation.

**Wyoming SkillsUSA Championships:** Earlier this week, a group of us from the College of Education attended the Wyoming SkillsUSA Championships in Casper. The event featured a wide variety of skilled competitions, highlighting the talents of the top career and technical education students. It was inspiring to witness the dedication and enthusiasm of the students, educators, and industry leaders. Tim Slater, Wyoming Excellence Chair in Science Education, supported the event with his expertise in drone education. We also had the opportunity to observe welding and construction competitions at the Pathways Innovation Center and to engage with students and SkillsUSA leaders at the SkillsUSA Techspo event!

**Wyoming School-University Partnership Governing Board Meeting:** The Wyoming School-University Partnership also hosted the statewide Governing Board Meeting, also in Casper. During the meeting, different members of the College of Education were able to share updates about our important work with superintendents and other educational leaders from across Wyoming, and those leaders, in turn, provided feedback for future work and initiatives. This forum represents a fruitful opportunity for us to partner with schools and districts to better meet the needs of Wyoming students.

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I wish everyone the very best as we quickly approach finals week, graduation, and the summer semester. I suspect more great news is on the way, so stay tuned for next week!

Jenna

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**April 12, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

It has been another busy week in the College as we begin to make our way toward the end of the semester and celebrate the class of 2024. This week, I would like to showcase the beginning round of awards that members of our college have received, updates from some of our centers, and great news about keeping our programs accredited.

**PIE Award Winners:** The Promoting Intellectual Engagement (PIE) Award recognizes and honors instructors who inspire excitement, inquiry, and autonomy in first-year courses. This year, three faculty members from the School of Teacher Education were recipients: Joe Russo,

Joe Schroer, and Maureen King. I thank and congratulate these excellent instructors on their hard work supporting our students. Well done!

**Education Student Success Center Update:** New Admitted Student Days will be held on April 15, April 22, & April 26. The ESSC will be using their time with students to show them a short presentation about the programs and College of Education and help them build their schedules and register for classes in the fall. If any faculty or staff want to come meet new incoming students and introduce themselves, please contact Jody Evans at [jody.evans@uwyo.edu](mailto:jody.evans@uwyo.edu) to get more information. Interested members of the College can meet future Education students in room ED 4 starting at 10:30.

Also, advising is in full swing and the ESSC has appointments scheduled into mid-May. This is a busy time of year for our advisors, and we are grateful as always for their kindness and support for our students as they plan their upcoming semester.

The ESSC also has extended an offer to a candidate for an Academic Advising Professional position.

Finally, the ESSC team will be participating in “UnionFest” and a new event “Readiness Rally” that the Student Success & Graduation office is putting together on May 3. Stay tuned for more information about how to volunteer.

**Voices in the Field:** During March, the Wyoming School-University Partnership, in collaboration with the High Altitude Pathways program, sponsored two separate “Voices in the Field” events.

The Big Horn County School District #1 event was held on March 12 and was coordinated by Sally Bernhisel, a Career Coordinator from the district. Members from the College for Every Student “Brilliant Pathways” team and community members from Big Horn County also attended the event.

The Albany County School District #1 event was held on March 28 at Rock River High School. This event was led by “Voices” founder and Whiting High School Principal, Malinda Garcia, and her team. They collaborated with Stacie Anfinson, the Rock River High School Principal. Employers and career professionals from Albany County were present, as were the ACSD1 leadership team.

The event connected more than 100 students to career pathways in their area.

To learn more about Voices in the Field, visit: <https://bit.ly/3U2PFpu>

**High Altitude Pathways Career Fair and Transitions Workshops:** Last Wednesday the [High Altitude Pathways](#) program and the Wyoming School-University Partnership were on the ground at [Eastern Wyoming College](#) to collaboratively host a career fair and post-secondary pathways workshops with partner schools in [Goshen County](#).

Thanks to the help of colleagues from [Goshen County Schools](#), EWC, [Go Goshen](#), the [Wyoming Department of Workforce Services](#) - Torrington, and the community college career

advisors, the event taught more than 140 students about different possible pathways in post-secondary education. Follow this link to view photos published in the *Torrington Telegram*: <https://bit.ly/3xndWxk>

**Early Care and Education Center Update:** The UW ECEC has enjoyed a special week, celebrating the work of children and teachers during the “Week of the Young Child”. This is an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the world's largest early childhood education association. The purpose of the event is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs. NAEYC first established the Week of the Young Child in 1971, recognizing that the early childhood years (birth through age 8) lay the foundation for children's success in school and later life. This is a time to plan how we—as citizens of a community, of a state, and of a nation—will better meet the needs of all young children and their families. Each day has a special theme and activity, such as “Music Monday,” “Tasty Tuesday,” “Work-Together Wednesday,” “Artsy Thursday,” and “Family Fun Friday!” Check out some photos from the week:

**Professional Teaching Standards Board Approval:** The Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB), Wyoming’s teacher license granting agency, voted to approve the College of Education Secondary Social Studies, Secondary Sciences, Middle Level Sciences, and Modern Languages programs. These programs will retain state approval until their next scheduled review in the 2030-2031 academic year. Many thanks to our faculty members in these programs who worked hard on these reviews!

**Science and Math Teaching Center Update:** The folks at the Science Math and Teaching Center (SMTTC) have also been very busy. Colleagues from Montana, California, and North Dakota, along with Martha Inouye, recently submitted a manuscript to a special issue of *Education Sciences* titled “Defining Rural: Rural Teachers' Perspectives and Experiences.” They are also seeking applications from Wyoming teachers for participation in their STEM STRONG program during the 2024-2025 school year: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xeu2y-wNzUPNRFyZ\\_US-fxoo8jc4YEU\\_/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xeu2y-wNzUPNRFyZ_US-fxoo8jc4YEU_/view?usp=sharing)

This month, they provided professional development to various Wyoming school districts and open-enrollment series across WY, MT, CA, and ND. Anna Payne is working on a contract for math support with WY Virtual Academy, and a grant proposal for an NIH SEPA award is being prepared to aid UW science lab groups in translating data for K-12 education. Ana Houseal and Martha also presented with high school teachers at NSTA Denver on creating aligned learning targets.

A Teacher Researcher Knowledge Exchange (TRKE) meeting in Jackson gathered UW scientists, K-12 teachers, non-formal educators, and community non-profits to plan the program's future. TRKE recruiting for Cohort 2 is ongoing, with application reviews starting on April 30 and continuing until the cohort is full. Wyoming educators can learn more about the program and how to apply here: [https://www.canva.com/design/DAF9qKMgPLo/p2sbWyr4EnJSxcKluOPf\\_w/view?utm\\_content=DAF9qKMgPLo&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_source=editor](https://www.canva.com/design/DAF9qKMgPLo/p2sbWyr4EnJSxcKluOPf_w/view?utm_content=DAF9qKMgPLo&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor)

As for students, Andrea Hayden recently defended her PhD, and four SMTC graduate students will soon defend their Plan B projects. You can learn more about their presentations and how to attend here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/smtc/news-and-events/index.html>

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Thank you for reviewing a snapshot of updates from the College this week. Next week I will be out of the office to attend to family matters, so I will send my next round of weekly updates on Friday, April 26. I hope everyone has an enjoyable weekend.

Jenna

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**April 5, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

I am writing to you this week from Gillette, Wyoming, where I am visiting Campbell County School District to learn more about their programs. Gillette College, an important partner, also graciously welcomed me for a visit to their campus and their AREA 59: Gillette College Center for Innovation & Fabrication. I was also invited to tour the Eagle Butte Mine, and I learned more about the community's increasing and critical need for trained workers in Career Technical Education. Excellent work is happening in Campbell County, and I am grateful for the opportunity to visit and learn.

Here are a few other updates from the week that I would like to highlight:

**UW AI Summit in Higher Education:** William Cain, Mia Williams, and Lars Kotthoff organized the University of Wyoming's first AI Summit on Higher Education on April 1, connecting their work with the Presidential Fellows Program to a wider audience. I also attended part of the summit and was enlightened by the experience. The keynote speech by [Dr. Sidney D'Mello from the University of Colorado Boulder](#), titled "From Learning Optimization to Learner Flourishing: Reimagining AI in Education," showcased how AI could change education for the better. Dr. D'Mello discussed the work at the Institute for Student-AI Teaming (iSAT), focusing on using AI to enhance learning through teamwork and collaboration. This approach involves using AI in practical ways, like improving speech recognition and computer vision, to support students and teachers in creating more engaging learning experiences. The summit also included breakout sessions where participants discussed how to apply these AI advancements at the University of Wyoming, particularly in teaching, learning, and research. These discussions aimed to produce recommendations for future AI initiatives, emphasizing collaboration and innovation in education.

**Implementation of AI in Higher Ed Writing Workshop:** The work of one of William Cain's doctoral students – Carrie Kell – was featured in a news article at her home institution, Bryant University, highlighting her innovative approach to integrating AI in education. In her "Writing Workshop" course, part of Bryant's new general education program, Kell utilizes ChatGPT to enhance students' writing skills by encouraging them to engage with AI as a collaborative partner during the writing process. Kell's method emphasizes the constructive potential of generative AI, countering the prevalent narrative of its association with cheating and plagiarism. She educates students on ethical AI use, underscoring the importance of AI literacy as the

technology's influence grows across various industries. Through specific prompt engineering and critical engagement with AI-generated feedback, Kell's students learn to leverage AI for tasks like improving thesis statements, argument strength, and organizational coherence. This approach not only prepares students for a final project that incorporates AI in multiple phases of writing but also prompts them to reflect critically on the value and limitations of AI assistance compared to traditional human peer review. It is always heartwarming to see our graduate students thriving in their endeavors, including in their research efforts.

Click the link to read the article: <https://news.bryant.edu/should-students-leverage-ai-writing-process-intro-course-explores-best-practices>

**Popular Culture Association National Conference:** Anne Aydinian-Perry presented this week at the annual Popular Culture Association national conference this week. She explored how concepts presented in the popular TV show *The Great British Baking Show* could be used in secondary social studies methods to help students investigate exoticism, stereotypes, and multiple perspectives in world history classrooms. This research cultivates pedagogies that assist students in linking theoretical ideas to real-world examples in their daily lives.

You might have seen Anne's research shared on the College of Education's social media. I wanted to take this opportunity to remind everyone that you can find more college news, announcements, and shoutouts than ever before on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X, and YouTube. I will reshare the links below:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WyoCollegeOfEd/>

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/uwyo\\_ed/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/uwyo_ed/?hl=en)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/school/university-of-wyoming-college-of-education/>

X: <https://twitter.com/uwyocoed?lang=en>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCikM7A50XrUNhje7bEyfyg>

**New Cybersecurity and General Safety Training for UW Employees:** A reminder that new mandatory training on cybersecurity and general safety will need to be completed by all UW employees by June 30, 2024. As many of you know, phishing emails impersonating university personnel (especially leadership) are becoming more prevalent, and the technology and techniques to make these emails more convincing is also improving. The cybersecurity training will teach employees how to recognize dangerous emails and other phishing attempts, and the general safety training will help employees understand best practices to prevent dangerous accidents in all workplace environments.

You can find the training by accessing "WyoCloud" from our WyoWeb homepage and clicking "Learning": [wyoweb.uwyo.edu](http://wyoweb.uwyo.edu)

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It has been another busy week as we enjoy some spring-like weather. However, please stay warm and be safe on the roads this weekend as Wyoming reminds us that it is never too late for snow. I will see everyone next week.

Jenna

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**March 29, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

I hope everyone has had a wonderful week. Below are some updates as we move into April.

**Campus Visits:** This week, we welcomed two additional candidates for faculty positions on campus. Dr. George Hruby visited campus as a candidate for the Fisher Family Executive Director and Professor of the Literacy Research Center and Clinic, and Dr. Ling Zhang visited campus as a candidate for the Special Education Assistant Professor position. It was wonderful meeting with both candidates, and I am grateful to the faculty search chairs and committee members for their continued efforts to bring talented potential colleagues to campus. Thank you to everyone who supported these visits.

**SMTC Director:** To celebrate the fruits of our efforts in these faculty searches, I am pleased to announce that Dr. Jessica (Jessie) Marcolini has accepted our offer to become our next Science and Math Teaching Center (SMTC) Director. In her current role, Dr. Marcolini is the Assistant Director of the Whitaker Center for STEM Education and an Instructor at Florida Gulf Coast University.

**Ann Pickard and Dan Smith's Transformative Gifts:** Please take a moment to explore UW Story featuring Ann Pickard and Dan Smith and their generous contributions to statewide literacy and first-generation students. We extend our deepest gratitude to Ann and Dan for their remarkable generosity.

<https://www.uwyo.edu/news/2024/03/two-gifts-to-uw-support-statewide-literacy-and-first-generation-students.html>

**Montessori School Visit:** Dr. Joseph Schroer took his Exploring Teaching as a Career group to Laramie's Montessori Charter School this week. They read and discussed the tenets of Montessori education, met the principal, and toured the school. Later, they observed classes, worked with students, and discussed Montessori education with teachers in the building. Dr. Schroer reports, "The students were very interested and asked lots of great questions. It was a very enlightening experience for them to see this 'alternative' education method."

**College Meeting Reminder:** The College of Education Faculty and Staff Meeting will be held at noon on Monday, April 1, in Coe Library room 506. We will be discussing the draft of the revisions to the college Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion guidelines document. Associate Dean Alan Buss and the rest of the review committee shared the draft earlier this week for faculty to review and comment on ahead of time and during the meeting. The primary goal is to bring the document in line with Uni Regs 2-1 through 2-10 and [UW Standard Administrative Policy and Procedure \(SAPP\) 2-7](#), guided by several [Pythian/white papers](#) on this subject. The 2024 College of Education Reappointment, Tenure, Fixed-term, Promotion, and Post-Tenure



Guidelines will apply to all new faculty hired after the guidelines have been adopted by the college.

We will also celebrate this year's completed Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion cases, which I am also thrilled to share here:

- Dr. Barbara Hickman has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure
- Dr. Jihyun Lee has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure
- Dr. Todd Reynolds has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure
- Dr. Joseph Schroer has been promoted to Associate Lecturer
- Dr. Rochelle McCoy has been promoted to Associate Lecturer
- Dr. Kimberly Gustafson has been reappointed with a 5-year fixed-term rolling contract

Congratulations to these outstanding faculty members for this important milestone in each of their careers.

**College Awards:** Please submit nominations for the College of Education Faculty, Staff, and Graduate Student Awards by Sunday, March 31. Jake Orr sent out an email reminder with more information about the awards yesterday morning (Thursday, March 27). Please submit your nominations to Jake at [jorr2@uwyo.edu](mailto:jorr2@uwyo.edu).

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Thank you for reviewing this week's updates. I wish everyone a wonderful weekend!  
Jenna

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## March 22, 2024

Dear colleagues,

Campus is buzzing with activity with our students returned refreshed from Spring Break. I hope all of you were able to take advantage of last week as we catch our second wind for the remainder of the spring 2024 semester. I am excited to highlight some college updates for all of you for this week.

**Summit on Artificial Intelligence:** The Summit on Artificial Intelligence will be held on April 1 from 10 AM to 4 PM in the Center and East Union Ballrooms. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Sidney K. D'Mello. Dr. D'Mello (PhD in Computer Science) is a Professor at the Institute of Cognitive Science and Department of Computer Science at the University of Colorado Boulder. He leads the NSF National Institute for Student-Agent Teaming (2020-2025), which aims to develop AI technologies to facilitate rich sociocollaborative learning experiences for all students. The keynote address is open to the public and does not require registration. If you would like to participate in the programming following the keynote please use the following link to register; 40 spaces are available and registration will be open until they are filled: [https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_02oolJ3XRKwVeke](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_02oolJ3XRKwVeke)

**Going On Now at the Literacy Research Center and Clinic (LRCC):** The LRCC tutoring clinic is bustling with spring semester sessions underway, featuring 10 tutors and 13 students, a growth of four from last semester. Cindy Brock and Sara Pommarane are conducting literacy professional learning in Fremont County School District 6, working with teachers to craft lesson plans for vocabulary instruction. Meanwhile, Cindy and Leslie Rush also are supporting TCSD#1's literacy instructional leadership team, focusing on equitable learning systems. The LRCC staff, with Jayne Hellenberg's assistance, also recently conducted a literacy needs assessment in Big Horn County School District #4. Plans for the Fall Literacy Education Conference, supported by faculty, notably Jennifer Geringer, are in the works. Additionally, secondary-level professional learning initiatives in vocabulary instruction and writing are ongoing in Big Horn County and Sublette County, led by Leslie and Sara, and Leslie and Tood respectively. Finally, thanks to Sara's efforts, LRCC library books are now available for checkout! To schedule a visit or set up an account, please contact Sara at [spommara@uwyo.edu](mailto:spommara@uwyo.edu). Lots of great work at the LRCC!

**CAVE Visit:** Joseph Schroer recently took his Human Development and Learning class to visit the CAVE (immersive virtual reality environment) as part of brain week to learn more about the parts and functions of the brain and what they mean for learning and development. I encourage other faculty to follow Joseph's lead in exposing students to new technologies that will enhance the way we teach and learn. Learn more about UW's CAVE and how it supports multidisciplinary research and teaching: <https://www.uwyo.edu/ser/visualization-center/index.html>

**New Faculty:** I am pleased to announce that Ty Tedmon-Jones and Brittney Phillips are the newest additions to our faculty next fall and will join us as Assistant Professors in our Counseling Program. Welcome Ty and Brittney! Here is a summary of completed faculty searches so far:

- Counseling Program Assistant Professor: Ty Tedmon-Jones
- Counseling Program Assistant Professor: Brittney Phillips
- Special Education Assistant Lecturer: Jennifer Krause
- Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education: Amy Encinger
- Special Education Assistant Professor: Tiffany Hunt
- Elementary Literacy Education Assistant Lecturer: Stella Nowell
- Secondary Mathematics Education Assistant Professor: Miriam Sanders
- John P. Ellbogen Foundation Professor of Early Childhood Education (pending approval of rank and tenure by the Board of Trustees): Marisa Macy

**Board of Trustees March Meeting:** As you all know, the Board of Trustees March meeting is underway and will conclude today. There was very robust and deeply heartfelt discussion yesterday afternoon. You can find links to review previous broadcasts and watch the remainder of the meeting here: <https://wyolinks.uwyo.edu/trusteesmar24/>

I encourage everyone to tune in.

**Faculty Senate Committee Search:** The Faculty Senate is currently seeking a new member for the Academic Planning Committee. If you would like to volunteer for this important role, please reach out to Noah Engel Cartie at [nengelca@uwyo.edu](mailto:nengelca@uwyo.edu).

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Thank you for reviewing this week's highlights of important college and university news. I appreciate everyone's hard work in welcoming students back from Spring Break.

I wish everyone a wonderful weekend.

Jenna

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**March 8, 2024**

Dear Colleagues,

Happy Friday and Happy Spring Break! I am sure everyone is grateful for a slower week to rest, catch up on important projects, and spend some time with family and friends. This week in Arizona, I was busy alongside our Senior College Development Officer, Tyler Spear, meeting with several important friends and supporters of the college. We shared the critical work we do and learned more about their lives and experiences. Then yesterday, I was heading to Jackson for the Wyoming's Future of Learning, a Celebration of Learning event, but a delay in my Phoenix flight prevented me from making it there.

I am pleased to report that the rest of the college has been busy as we hit our mid-semester checkpoint. Below are my weekly updates.

**Recent Publication:** Colby Gull, Managing Director of the Trustees Education Initiative (TEI) and Director of the Wyoming School-University Partnership (WSUP), and Leslie Rush, our Wyoming Excellence Chair in Literacy Education, recently published an update for the Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps (WTMC). The article focuses on findings from their work in the WTMC in developing four competencies to promote teacher persistence and success, and they honed in on the notion of work-life balance. Learn more about strategies teachers can use to promote professional well-being, and how mentors and school leadership can support them, here:

[https://kappanonline.org/mentors-work-life-balance-gull-rush/?utm\\_source=PDK+International&utm\\_campaign=82d617588a-Kappan+Newsletter+Lapsed+2+25+2020+COPY+01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_867590cd6a-82d617588a-35337762&mc\\_cid=82d617588a&mc\\_eid=7c272b4455](https://kappanonline.org/mentors-work-life-balance-gull-rush/?utm_source=PDK+International&utm_campaign=82d617588a-Kappan+Newsletter+Lapsed+2+25+2020+COPY+01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_867590cd6a-82d617588a-35337762&mc_cid=82d617588a&mc_eid=7c272b4455)

**Education Student Feature:** Larkin Williams, president of the FFA Wyoming and a student at the College of Education majoring in elementary and special education, was featured recently in the Wyoming Association for Career and Technical Education (WACTE) newsletter (attached). Larkin did a wonderful job representing the college at an event where Governor Gordon

proclaimed February 2024 “CTE Month.” It's exciting to witness our student engaging in such crucial work across the state.

**Staff Recognition Day Volunteers:** There have been several announcements for the upcoming Staff Appreciation Day on April 16 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Arena Auditorium. The organizers are still seeking faculty volunteers to help out at the event and show appreciation to the folks who diligently support faculty for the remainder of the year. If you are available on this day, I ask you to consider volunteering by emailing Christina McDonald at [cmcdon19@uwyo.edu](mailto:cmcdon19@uwyo.edu).

**Presidential Leadership Institute:** Full-time staff who have worked at the university for more than two years and who are interested in strengthening their skills are encouraged to apply for the Presidential Leadership Institute (PLI). Applications are due on March 29, and monthly meetings will occur from May-September. Follow the link to learn more: <https://www.uwyo.edu/president/initiatives/presidents-leadership-institute.html>

**Education Leadership Program Update:** In February, Barbara Hickman and Margaret Hudson from the Educational Leadership Program, along with Colby Gull from TEI/WSUP, facilitated a mid-year meeting with the Wyoming Principal Mentor Certification Program (WPMCP) in central Wyoming. The WPMCP plays an important role in developing the next generation of school leaders. Current educational leaders participating in this program exemplify a commitment to advancing Wyoming's education system. The WPMCP warmly thanks Fremont County School District #24 and Elementary Principal Andrea Gilbertson for hosting the meeting at their lovely school facility.

Last week, Barbara and Margaret also had the privilege of representing the Educational Leadership Program as part of an Ethics Panel at the Wyoming School Counseling Association (WYSCA) annual conference in Casper. This opportunity to collaborate with our colleagues in the Counseling Program fostered rich discussions and demonstrated the importance of interdisciplinary work to support university students and school counselors from around the state.

Finally, the Educational Leadership Program just completed the review process for admission to its four programs. As we welcome these promising leaders to our Principal Certification, Master of Arts, Superintendent Certification, and Doctor of Education programs, we reaffirm our commitment to developing exceptional educational leaders who will shape the future of education in our state and beyond. We are indebted to Tiffany LeGal for her tireless efforts throughout this process, ensuring a smooth transition for our incoming students.

**AI in Wyoming:** On Tuesday, March 5, William Cain and Mia Williams from the Learning, Design, and Technology (LDT) Program, together with President Seidel and representatives from the Presidential Fellows Program, as well as graduate and undergraduate student ambassadors, engaged in a series of presentations at the State Capitol in Cheyenne. This initiative illustrated the University of Wyoming's forward momentum in harnessing Artificial Intelligence (AI) for educational and scientific advancement. By sharing insights on the integration of AI technologies, they highlighted the institution's commitment to innovation and its ethical application in academia.

William and his graduate student Rebecca Austin delved into their research on fostering ethical thinking in AI within education. Concurrently, Mia and her students presented on the practical

use of AI in teaching and learning. These discussions with legislators at the Capitol demonstrated the College of Education's role as a leader in responsibly integrating AI into education.

**Presidential Fellows AI Group:** The Presidential Fellows AI Group invites you to attend and participate in the 2024 Summit on Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education to discuss and debate the potential for emerging AI technologies to transform educational practices. The summit will take place on April 1 at 10:00 a.m. in the Center and East Union Ballrooms. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Sidney K. D'Mello, who is a Professor at the Institute of Cognitive Science and Department of Computer Science at the University of Colorado Boulder. He leads the NSF National Institute for Student-Agent Teaming (2020-2025), which aims to develop AI technologies to facilitate rich socio-collaborative learning experiences for all students. The keynote address is open to the public and does not require registration. If you would like to participate in the programming following the keynote, please use the following link to register; 40 spaces are available and registration will be open until they are filled: [https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_02oolJ3XRKwVeke](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_02oolJ3XRKwVeke)

**Canva workshop:** I also wanted to take a moment to promote a free learning opportunity for members of the university community: a Canva workshop presented by the Writing Center. Explore Canva's wide array of abilities, including PowerPoints, social media posts, infographics, documents, and much more!

- Master the Basics: Learn the ins and outs of Canva, from its user-friendly interface to its vast array of tools.
- Tips & Tricks: Explore the helpful functions that Canva offers, which may not be well-known.
- Difference between Canva and Canva Pro: Uncover the minor differences between the free and premium version of the platform.

You can join the workshop on March 20, from 5:15-6:00 p.m., in Coe Library Room 121. Follow this link to

register: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdWCQC7CcBFwtXzeAT4HKCuLggC5iNttXA9jbrV8lNq5Vw4iQ/viewform>

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Thank you for catching up with me on this week's snapshot of important news from the college and university. I hope everyone has a good weekend and a fun, safe, and restful spring break. My next weekly updates will be on 3/22.

Jenna

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**March 1, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

Before I begin, I wanted to recognize that February was a very difficult month for the university. Three of our student-athletes passed away in a car accident last week: Charlie Clark, Carson Muir, and Luke Slabber. And, as many of you may have heard, another student passed away a few weeks ago: Sabrina Geller. It is overwhelming to think about these tragedies. We must support each other, especially those who are connected to these students. Amid hard times, I still wish to reflect on the important work that is happening within the college community.

**College Meeting:** Our first college meeting of the semester was held on Monday. We had a thoughtful discussion about updates on the Master Educator Competency Program (MECP) and our progress so far. Tyler Spear joined our meeting, and together, we discussed our college donors and expectations moving forward as they continue to fund important internal grants and awards that breathe life into our work and research. This was one of the most well-attended college meetings, with over 60 attendees, more than 50 in person and 10 via Zoom. I appreciate everyone's fervent participation in leading the college a brighter future.

**Early Childhood Education News:** I was sent a remarkable article about early childhood education in Wyoming that I would like to share. WyoFile's Katie Klingsporn reports on Kendra West, executive director of the Evanston Child Development Center. In reading about West's groundbreaking work growing the center, advocating for better teacher working conditions, and improving the quality of care to more children than ever, I was reminded that education is *everything*. Kendra exemplifies the grassroots action needed to solve the shortage of professional early childcare and education in Wyoming: "West saw the needs firsthand. Instead of waiting for the entire ecosystem to improve, she focused on cultivating her own small corner of the lot." Click here to read the article:

<https://wyofile.com/early-childhood-educator-kendra-west-builds-better-beginnings-in-southwest-wyoming/>

I would also like to highlight our own faculty's important work on campus, as well as the Early Care and Education Center, to professionalize and cultivate early childhood educators who are ready to spark needed change in the state.

**Website Update:** As many of you have noticed, the college website ([uwyo.edu/education](http://uwyo.edu/education)) has undergone a major reworking. Thanks to the efforts of Cody Schofield, Chloe Palmer, and the team over at Institutional Marketing. The goal is not only to organize the resources on our website to be navigable and inviting to students and other visitors but also to standardize the website. I would also like to spotlight the renewed "Events Calendar." If you know of an important happening in the college, you can report it via the website for Cody to add to our main calendar. Have a look: <https://www.uwyo.edu/education/calendar.html>

**Education Summit:** The annual Education Summit kicked off last night with the first-ever "mixer" event where faculty and participating graduate students came together and mingled before exciting presentations today, Friday, March 1. Although I was not able to attend last night, I was told that over 20 attended the mixer, including Associate Deans Alan Buss and Pete Moran and CLAD School Director Courtney McKim.

I am looking forward to our lineup of presentations today! Attached is the updated schedule, and I look forward to seeing everyone.

**Faculty Search Update:** Since last week, I am pleased to announce that Amy Encinger has accepted the offer for the Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education. This is another exciting addition to our faculty, and I look forward to announcing future acceptances in the coming weeks.

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That concludes my updates from this week. As we move into March, perhaps pulling our coats and scarves in closer to stay warm, I remind everyone that our work makes a huge difference. As we mourn lost students, I am grateful for our community. I wish everyone a restorative weekend.

Jenna

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**February 23, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

I hope everyone had another productive week. Despite some travel hiccups, I am writing to you from San Francisco, where I am attending the CASE Development for Deans and Academic Leaders Training and Conference. This program offers academic leaders practical fundraising information, opportunities for collaborative technique sharing, fresh development perspectives, and networking opportunities to enhance fundraising practices for their institutions. Alongside Tyler Spear and other colleagues from UW, I am learning a lot.

Associate Deans Moran and Buss have also been on the road, attending 'Celebrations of Learning' events in Albany County and Laramie County to learn more from our district partners about what they have gained from their participation in the Governor's RIDE initiative. It has been another busy week all around, come snow or shine!

Here are my updates as we move into the last week of February:

**Faculty Searches:** With all faculty search campus visits concluded, we are excited to begin announcing job offers that have been extended and accepted for various positions – a testament to everyone's hard work, especially that of all search committee members and chairs. Marisa Macy has accepted the position of John P. Ellbogen Foundation Professor of Early Childhood Education, pending approval for her rank and tenure. Stella Nowell has accepted the position of Elementary Literacy Education Assistant Lecturer. Jenni Krause has accepted the Special Education Assistant Lecturer position, and Tiffany Hunt has accepted the Special Education Assistant Professor position. Their arrival marks an exciting chapter for us, and we can't wait to see the contributions they will make. More announcements on the additional positions are on the way in the next couple of weeks!

**College Meeting:** Our college-wide meeting will be held next Monday, February 26, from 12-1 PM in Coe Library room 506. As usual, in-person attendance is highly encouraged. If you wish



to receive the Zoom link, please reach out to your school director. We will be discussing college initiatives, awards, and offer time for a general discussion.

**Wallop Civic Engagement Program Summer Workshop:** The Wallop Civic Engagement Program Team in partnership with the Wyoming School-University Partnership is pleased to host a virtual professional development workshop on Thursday, June 13th for 20 Wyoming social studies and English language arts teachers.

Apply by April 15th or contact the [Wallop Civic Engagement Program](#) for more information.

Follow this link to apply:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeGQTQD1K9Bdq3STAXTmnCQ9wzFBPWk5EYBBr\\_lvmisaNjZDw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeGQTQD1K9Bdq3STAXTmnCQ9wzFBPWk5EYBBr_lvmisaNjZDw/viewform)

**UW Staff Awards:** An announcement from Staff Senate was recently disseminated that highlights various staff awards. Let's remember that our college simply cannot function without the dedication, hard work, and expertise of our staff members. Their contributions are the backbone of our success and daily operations. I encourage everyone in the College to take this opportunity to recognize and nominate our outstanding staff for these awards, as a token of our appreciation and acknowledgment of their indispensable role in our college.

#### **Presidential Excellence Award**

*\$1000 and a plaque*

Given by the UW President, this award recognizes a UW staff member who exemplifies excellence and demonstrates commitment to achieving the university's strategic plan.

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_2t0GfjpT6TH29D0](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2t0GfjpT6TH29D0)

#### **All-Star Team Award 2024**

*\$2000 per team and a plaque for each team member*

This award honors a team of two to five UW Staff members who have worked together as a team to complete a project; create a new program or process; or facilitate a significant transition to a current project, program, or process as the University. Recipients of this award will be staff members who are notable for their collaborative skills and perseverance to complete a sizeable task or accomplish a long-term goal.

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_9ADcRo4WvBFnvwy](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9ADcRo4WvBFnvwy)

#### **Custodian of the Year 2024**

*\$1000 and a plaque*

This award honors one current UW staff member who exemplifies outstanding work ethic and professional competence in custodial services from Athletics, Operations, Wyoming Union, or Residence Life and Dining Services.

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_bmHcs0xmaxZQsui](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bmHcs0xmaxZQsui)

#### **E.G. Meyer Family Award 2024**

*\$1000 and a plaque*

This long-standing staff award on campus honors two current UW Staff Members (one non-exempt and one exempt\_ who show initiative, helpfulness, dependability and a positive and cheerful demeanor.

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_das2v7CzJ0mvZKm](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_das2v7CzJ0mvZKm)

#### **Jodi K. Humphrey Inspirational Award 2024**

*\$1000 and a plaque*

This award was established in 1995 in memory of long-time Department of Residence Life and Dining Services employee Joleen "Jodi" K. Humphrey, and honors two current UW Staff member who inspires people to do their best, remains positive under stressful conditions, serves as a positive role model to others, shows eagerness toward the job, displays a cheerful attitude toward customers, and motivates self and others.

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_3qQ3cVSXx8qeWai](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3qQ3cVSXx8qeWai)

#### **Off-Campus Award 2024**

*\$1000 and a plaque*

This award honors two staff members who work off the main UW campus and display an outstanding attitude toward furthering the mission and goals of UW off-campus.

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eESB6Q2fdPQJ0pg](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eESB6Q2fdPQJ0pg)

#### **Pete K Simpson Golden Gloves 2024**

*Dated plaque*

This award was founded in honor of outstanding staff/faculty member Pete Simpson and recognizes one current Staff Senate member who shows outstanding participation on their Staff Senate committee, participation at full Staff Senate meetings and strong representation to constituents.

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_3P2CxuhyMBJz4xM](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3P2CxuhyMBJz4xM)

### **Skilled Trades Award 2024**

*\$1000 and a plaque*

This award honors one current UW staff member who exemplifies outstanding work ethic and professional competence in the skilled trades or in equipment, maintenance, or grounds positions.

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_8qqLOLfsH9oUrPM](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8qqLOLfsH9oUrPM)

### **Supervisor of the Year Award 2024**

*Season tickets to various campus events and a plaque*

This award honors one UW employee who is an outstanding supervisor to one or more classified staff members.

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_4USFPu9noqeGGoe](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4USFPu9noqeGGoe)

### **True Grit Award 2024**

*\$1000 and a plaque*

This award honors two current, full-time benefited UW staff members who are noted for their flexibility, consistency, vision, grit and/or problem-solving skills.

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_8oya1PjzTWWTOK](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8oya1PjzTWWTOK)

### **Unsung Hero Award 2024**

*\$1000 and a plaque*

This award honors four UW staff members for their contributions above and beyond their position without fanfare or a desire for praise.

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_dhexMA0XcwJ4GLs](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dhexMA0XcwJ4GLs)

### **2024 Employee of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter**

[https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_1lmIbQUOGiLwJ8](https://uwyo.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1lmIbQUOGiLwJ8)

Nominations for Employee of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter are due Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup> @ 5pm.

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Cheers to another productive week! I wish everyone a nice weekend and look forward to seeing everyone on Monday.

Jenna

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**February 16, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

Good morning, and happy Friday! I hope everyone had a productive and enjoyable week. Here are some updates and announcements:

**Dean's Office:** Colby and I provided the Trustees Education Initiatives updates to the State Board of Education in Cheyenne yesterday. Associate Dean Moran has also been traveling to attend Celebration of Learning events connected to the Wyoming's Future of Learning partnership in Cody and Meeteetse. In addition, we have been welcoming another round of faculty finalist visits. Many thanks to your efforts and participation.

**Search Updates:** This week, we hosted another SMTC Director finalist and three counseling assistant professor finalists on campus. I am pleased that more offers are being extended for previously concluded searches, and I look forward to seeing reports on these last searches before finalizing another final round of offers. I appreciate your dedication and hard work in this busy semester filled with collaboration and collective efforts in searching for new colleagues.

**School of Computing Speaker and Visiting Candidate:** The School of Computing is welcoming a speaker next Monday, Dr. Chad Lane, who will present on "Applying AI & Interactive Technology to Educational Problems." Given the interdisciplinary nature of the talk and its relevance to our college, I encourage everyone to attend. His talk will be in Engineering 2102 at 10:30-11:30 AM. I am attaching the flyer (note that the "PM" should say "AM.")

On Tuesday, in Engineering 2105 from 9:30-10:30 AM, Ali Raza, a finalist for a possible joint position in the School of Computing and the College of Education, will be delivering his public presentation. He will present on "Using Visual Learning Analytics and Evidence-Based Instruction to Support Students' Experience in STEM Classrooms." I hope everyone will attend this presentation as well. This could be an exciting partnership between the College of Education and the School of Computing. Please find the flyer attached.

**College of Education in the News:** The college was recently covered by WPR's rural and tribal reporter Hannah Habermann for the new CTE bridge course that introduces students to a career in CTE teaching. The course has attracted a diverse array of students, including veterans, community college students (and instructors), and industry professionals as well as paraprofessionals from school districts. <https://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org/wyoming-economy/2024-02-13/new-course-partners-with-community-colleges-to-address-shortage-of-career-and-tech-ed-teachers>

**Time Management Tips from Dr. Douglas Reeves:** A longstanding friend and supporter of the college, Dr. Douglas Reeves, recently created a short video on time management that I hope you will find useful. His video covers his tried-and-true methods such as “total capture,” “daily prioritized task lists,” “notes during the day,” and “calendar time blocks.” These concepts are easy to implement and can help you manage your time more effectively. As we push forward with the semester and juggle multiple tasks and projects, I hope you will consider these tips and how they can improve your time management habits. You can watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65Nsxf948qE>

**Student Success Center Updates:** Sarah Rundall at the Student Success Center is excited to announce practicum placement updates for spring:

173 students were placed in the various practica:

- EDST 1200 | Practicum 1: 20 students with multiple placements across three Albany county schools, rotating each week for 7 weeks.
- EDST 2200 | Practicum 2: 22 students for a total of 25 placements.
- EDST 3101 | Practicum 3: 107 students placed across Wyoming (Albany #1, Campbell #1, Laramie #1, Laramie #2, Natrona #1, Platte #2, Sweetwater #2, Uinta #4, & Weston #1) along with placements in Big Timber, MT, Cliché, CO, Fairfax, VA, and Fort Collins, CO.
- EDEC 4209 | Early Literacy Methods: 54 students placed.

Nice work, Sarah! Our students are doing great work far and wide, and we appreciate your expert coordination.

Also, a reminder that March 23 is Discovery Days, and the college could use a few volunteers to meet future students and their parents. Please reach out to Jody Evans ([jody.evans@uwyo.edu](mailto:jody.evans@uwyo.edu)) if you would like to sign up.

Finally, the official start date for the Student Success Center's new Office Associate, Kelsie Tarver, is Monday, February 26. Welcome, Kelsie!

**New School of Teacher Education Office Associate:** In the past few weeks, many of you have probably seen several emails from her. I am glad to announce that Alyssa Janzen has joined Alexis Ontiveroz as one of the STE Office Associates. I am grateful for her additional support and hope everyone continues to make her feel welcome.

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Thanks for reviewing this week's updates. I will see everyone next Monday, and I wish you all a good weekend.

Jenna

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**February 9, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

Happy Friday once more! I am writing to you this week from San Diego, California. My reprieve from Wyoming's snowstorms appears to be San Diego's rainstorms, but I have been staying dry. I am here for the University of Wyoming Foundation Board Meeting, alongside other fellow deans and UW colleagues. Tyler Spear and I have also taken the opportunity to meet with some of the college's most faithful and appreciated supporters and alumni in the area. Even while traveling, I am thrilled to report that the news from the college never stops. Below are a few updates.

**Celebrations of Learning:** Associate Deans Buss and Moran have also hit the road to attend continued "Celebrations of Learning" across the state in Douglas, Kemmerer, Upton, and, next week, Cody and Meeteetse. These events not only allow RIDE pilot school districts to reflect on their work to bolster student-centered learning initiatives but also provide the Associate Deans with a good chance to connect with principals and superintendents and learn more about how we can continue to meet the educational needs of the state here at the college. I know many of you are also active across the state, and I am grateful for our robust network. Every handshake, every conversation, and every smile build crucial relationships as we continue to innovate how we train new generations of educators, researchers, counselors, and administrators.

**Practicum Visits:** On that note, Elizabeth McMahan and Anna Payne recently visited multiple Wyoming school districts. They met with superintendents and principals, visited schools, and checked in with student teachers, method practicum students, and mentors. Nice work!

**Trustees' Scholars Award Interviews:** Alongside other Education Student Success Center (ESSC) members last week, Elizabeth McMahan attended interviews with finalists for the Trustees' Scholars Awards, UW's most prestigious full-ride scholarship program for Wyoming's most excellent high school students. Students who qualify for this award typically have GPAs of 3.95 or higher and average ACT composite scores of 32 out of 36, so it is good to hear that the College of Education was able to build early relationships with some future education majors who will likely excel in their programs. Learn more about the scholarship here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/sfa/scholarships/residents/trustees.html>

**UWyo Magazine Winter Edition:** If you have not seen it, the winter edition of the UWyo magazine is available to read online (link below). Our very own Nikki Baldwin was featured for her groundbreaking work under the WYECON (Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network) initiative (page 24). On page 26, you will also notice our unit, the Science and Math Teaching Center, was highlighted for its professional development across the state and four in-house master's programs. Next to the feature, you will also see the Malcolm Wallop Civic Engagement Program and the UW Wallop K-12 Curriculum Project, a bank of various lessons and multimedia lessons available to Wyoming social studies and English language arts teachers, developed in partnership between A&S and Education.

<https://online.publicationprinters.com/html5/reader/production/default.aspx?pubname=&edid=9c7d5ac8-18f5-4454-818a-a04798fa54a8>

**Faculty Searches and Visits:** Next week we will be welcoming more finalists for the two Counselor Education faculty positions and the SMTC Director position, and I am looking forward

to it. As we approach the conclusion of these visits, we are preparing to announce additional offers for several positions: the Fisher Family LRCC Executive Director/Professor, the Special Education Lecturer and Assistant Professors, the Early Childhood Education Assistant Professor, and the Literacy Lecturer. It feels like the College of Education is gilding itself with a new round of excellent scholars, ready to meet the next generation of future educators and counselors.

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This concludes my updates for this week. Did you know that you can now view an archive of my weekly updates from previous weeks? Check out the updated Office of the Dean webpage here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/education/deans-office/office-of-the-dean/index.html>

As always, I am looking forward to seeing everyone next Monday. I will be back with more news next Friday.

Jenna

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## February 2, 2024

Dear colleagues,

Happy Groundhog's Day! Can everyone believe it is already February? I hope everyone had a productive week. Here are my updates and reminders for this week.

**University Awards:** Numerous deadlines for awards across campus are approaching, and I would like to highlight a few of them and encourage faculty and staff, in consultation with their school directors, to consider nominating exemplary members of our college.

*Tobin Memorial and Rosemarie Martha Spitaleri Awards*, which recognize outstanding undergraduate students. The initial nomination only requires a supporting letter be sent to [studentaffairs@uwyo.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@uwyo.edu).

There are also several graduate student and faculty awards:

- *Ellbogen Outstanding Graduate Assistant Teaching Award*
- *Distinguished Graduate Faculty Mentor*
- *Mid-Career Graduate Faculty Mentor*
- *Early-Career Graduate Faculty Mentor*
- *Outstanding Master's Thesis*
- *Outstanding Dissertation*

I know our college has several outstanding graduate students and faculty mentors who would be excellent candidates for these awards. You can find all the information about the graduate student and faculty awards at this link: <https://www.uwyo.edu/uwgrad/faculty-staff/award-information.html>



Finally, there are several faculty awards to keep on your radar as you think about how to celebrate your favorite faculty member:

*John P. Ellbogen Meritorious Classroom Teaching Award*

*George Duke Humphrey Distinguished Faculty Award*

*Hollon Family Award for Online Teaching Excellence*

*John P. Ellbogen Lifetime Teaching Award*

*“Laramigo” Award for Community Engagement*

Follow this link to view the call for applications from the Office of Academic Affairs: <https://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/files/docs/call-for-faculty-awards-2024.pdf>

If you know of someone who would be perfect for one of these awards, please speak with your school director to learn more about required materials for nominations.

**College Awards:** I also wanted to let everyone know that the Associate Deans will soon be releasing calls for the internal College of Education awards. Stay tuned for more information. You can review recipients for last year by following this link: <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=799716312160195&set=a.547130634085432>

**College of Education Represented at Celebration of Research Excellence Event:** Mark Perkins, our Assistant Dean of Assessment, Data, and Accreditation and Assistant Professor, was honored last week at the inaugural *Celebration of Research Excellence*, hosted by the University of Wyoming Research and Economic Development Division. The event celebrated research conducted by some of UW's finest scholars and researchers who contributed to more than \$150 million in research expenditures last year: a record for the university. Brilliant work, Mark!

**Student Success Center Update:** Our Student Success Center is pleased to announce the hire of a new office associate starting February 8, pending a written offer. Levi and Matt, our academic outstanding advisors, also attended the Trustees' Scholars Award Interview Day and Resource Fair on January 26 and met some exciting education majors. This is one of UW's most prestigious scholarships, and it is always exciting to see Wyoming's most elite high school graduates considering our programs. The next Trustees Scholars Award Interview Day will be held today.

**Phishing Reminder:** On Wednesday, Alex sent out an email announcing that a copycat account was impersonating me to get College of Education faculty and staff to send out their personal information. I wanted to remind our community of the dangers of phishing. Anyone could create an email address and pretend to be any one of us, using our signature lines or photos to seem more convincing. Please stay vigilant, especially if emails include the “This message was sent from a non-UWYO address” warning banner. Learn more about phishing and other malicious emails to UW here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/infotech/phishing/>

**Faculty Searches:** I am delighted to announce that Miriam Sanders has officially accepted our verbal offer for the position of Assistant Professor in Secondary Mathematics Education. Miriam is currently preparing to defend her dissertation at Texas A & M University in May. Additionally, I am pleased to inform you that Dr. Marisa Macy, currently Cille and Ron Williams Chair of Early Childhood Education at the University of Nebraska, Kearney, has accepted a verbal offer for the John P. Ellbogen Foundation Early Childhood Education Professor position. Dr. Macy's rank and tenure are currently in the review process and will undergo review by the UW Board of Trustees in March.

We also had the pleasure of conducting campus visits for candidates applying for the positions of Assistant Professor and Lecturer in Special Education, as well as candidates for the role of Director at the Science Math and Teaching Center. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet these candidates in person, and we truly appreciate everyone's active involvement in making them feel welcome. We will keep everyone updated on any developments in these ongoing searches, and once again, we thank all of you for your continued dedication in welcoming potential future colleagues. There will be a few more weeks of candidate visits for other faculty searches, and we are looking forward to sharing concrete updates for all the available positions in the near future.

**Online Programs:** As reported in the Provost's weekly newsletter, Vice Provost Matt Griswold and team have been working across campus to increase the availability of fully online bachelor's degree programs for online education students. A new webpage highlighting available online degrees was published here: <https://www.uwyo.edu/online/programs/bachelor.html>. You will note that many of our programs were featured, and I am proud that our college continues to stay at the forefront of distance modalities. This is especially important in a spread-out state like Wyoming, and I encourage the continued innovation of our online offerings. Great work, everyone!

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Next week, Associate Dean Moran will travel to Kemmerer, while Associate Dean Buss will head to Douglas. They will both attend the Celebration of Learning, a component of Wyoming's Future of Learning Partnership Initiative, which focuses on student-centered learning. Meanwhile, I will be traveling to San Diego for the UW Foundation Board meeting. During this trip, I will also take the opportunity to visit and express gratitude to our college's generous supporters.

It was an energetic week, and I am looking forward to the rest of the semester. Here's to more good news to share. On that note, if you have news to share with the college, please send me an email. I wish everyone a fun and safe weekend!

Jenna

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**January 26, 2024**

Dear colleagues,

We have made it through the second week of the semester! I hope everyone retains momentum this week as we continue forward with solidified classes, filled-up travel schedules, and fresh ideas for the semester. Before we know it, we will be seeing each other at the spring 2024 graduation ceremony!

Meanwhile, here are my updates for this week:

**Faculty Searches Update:** It has been another lively week of faculty search finalist visits to campus. We saw candidates for the Fisher Family LRCC Director and Associate/Professor position, the Literacy Lecturer position, and the Early Childhood Education Assistant Professor position. Today, our very own Tiffany Hunt will kick off visits for the Special Education Assistant Professor position, and the candidate visits will continue into next week. Here are our other upcoming visits:

1. Science Math and Teaching Center Director
2. Special Education Assistant Lecturer
3. Two Counseling Assistant Professors

Thank you to everyone for keeping your calendars flexible with so many other plates spinning. It will all be worth it next fall when we welcome our new colleagues!

**New Project Coordinator in the Dean's Office:** We nearly forgot to announce this because he has been such a beloved presence in the college, but Jake Orr returned to the College of Education this month as a Project Coordinator in the Dean's Office. He will be supporting our associate deans, Alan Buss and Pete Moran, as well as serving as the first point of contact for visitors to the dean's office. All of us are thrilled to have him back, and hope everyone will stop by to welcome him on this new role.

**WTMC New Cohort Application Reminder:** The Wyoming Teacher Mentor Corps (WTMC) will welcome its third cohort of future teacher mentors this spring. A spring retreat has been tentatively planned on March 19-21, 2024, followed by a 3-day summer institute in late June. This is a great opportunity for teachers across the state to build leadership skills to support emerging teachers in their district. Today is the deadline for cohort 3 nominations.

<https://www.uwyo.edu/tei/wyoming-teacher-mentor-corps.html>

**Board of Trustees Meeting:** As many of you know, two topics related to the College of Education were on the agenda for this month's Board of Trustees (BoT) regular meeting: an update from the Trustees Education Initiative (TEI) as well as an update on the Master Educator Competency Program (MECP). I appreciate everyone who came to support the college during the CoE presentations yesterday. You can learn more about the meeting, as well as future meetings, by checking out the Board of Trustees webpage: <https://www.uwyo.edu/trustees/>

**Dr. Douglas Reeves Meet & Greet:** An important and longstanding supporter of the college, Dr. Douglas Reeves is visiting Laramie to support the college during this month's BoT meeting. A known champion of early career faculty and graduate students, Dr. Reeves will be meeting with some junior faculty this morning in ED 115 from 10:00-11:00 AM. Faculty and graduate students can also drop by if they have a chance.

**Education Summit:** You have probably heard about the Education Summit on March 1, 2024. This annual event is an excellent opportunity for students and faculty to present ongoing research, rehearse presentations to be shared at national/international conferences, gather insight from peers and mentors, and learn about innovations in education. Proposals are due next Friday, February 2.

You can apply

here: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfCRZHa\\_hZ2ocvQNb9HVohyhipNIFEC2-nMdiA2dH0ICfDag/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfCRZHa_hZ2ocvQNb9HVohyhipNIFEC2-nMdiA2dH0ICfDag/viewform)

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This concludes my second week of updates from 2024. So far, it is turning out to be a strong semester for our faculty, staff, and students. If any of you have any news or events to share, I invite you to send them my way. With that, please keep up the great work!

Jenna

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## January 19, 2024

Dear colleagues,

Welcome back to campus! I hope your first week of the spring semester has gotten off to an excellent start. As we gear up for another exciting, busy, and productive semester, I would like to express my gratitude for your dedication to teaching, research, and service in support of our students and delivering services that align with the land-grant mission of our college.

I am looking forward to continue providing weekly updates to offer a snapshot of some of our activities and achievements. Here are my updates for this week:

**College Meetings:** The dean's office would like to announce that college-wide meetings will start in February due to the busy nature of January with numerous campus visits for faculty search finalists. Here are the dates (with calendar invitations to come soon):

- Monday, February 26, from 12-1 PM
- Monday, March 25, from 12-1 PM
- Monday, April 29, from 12-1 PM

As always, faculty and staff are highly encouraged to make every effort to attend these meetings in person to better cultivate college-wide discussion and collaboration.

**Faculty Searches:** Speaking of faculty searches, many of you know that we have been in the thick of campus visits and public presentations. I appreciate everyone's collaboration and collegiality in participating in tours, public presentations, and other activities to show these candidates what our college is all about.

I am pleased to announce that we are nearing the conclusion of the John P. Ellbogen Foundation Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education and the Secondary Mathematics Education Assistant Professor searches. We are in the middle of college visits for the Early Childhood Education Assistant Professor and the Special Education Assistant Professor searches.

Visits for the Fisher Family Executive Director/Professor of the Literacy Research Center & Clinic, the Science and Math Teaching Center Director, the Elementary Literacy Education Assistant Lecturer, the Special Education Assistant Lecturer, and the two Counseling Assistant Professor searches are currently being planned, and schedules will be sent to your inboxes soon.

**Annual Performance Evaluations (Staff) and Annual Reviews (Faculty):** Please be reminded that faculty should have submitted their annual review packets in WyoFolio by Monday, January 15. If you have any questions or need assistance, you can reach out to the College Affairs Coordinator ([arickert@uwyo.edu](mailto:arickert@uwyo.edu)), as well as the directors of CLAD ([cmkim3@uwyo.edu](mailto:cmkim3@uwyo.edu)) and STE ([Scott@uwyo.edu](mailto:Scott@uwyo.edu)). These reviews will be forwarded to the respective directors for evaluation and then to me for the final assessment. The deadline for reviews to be forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs is March 17.

All staff are expected to complete their annual performance evaluations with their supervisors by March 31. Staff will have seen announcements about their process from the HR central email, and can review the process by [clicking here](#).

**ECEC Update:** I always value receiving updates from the Early Care and Education Center (ECEC). The ECEC holds accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and is actively preparing for its upcoming renewal visit to secure another 5-year accreditation.

The administration, teachers, and staff have been diligently reviewing standards, updating portfolios, and engaging in discussions on best practices in their field. In November, the lead teaching team had the opportunity to attend the annual NAEYC conference in Nashville, TN, alongside nearly 30,000 early childhood educators. During the conference, they participated in diverse sessions geared toward enhancing their knowledge of innovative practices and the latest research in the field.

I am sure that this trip has sparked important discussions and will contribute significantly to their preparations for the next accreditation cycle. Best of luck to the ECEC!

**Winter Commencement:** It was truly wonderful to see many CoE graduate and undergraduate students take their proud walk across the stage during the winter commencement ceremony last month. I would like to extend a special recognition and sincere appreciation to **Britany Kathan**,

our dedicated commencement coordinator for the College of Education, whose commitment and hard work made the commencement a remarkable success.

**HAP and WRTC:** The Wyoming Rural Teacher Corps and the High Altitude Pathways Program were recently featured in the [Laramie Boomerang](#) for their outstanding efforts in supporting high school students and other individuals across Wyoming in their college and career preparation journey and in building a community of rural educators across the state. These initiatives are instrumental in improving teacher success and retention, especially in our sparsely populated communities. It's truly inspiring to see these initiatives receive the recognition they deserve, as they play a vital role in bolstering Wyoming's education system, workforce, and, ultimately, the economic future of our state. Congratulations on the well-deserved recognition!

**Food Donations:** The College of Education fun committee spearheaded a food drive that raised 97 pounds of food and goods to be donated to UW's food pantry located in Knight Hall. This resource is available to food-insecure students and employees at the university, which ultimately increases the chances of program completion and access to better employment opportunities. We were thrilled to be able to offer support to this important campus resource and look forward to doing even better next time!

While it was nice to have some time to regroup over the winter closure, I am glad to be back in the saddle and look forward to new opportunities, challenges, and lessons ahead this year.

I look forward to checking in with all of you next week. Until then, please keep up the good work!

Jenna

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