



# 2019 IMPACT REPORT EDUCATION



***BIG  
BOLD  
BREAKTHROUGHS***

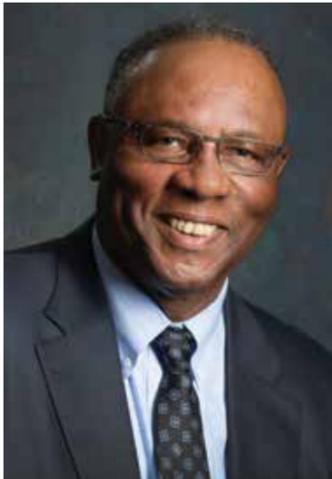


Photo by Larry Kanfer

As we leverage technology to make education more accessible, we understand there's nothing more important than personal connection.

2019 has been a banner year of celebrating milestones for the College of Education. The contributions of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni shine during these momentous occasions, because while we celebrate the opening of a new cutting-edge research space, or the valuable research support provided to our faculty, we know that these events represent the persistence and visionary thinking of people committed to shared goals and the future of education for 21st-century learners and beyond. The human element is the difference-maker when preparing education leaders of the future.

Case in point is the inaugural Statewide K-12 Computer Science Education Summit, bringing together a first-ever assembled community of stakeholders to catalyze a comprehensive plan for world-class teacher and student computer science education in Illinois. The opening of the O'Leary Learning Center is evidence of the strong commitment of our alumni to support collaboration and educational innovation at Illinois. Inside, you will read about the Office of Community College Research and Leadership—commemorating their 30-year anniversary of addressing student transitions from high school to community colleges, and the Bureau of Educational Research and its 100-year history of findings and expertise. The common thread among these big, bold achievements: committed people with a passion to positively impact society through teaching, leadership, and service.

Through education, the world advances. At Illinois, we recognize and embrace this challenge. Our scholars are developing game-changing online learning and instructional experiences for the digital landscape of tomorrow. We are preparing teacher-leaders and teacher-advocates to continue the fight for diverse and equitable opportunities in the classroom, worldwide. Our investigators are engaging in research that will forever change education. In all things, our people are making a difference.

Yours in Orange & Blue,

**James D. Anderson**  
Dean, College of Education  
and Edward William and Jane Marr Gutsgell Professor of Education

**OUR PEOPLE MAKE THE  
DIFFERENCE—**

**BIG  
Innovations,  
BOLD  
Impact,  
AND BREAKTHROUGH  
Research  
ARE THE RESULTS.**

# RESEARCH/PROGRAMS/RANKINGS EDUCATION AT ILLINOIS



**\$47.5M** **94**

2018-19 Active grant funding

Active grants

**29** **18**

National Science  
Foundation grants

State of Illinois  
Agency grants

**15** **9**

U.S. Department of  
Education grants

Major foundation  
grants

## WORLD-CLASS PROGRAMS

2020 *U.S. News & World Report* rankings  
for our departments and programs.

- #9** Educational Psychology
- #10** Special Education
- #13** Elementary Teacher Education
- #17** Education Administration
- #18** Curriculum & Instruction
- #18** Secondary Teacher Education

### Curriculum & Instruction

- Curriculum, Aesthetics, & Teacher Education
- Digital Environments for Learning, Teaching, & Agency
- Early Childhood Education Plus Teaching Licensure
- Elementary Education Plus Teaching Licensure
- Language & Literacy
- Mathematics, Science, & Engineering
- Secondary Education: English Plus Teaching Licensure
- Secondary Education: Mathematics Plus Teaching Licensure
- Secondary Education: Science Plus Teaching Licensure
- Secondary Education: Social Studies Plus Teaching Licensure

### Educational Psychology

- Child Development
- Cognitive Science of Teaching & Learning
- Counseling Psychology
- Quantitative Methodology, Measurement & Evaluation

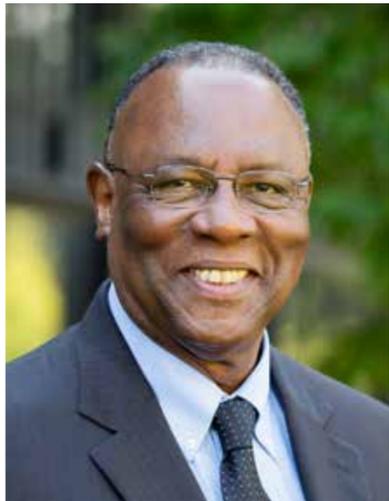
### Special Education

- Special Education
- Infancy & Early Childhood Special Education
- Learning Behavior Specialist I
- Learning & Behavior Specialist II in Multiple Disabilities

### Education Policy, Organization & Leadership

- Diversity & Equity in Education
- Educational Administration & Leadership/Principal Preparation
- Global Studies in Education
- Higher Education
- History of Education
- Human Resource Development
- Executive Human Resource Development
- Learning Design & Leadership
- Philosophy of Education
- School Executive Leadership | Superintendent Endorsement
- Social Sciences & Education Policy
- Teacher Leader Specialization

# EDUCATION AT ILLINOIS LEADERSHIP



**James D. Anderson**, Dean



**Amanda Brown**, Assistant Dean for Administration, Budget, and Resource Planning



**Gabrielle Allen**, Associate Dean for Research



**Michaelene Ostrosky**, Head of Special Education



**Kiel Christianson**, Chair of Educational Psychology



**Yoon Pak**, Head of Education Policy, Organization & Leadership



**Lisa Monda-Amaya**, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Teacher Education



**Christopher Span**, Associate Dean for Graduate Programs



**Lisa Denson-Rives**, Assistant Dean for Advancement



**Sarah McCarthy**, Head of Curriculum & Instruction



**Nancy Latham**, Executive Director of the Council on Teacher Education



**Mila Fuller**, Interim Director of Online Programs

# 2019-20 DEPARTMENTAL PRIORITIES



## CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

### 2018-19 Milestones

- Leveraged the Technology Innovation in Educational Research and Design (TIER-ED) initiative across disciplines for new grants and research
- Designed new online Ed.M. in Curriculum & Instruction with two concentrations
- Revised the Digital Environments for Learning, Teaching & Agency (DELTA) undergraduate program to align with changing needs of students in Learning & Education Studies degree programs
- Developed two new MOOCs

### Priorities for 2019-20

- Launch new online Ed.M. in Curriculum & Instruction with two concentrations: Bilingual/Bi-cultural and Digital Learning
- Offer two new MOOCs to recruit future masters' students: (a) Collaborative Learning and (b) Constructivism and Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education
- Support bilingual faculty in designing groundbreaking research with diverse learners
- Develop the program for computer science education in schools through the Illinois Secondary Teacher Education and Computer Science (I-STECS) initiative
- Create new course in Technology Applications to support pre-service and classroom teachers

## EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

### 2018-19 Milestones

- Master's program in Counseling Psychology/Mental Health will launch Fall 2020
- Expanded interdisciplinary research on teaching and learning in digital environments, including grant-funded projects on online STEM education and on leveraging game technology to support student interest and learning in STEM. Both projects involve collaborations with faculty in engineering and the UI Colleges of Engineering and Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Increased faculty focus on research projects related to community engagement and lifespan resilience in education
- Aligned the curricula in the Applied Learning Sciences and DELTA concentrations in the Learning & Education Studies major

### Priorities for 2019-20

- Continue strengthening the Evaluation program with additional faculty, and rebuild the reputation for excellence in evaluation and research design methodologies
- Synergize the Developmental Sciences and Counseling Psychology programs to efficiently connect the study of development in adolescence and young adulthood with research and practice in Counseling Psychology
- Increase EdPsych faculty's Online Programs output and participation, specifically to create an online course on research skills

## EDUCATION POLICY, ORGANIZATION & LEADERSHIP

### 2018-19 Milestones

- Launched the first-of-its-kind MasterTrack Certificate (MTC) in Instructional Design through Coursera
- Enrolled the highest number of underrepresented minorities (URM) of any graduate program on campus
- Continued to lead the nation with an innovative Ed.D. online program in four concentration areas (Diversity & Equity, Global Studies in Education, Human Resource Development, and Learning Design & Leadership) with high URM and female enrollment
- Faculty held key leadership positions in internationally-recognized societies as Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Boards of Directors and won awards/key recognition through their rigorous scholarship
- Ensured appropriate recognition of faculty work whose research, teaching, and service include diversity, equity and inclusion at the core for annual reviews, tenure and promotion considerations

### Priorities for 2019-20

- Strengthen and maintain the quality of teaching and mentoring for all students (online, off-campus and on campus) by core faculty
- Build an EPOL community through shared collaborations with faculty, students, alumni, and local community
- Ensure that faculty and graduate students' research creates impact for greater social change and equity
- Provide additional research opportunities for graduate students through increased external funding

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

### 2018-19 Milestones

- Strengthened collaborations with colleagues at the University of Birmingham, UK, through the BRIDGES project, involving more faculty and doctoral students in shared research activities
- Unified several state- and federally-funded early childhood research project operations, managed by both the Children's Research Center and Special Education, and reorganized them as the Early Childhood Collective (ECC)
- Faculty received numerous federal grants and foundation awards, supporting research and graduate students
- Invested considerable time preparing for and engaging in an Academic Program Review (APR) with external reviewers that will help inform the department's future planning

### Priorities for 2019-20

- Develop a strategic five-year plan for Special Education and start implementing recommendations from the APR
- Increase the availability of Special Education courses within Education Policy, Organization & Leadership's Ed.D. program

# 2018-19 FACULTY BY THE NUMBERS

68

Tenure-track faculty

29.4%

Tenure-track faculty from underrepresented populations

7

Tenure-track faculty named as journal editors

43%

Tenure-track faculty who published research

60%

Tenure-track faculty who received new research grants

## MEET OUR NEW SCHOLARS

The College of Education welcomes seven new faculty across multiple areas of expertise. These scholars will contribute to the College's robust research culture and develop important scholarship around learner-centered pedagogy, educational equality, clinical psychology, ESL and bilingual education, and increasing STEM educational opportunities and equity for underserved communities.



**MÓNICA GONZALEZ YBARRA**  
Assistant Professor, Curriculum & Instruction

Dr. Gonzalez Ybarra is a proud University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign alumna. She completed her undergraduate degrees at Illinois in Latina/Latino Studies and Spanish in 2011. She then earned her master's and doctorate degrees from the University of Utah, in 2013, and the University of Colorado Boulder, in 2018, respectively. She is a former Cultivating New Voices Fellow through the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and was a recipient of the AERA Minority Dissertation Fellowship. Gonzalez Ybarra's teaching and work with bilingual pre-service and in-service teachers seeks to create opportunities for transformative educational experiences both inside and outside of the classroom. She is committed to working with educators, students, and community members to collectively re-imagine and build educational spaces and opportunities for youth and communities of color.



**GISELLE MARTINEZ NEGRETTE**  
Assistant Professor, Curriculum & Instruction

Dr. Martinez Negrette completed her doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Spring 2019. She is an expert in bilingual/ESL education, sociolinguistics, and educational policy studies. She has worked as a language teacher in several different regions including Latin America, North America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Her research interests are centered on issues of language, equity, and social justice, particularly in relation to the schooling of linguistically and culturally diverse children in the United States and other regions of the world. Dr. Martinez Negrette is investigating how emergent bilinguals in dual language immersion (DLI) programs perceive, enact, and negotiate the tenuous intersections of race, ethnicity, social class position, and language in American school settings. Her work has been recognized by the National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation and the Morgridge Center for Public Service at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



**CATHERINE DORNFELD TISSENBAUM**  
Assistant Professor, Curriculum & Instruction

---

Dr. Dornfeld Tissenbaum completed her doctorate in Educational Psychology with an emphasis on Learning Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research focuses on the ways in which classrooms and museums support learning collaboration. In her research, Dr. Dornfeld Tissenbaum analyzes the dynamics of social interactions in learning contexts and looks for evidence of knowledge co-construction and learner-center pedagogy. Her primary aims are to help teachers adopt learner-centered pedagogical practices; to help parents capitalize on “learning moments” in museums; and to help museums become inclusive community spaces. She looks forward to collaborating with critical theory experts in the College of Education to further address social factors that shape collaboration and learning.



**NIGEL BOSCH**  
Assistant Professor, Educational Psychology

---

Dr. Bosch completed his Ph.D. in Computer Science from the University of Notre Dame and most recently served as a postdoctoral researcher at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) on the Urbana campus. He joins the College in a joint appointment with the School of Information Sciences. His research employs statistics and machine learning to model emotion, engagement, and learning, with a special focus on the fair treatment of students who are members of underrepresented groups. Bosch’s work has included automatic emotion detection from facial expressions, measurement of emotion during computer programming education, and other topics related to learning and affective computing.



**LYDIA KHURI**  
Clinical Associate Professor, Educational Psychology

---

Dr. Khuri received her doctorate from the Illinois School of Professional Psychology-Chicago and has maintained a part-time independent practice for over 20 years in Champaign-Urbana. Dr. Khuri joins Counseling Psychology with more than 15 years of Illinois experience in Student Affairs, directing several multicultural and STEM living-learning communities, and in the University’s Counseling Center, where she provided clinical services and facilitated experiential social justice education courses. Within the College of Education, in addition to leading a counseling psychology practicum for graduate students, Dr. Khuri is teaching History and Systems of Psychology, challenging students to gain awareness of the roots and contexts of their own views, as well as an understanding and appreciation of others’ theoretical orientations.



**NIDIA RUEDAS-GRACIA**  
Assistant Professor, Educational Psychology

---

Dr. Ruedas-Gracia received her doctorate in Developmental and Psychological Science from Stanford University in 2019. Her research explores sociocultural factors that impact academic performance and psychological development of historically marginalized students. Currently, she is examining how diverse cultures and students across the developmental spectrum experience a sense of belonging in various contexts and how sense of belonging impacts important life outcomes. Dr. Ruedas-Gracia hopes to utilize findings from her work to inform and develop culturally-sustaining interventions for historically marginalized students such as first-generation and/or low-income students.



**JESSICA HARDY**  
Assistant Professor, Special Education

---

Jessica Hardy received her Ph.D. in Early Childhood Special Education from Vanderbilt University and her M.Ed. and B.A. from the University of Florida. Before arriving at Illinois, Dr. Hardy served as an assistant professor in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Louisville, and prior to that she taught in Portland, Oregon, as a Head Start teacher and an early childhood special education teacher. She currently serves as treasurer on the executive board of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children. Dr. Hardy’s primary research interests are evidence-based instructional practices, particularly for teaching early math and science, and early childhood coaching and professional development.



## ADDRESSING THE DIGITAL SKILLS GAP IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS — Adam Heckman, Microsoft Philanthropies

# 800M

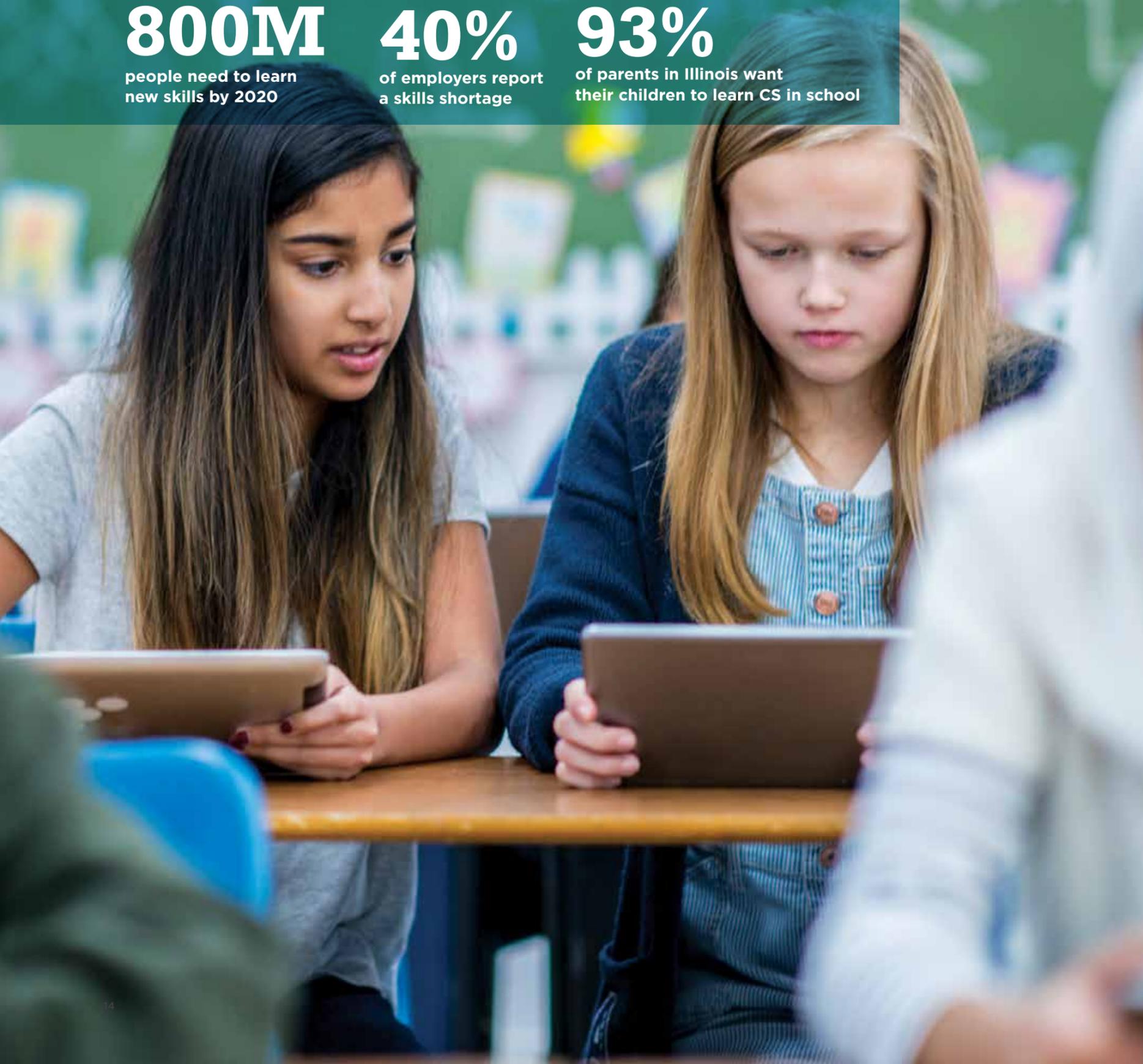
people need to learn new skills by 2020

# 40%

of employers report a skills shortage

# 93%

of parents in Illinois want their children to learn CS in school



# Leading the way for COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS

BY SHARITA FORREST, UI NEWS BUREAU

**Teachers, lawmakers, and other stakeholders convened on the University of Illinois campus to discuss ways of ensuring that Illinois' schoolchildren enter college and the workforce computer literate—and that the state's colleges and universities are preparing teachers to provide that education.**

**T**he inaugural **Illinois Statewide K-12 Computer Science Education Summit** was held on September 20, 2019 at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) in Urbana, Illinois.

Participants came together to discuss the many issues related to computer science education in public schools, including Illinois' lack of learning standards for computer science education and the critical need for teacher education programs.

According to the nonprofit **Code.org**, 22,000 computing and technology jobs in Illinois are going unfilled each year because workers lack the requisite skills.

However, across Illinois' 800 school districts, access to "authentic" and "pedagogically sound computer science" education is inconsistent. The majority of schools have neither computer science courses nor qualified teachers to teach them, the **Illinois Computer Science Education Task Force**, led by then-State Superintendent of Education Tony Smith, noted in a 2017 report to then-Gov. Bruce Rauner and the Illinois General Assembly.

In the minority of Illinois schools that teach computing, it's usually offered in advanced placement courses accessible only to certain groups of students - exacerbating existing inequities in access to technology known as the "digital divide," said Kenton Machina, a professor emeritus of philosophy at Illinois State University and a member of the summit's planning committee.

Machina is also a co-principal investigator of a National Science Foundation grant that funded Illinois State University's development of a licensure endorsement program in computer science for in-service teachers. The grant included funding for a statewide summit of stakeholders to discuss related issues that is providing support for the summit in Urbana.

The task force's findings and recommendations will serve as the springboard for discussions



## K-12 CS Summit Planning Committees and Attendees

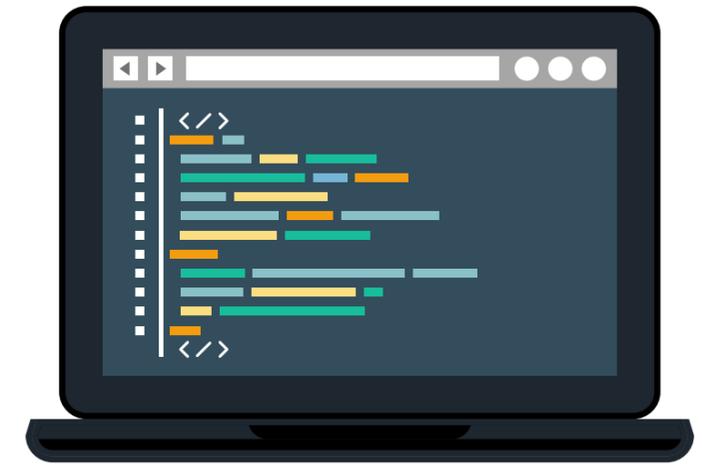
**Attendees:** 210 on-site attendees and 24 virtual attendees

**State Representatives:** Deputy Governor Ruiz, Chief Information Officer Guerrier, ISBE Director of Education Matias, Illinois DCEO. UI Leadership: Chancellor Jones, President Killeen, VPEDI Seidel, College of Education Dean Anderson, NCSA Director Gropp.

**Organizations:** ACT Now, AnitaB.Org, Argonne National Laboratory, BootUp Professional Development, CodeHS, CodeVA, Computer Science Teachers Association, College Board, Code.org, Code Your Dreams, csedresearch.org, CSforALL, Expanding Computing Education Pathways, Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, Illinois Manufacturers' Association, Joyce Foundation, Learning Technology Centers of Illinois, Lego Education, Microsoft, National Science Foundation, P33 Chicago, Project Lead The Way, SAM Labs Inc., Spencer Foundation, State Farm, Wolfram Research.

**Planning Committee:** **Gabrielle Allen**, associate dean for research in the College of Education co-chaired the summit planning committee with **Steve Svetlik**, the president and founder of **CS4IL**, a grassroots coalition advocating for quality computer science education for all Illinois children. Along with other U. of I. officials, the planning committee also includes representatives from **Chicago Public Schools**, the **Hutsonville School District** and the **University of Chicago**.

Sponsors committed more than \$40,000 in support for the daylong summit. Along with **Illinois State University** and the **U. of I. College of Education**, other sponsors include **Microsoft**; the **Illinois Innovation Network**; and the **Grainger College of Engineering**, the **NCSA** and the **Center for Digital Agriculture**, all at the U. of I.



## K-12 CS Summit Recommendations

**Short-term and actionable activities to build capacity and support for K-12 computer science education include:**

- Establish Computer Science undergraduate licensure (e.g. UI, ISBE).
- Create/publicize the key centers of activity that will support collaborative efforts for building and maintaining partnerships, professional development, pipelines, etc. (e.g. ROEs, IIN, DPI).
- Legislative action around computer science education, including approval of state standards, definition of computer science, development of state-level computer science education position.
- Funding for teachers for additional computer science credentialing, professional development.
- Continued support and community building for computer science teachers, including role of ROEs.
- Collect and analyze data impacting computer science access and success.
- Build on initial planning sessions of 2019 CS Summit to develop a comprehensive State Plan for CS Education that leads into the 2020 CS Summit.

**Longer-term activities and recommendations will be expanded through ongoing post-summit planning, but include:**

- Researching and developing integrated curricula for CS/CT from kindergarten to high school.
- Establishing clear career pathways for CTE and CS from school to work as well as school to two- and four-year higher education options.
- Developing industry connections and opportunities for student and teacher internships, school partnerships, and other opportunities.
- Integration of CS/CT broadly into other teacher training programs, not just CS licensure.
- Increasing connectivity in rural areas through improved broadband access, updated hardware, etc.

A keynote from Brenda Darden Wilkerson, now president of the Anita Borg Institute, set the stage for the day and provided background on CS education in Chicago Public Schools.

The task force's findings and recommendations will serve as the springboard for discussions at the upcoming summit, said **Gabrielle Allen**, the associate dean for research in the College of Education at the U. of I.

Among other recommendations, the task force proposed that Illinois lawmakers make computer science a requirement for high school graduation, similar to the policy adopted by Chicago Public Schools in 2013.

However, Illinois currently lacks computer science learning standards for kindergarten-12th grade students, as well as an accepted definition of what constitutes computer science

education and means of tracking teachers' qualifications to teach it, said **Raya Hegeman-Davis**.

"We can't track which schools are teaching computer science courses, the content being taught and how that compares to other schools' curricula," Hegeman-Davis said. She is the coordinator of the **Illinois Secondary Teacher Education and Computer Science Initiative (I-STECS)**, a five-year initiative aimed at creating teacher education endorsement and certification programs in computer science at the U. of I.

The initiative, a partnership between the **College of Education** and the **Department of Computer Science**,

also seeks to address the shortage of computer science teachers in Illinois and throughout the U.S.

Currently, no college or university in Illinois offers a teacher education major in computer science. Consequently, there are few jobs for computer science teachers in Illinois public schools, Hegeman-Davis said.

"At the moment, because Illinois schools are not providing many computer science classes, there are few computer science teaching positions in kindergarten-12th-grade schools," Allen said. "Preservice teachers also need schools where they can do their student teaching and where they can have careers and thrive."



» Education Policy, Organization & Leadership Associate Professor David Huang and Anthropology Professor Laura Shackelford

Photo by L. Brian Stauffer

# EXCAVATING A CAVE WITHOUT LEAVING CAMPUS

Education Policy, Organization & Leadership professor **David Huang**, anthropology professor Laura Shackelford and their colleagues designed **Virtual Archaeology**, a classroom and laboratory course that allows students to experience an archaeology field dig without leaving campus.

BY DIANA YATES



**VIRTUAL ARCHAEOLOGY STUDENTS LEARN TO SET UP TEST PITS, DIG FOR HUMAN AND ANIMAL ARTIFACTS, AND RECORD AND INTERPRET THEIR DATA.**

I'm in a cave with three identical waterfalls. The roar of water fills my ears as I look around, a little shakily. This is not what I was expecting when I showed up to Davenport Hall for an interview. But when I said, "Yes, I'd love to try out a virtual reality environment," two students perched a headset on my head, adjusted the earphones and set me loose in this "cave."

I can hear anthropology professor Laura Shackelford gently guiding me. I'm aware that I'm in a room with her and the students, but I'm also in a cave, alone.

This virtual environment is part of a test meant to help Shackelford and her colleagues design Virtual Archaeology, a new VR laboratory that next semester will allow 24 lucky students to participate in an archaeological dig without leaving campus. Two standard-reality classroom sessions will bracket the VR lab each week. Over the course of the semester, the students will uncover and interpret the history of an actual North American cave, layer by layer.

**“My interest is in developing a game-based learning environment that motivates learners.” — David Huang**

The students will get something very close to the full field-school experience, Shackelford says: They'll learn to map the cave, lay out an excavation grid and use ground-penetrating radar to locate potential underground features. They'll set up test pits, dig for human and animal artifacts, and record and interpret their data. Funded by a two-year, \$500,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, Virtual Archaeology could open the door to all kinds of field research and laboratory experiences, U. of I. Education Policy, Organization & Leadership associate professor **David Huang** tells me when I meet him later. An expert in game-based learning, Huang is co-lead on the project with Shackelford.

Historical documents and study materials are available inside and outside the virtual reality environment. He and his colleagues are incorporating elements of computer gaming to enhance student motivation. Huang also will evaluate student learning in the course.

# CHILDREN USE VIDEO GAMES TO EXPLORE SCIENCE IN TWO NSF-FUNDED PROJECTS

BY SHARITA FORREST, UI NEWS BUREAU

Educational Psychology associate professor **H. Chad Lane** and his team of researchers believe that the future of humanity rests in the hands of scientists so young that they currently have homework assignments and bedtimes.

The **National Science Foundation** seems to agree, recently awarding a total of **\$3.2 million** in funding to two of the team's projects. In both projects, children use the video game Minecraft to explore space or to develop solutions to significant environmental challenges on Earth.

Minecraft, which debuted in 2009, is the second-most popular video game of all time, surpassed only by Tetris, Lane said. He and his team are among the many educators who are using Minecraft to pique youths' interest in science.

"We know that middle school is a critical time," Lane said. "If we don't engage them deeply in science now and give them opportunities to explore important ideas in positive and fun ways, we might lose them before they ever have a chance to start."

By kindling children's interest in science, technology, engineering and math, the projects aim to increase underrepresented minorities' participation in STEM fields as adults.

The first project is an ongoing endeavor that asks young scientists to turn their eyes and minds skyward to explore profound questions such as what Earth might be like if it orbited a red dwarf star, as many recently discovered exoplanets do.

The NSF awarded \$2.7 million in funding to the project. With the new funding, Lane's team is scaling up the project to reach new audiences through the creation of planetarium shows, an interactive experience on the PBS NOVA Labs website, an always-on Minecraft server and new summer camps.

In collaboration with University of Maine astrophysicist Neil Comins, Lane's team is developing new hypothetical models of Earth and exoplanets. In addition, they're creating an online educational activity about exoplanets for the NOVA Labs website in collaboration with David Condon, a content producer for the site.

They're also developing new shows for the Fiske Planetarium in Boulder, Colorado, in coordination with astronomer and graphic designer Jorge Perez-Gallego of the University of Colorado.

Both the planetarium shows and the online exoplanet activity are intended to draw young scientists to the team's Minecraft server to further their learning.

Condon, Comins and Perez-Gallego are co-principal investigators on the project, which is called "Fostering Enduring Interest in STEM through Exoplanet Education and Interactive Exploration and Creation of Potentially Habitable Worlds."

In collaboration with the Champaign-Urbana Community Fab Lab, Lane has been using Minecraft as a learning tool in summer camps and after-school programs for several years. He is continuing to provide those opportunities for fifth graders through eighth graders in Champaign and at the Urbana Neighborhood Connections Center.

Learn01, a Miami-based nonprofit, is helping the team host a Minecraft-based

summer camp for children in that city.

Didith Rodrigo, a professor at Alteneo de Manila University, will seek to replicate the team's findings in U.S. children with their peers in the Philippines using the same Minecraft server.

In the second project, which received \$500,000 in NSF funding, middle school students will use Minecraft to solve significant scientific problems that are inspired by real-world environmental challenges such as devising ways to prevent recurrent flooding.

**“Students might see a setting where flooding is a recurring problem and be tasked with trying to prevent it or to redirect the water so there's minimal damage and environmental impact,” Lane said. “To do that, they'll use a variety of computational tools and apply their knowledge of the applicable science to come up with more effective solutions.”**

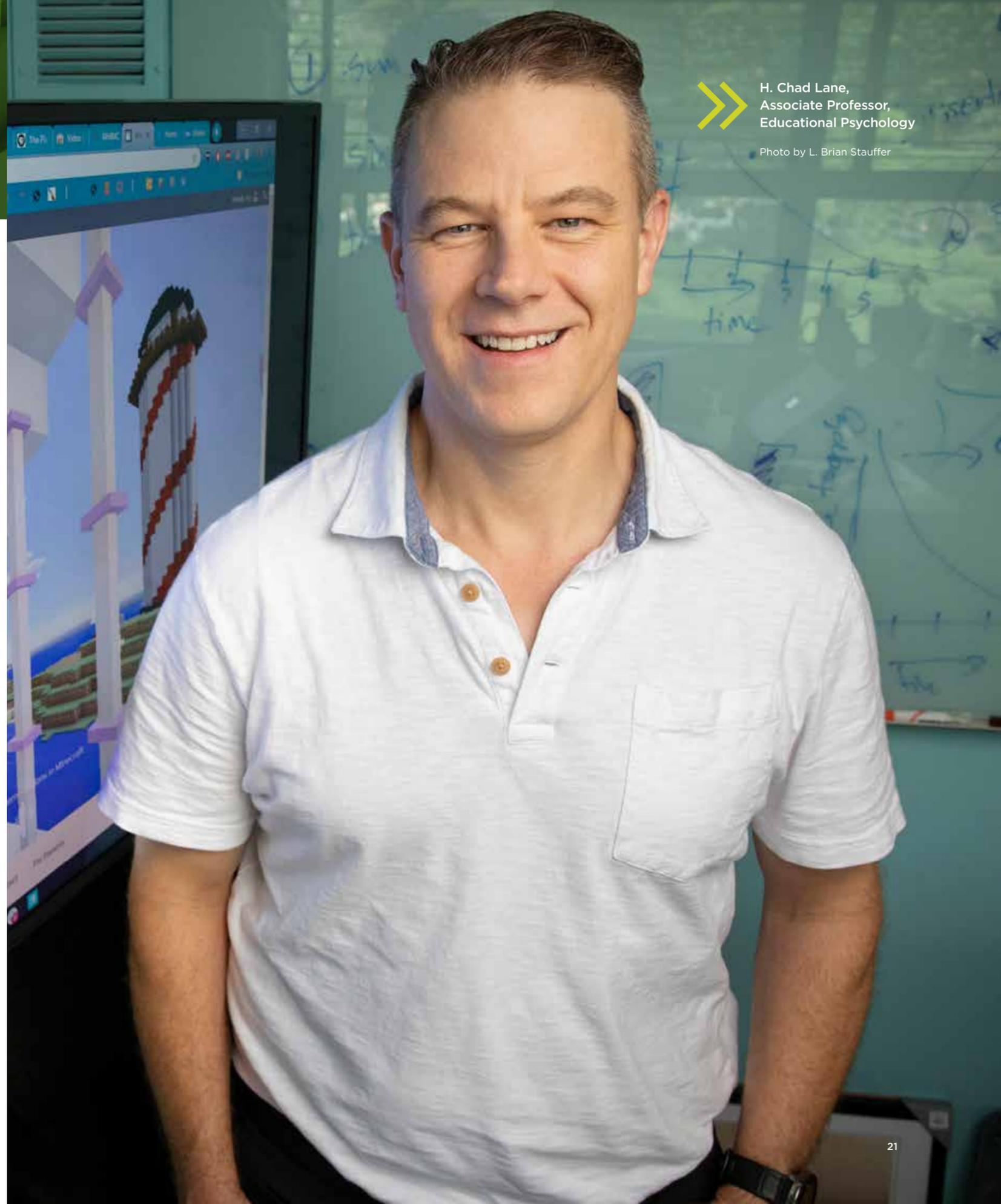
The solutions the children generate will be shared with an advisory board of scientists and engineers, who will review them and provide feedback.

The Western Center Academy in Hemet, California, a school that emphasizes project-based STEM education, is Lane's partner on that project, called "Cultivating Creativity to Integrate Computation and Science Problem-Solving in Informal Learning."

"Minecraft is a vehicle that allows kids to push their imaginations and think about important questions facing humanity, said Lane. By emphasizing the exciting, we hope to entice children with experiences that help them grow and sustain their interest in science over time."

**H. Chad Lane,**  
Associate Professor,  
Educational Psychology

Photo by L. Brian Stauffer





**Liv Thorstensson Davila Wins Funding for Refugee and Immigrant Research** In 2019 Liv Thorstensson Davila, assistant professor of EPOL, authored or co-authored five published papers within her areas of research—learner identities, language, and literacy practices, and the identities and ideologies of teachers in relation to immigrant and refugee students. She studies the experiences of refugee and immigrant youth local to Champaign-Urbana, in the US, and abroad. Her research has recently been funded by a Spencer Foundation Small Grant, as well as a University of Illinois Campus Research Board Research Support Award.



**Gloriana González Awarded NSF Funding for Project with University of Puerto Rico-Rio Piedras** Associate professor González was recently awarded a grant from the National Science Foundation for her proposal, titled, *Developing Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge of Pre-service Math Teachers by Enhancement of a Methods Course Using Instrumental Orchestration and Lesson Study Strategies*. The project aims to establish practices to help pre-service secondary mathematics teachers learn how to lead classroom discussions with interconnectivity technology. González is the Illinois principal investigator on this collaborative study with the University of Puerto Rico-Rio-Piedras.



**Rodney Hopson Named Co-PI for New NSF INCLUDES Program** Professor Hopson was named a co-principal investigator on new NSF INCLUDES Alliance awards. These projects seek to develop partnerships among stakeholders across the public, private, and academic sectors, share promising practices for broadening participation and other useful data, contribute to the knowledge base on broadening participation in STEM through research, and establish a framework for supporting communications and networking among partners.



**Nathan Castillo Recognized For Recent Publication** Assistant professor Castillo's recent publication was named SpringerLink Editor's Monthly Choice. Castillo's paper—*Early-grade reading support in rural South Africa: A language-centered technology approach*—describes a short-term study conducted in low-performing rural primary schools in South Africa. Castillo and co-author Daniel Wagner were involved in developing a two-year multimedia reading program for rural South African children in grades 1–3, and sought to assess key learning outcomes in existing school computer laboratories.



**Adler University Recognizes Rebecca Ginsburg as “Social Justice Visionary”** Adler University awarded associate professor Rebecca Ginsburg, co-founder and director of the Education Justice Project, with its “Social Justice Visionary” Award. Ginsburg, whose work at the Education Justice Project has been instrumental in the program's efforts to create a comprehensive college-in-prison program, to provide academic programs to incarcerated individuals and produce reentry guides for individuals being released from Illinois prisons.



**Idalia Nunez Receives Three Awards for Dissertation** Assistant professor Idalia Nunez was been recognized with three awards in 2019 for her recent outstanding dissertation. At the annual conference in Orlando, FL, Nunez received a dissertation award from the National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE) and at the 2019 AERA Annual Meeting with one of three Bilingual Education Research Special Interest Group Dissertation Awards in Bilingual Education Research. Nunez also received two dissertation awards at the 2019 AERA Annual Meeting in Toronto, ON, Canada: one from the Bilingual Education Research SIG and one from the Latina/o/x Research Issues SIG.



**AERA's Research on Women and Education Group Awards Dr. Adrienne Dixson** Professor Dixson was named the 2019 Willystine Goodsell Award Winner, bestowed by the AERA special interest group Research on Women and Education. The award annually recognizes an educator who has served AERA on behalf of women, girls, and education through scholarship, activism, and community-building. Willystine Goodsell, for whom the award is named, was a 19th-century activist, teacher, and faculty member at Teachers College, Columbia University. Goodsell dedicated her life to advancing opportunities and equal education for women.



**AJ Welton Wins JRLE Best Article of the Year Award** Anjalé (AJ) Welton, associate professor of EPOL and Educational Administration and Leadership program coordinator received the *Journal of Research on Leadership Education's* Best Article of the Year Award for co-authoring “Straddling cultures, identities, and inconsistencies: Voices of pre-tenure faculty of color in educational leadership.” The article explores how faculty of color in educational leadership programs help their departments move beyond White-dominant notions of leadership preparation to more culturally responsive approaches.



**Three Faculty Launch New NSF-funded Project** Assistant professors **Stina Krist**, C&I, and **Cynthia D'Angelo**, and **Nigel Bosch** (Ed Psych) received funding for their proposal to NSF for *Advancing Computational Grounded Theory for Audiovisual Data from STEM Classrooms*. The research project was awarded \$1.3M and officially began September 1, 2019. This research project builds on state-of-the-art computer vision and speech analytics methods tested on video data collected in STEM classrooms.



**Special Education Faculty Receive four OSEP Grants** During the second half of 2019, Department of Special Education faculty **Michaelene Ostrosky**, **Hedda Meadan-Kaplansky**, **Stacy Dymond**, and **Meghan Burke** were awarded funding totaling nearly \$4M that will support more than 50 doctoral students' work in special education at Illinois. Ostrosky leads Illinois in a consortium with nine

other U.S. universities, aimed at training doctoral students in early childhood intervention for infants and young children with high-intensity needs because of significant intellectual and developmental disabilities. Meadan-Kaplansky's project CO-LEAD is a collaboration across universities to prepare leaders in evidence-based practices, autism spectrum disorder, and diversity. She also teams up with Burke on Project Family IMPACT: attending to individualization, mobility, poverty, adversity, culture, and trauma. Professor Dymond is engaged with faculty in the UI's College of Applied Health Sciences on a project called SCORE, set to produce innovative practitioners who improve post-school competitive integrated employment outcomes for students with severe disabilities.



**Eboni Zamani-Gallaher Awarded Funding from Private Foundations** Professor of EPOL and director of the Office of Community College Research and Leadership, was tapped by the Lumina Foundation in 2019 to hold three conferences—in Chicago, New York City, and San Diego—addressing racial justice and equitable outcomes within community colleges. She is also PI on a \$1.47M project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, focused on embedding equity within the guided pathways catalog of community college services.



**Luc Paquette Uses Educational Data Mining and Knowledge Engineering Techniques to Study Behavior of Students in Digital Learning Environments** Assistant professor Luc Paquette focuses on the study of the students' behavior as they interact with digital learning environments, from students “gaming” systems to get an answer, to investigating collaborative behavior in group problem solving. He is PI or Co-PI of several grant-funded research projects, including the I-STECS (Illinois Secondary Teacher Education and Computer Science) and TIER-ED (Technology Innovation in Educational Research & Design) initiatives.



**Michael Tissenbaum Launches Computational Action Curriculum in Local Schools** Focusing on collaborative learning and knowledge communities, assistant professor Michael Tissenbaum aims to understand how children develop STEM and computational literacies when engaged with technology-enhanced learning. He has developed a whole-classroom collaborative simulation “City Settlers”, a multiplayer participatory simulation where teams of learners design and build virtual cities with industries and trade alliances while maximizing social or economic goals within ecological sustainability constraints. Tissenbaum also recently helped implement a Computational Action curriculum at University High School (Urbana), where students used App Inventor to develop apps that addressed personally relevant issues in their schools.



**Rachel Roegman Selected as Illinois Leadership Center Faculty Fellow for 2019-2020** Assistant professor Roegman focuses on the support and development of equity-focused school leaders who are committed to making schools better places for youth who have been historically and systematically denied K-12 educational experiences.



## YEARS OF SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL HISTORY AND **READY FOR THE FUTURE**

The **Bureau of Educational Research** has continually transformed itself to remain relevant and vital to educators across the state and the nation.

“In the next 100 years, we’re going to see education have a much greater impact across many fields. Education will not just impact its own field, but fields like medicine, social sciences, artificial intelligence, and so on. And collaborations are going to fuel and enable that impact.”

— Gabrielle Allen, Associate Dean for Research and Research Education

## SUPPORTING FACULTY AND EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

BY TOM HANLON

**At its 100-year mark,** the Bureau of Educational Research (BER) in the College of Education can look back with pride on the significant impact it has had in education across the state and the nation.

“The vision coming out of the College, enabled by the bureau, is thinking about how you build this structure that supports research and also connects you to civic engagement and social impact,” **Gabrielle Allen**, associate dean for research and research education, says.

“Just as on the engineering side of campus we see a lot of technology entrepreneurship and spinoff activities coming from that, we’re starting to see the same things here in education. How do we apply research, how do we bridge the research so it can both be driven by and address the challenges that we see in schools and in higher education and in companies?”

### COLLABORATING ACROSS CAMPUS

**Fouad Abd-El-Khalick** was a faculty member of the College of Education from 2000 to 2016; he is now dean of the School of Education at the University of North Carolina. He returned to campus in September to celebrate the BER’s centennial and take part in a panel discussion about the bureau’s history and its future.

“Time after time, leader after leader, this bureau has been able to respond to the changing epochs in educational research,” Abd-El-Khalick says.

“When I got my first grant here, there were very few in the College who were reaching out across campus to collaborate. Now, we’re sitting at the table with engineers, with scientists, with people in business, all under the auspices of the Bureau of Educational Research, talking about the next big grant. That has been a major shift for us. It’s become ‘How can I build strategic relationships across campus?’ The bureau has gotten us to go out into the world of funding, to be a builder of research, to reach out into campus.”

The idea of interdisciplinary work is not new, says **Rodney Hopson**, a professor in Educational Psychology, but the questions have changed. “I’m beginning my third decade of teaching at the university level and I do rely on the bureau to shape and act as a catalyst for my own academic training,” he says. “The bureau serves in a role to catalyze, to bring connections across disciplines and spaces.”

Those connections, says **Meghan Burke**, could eventually spawn a research center to facilitate interdisciplinary research on disability. “You could have a center where you could be able to have those cross-interdisciplinary dialogues and really try to develop something outside the box,” says Burke, an associate professor in Special Education. “We have a Department of Special Education that’s been known for decades for its important and innovative research. We have different departments that could be part of something like that. It doesn’t have to be just in disability; it could involve technology, for example. To be able to have the infrastructure of a center would be really critical in moving forward.”

**Robb Lindgren** points to the **IDEALL lab (Illinois Digital Ecologies and Learning Laboratory)** as a prime example of critical infrastructure being built in the College for interdisciplinary research. “We have the credibility here at Illinois to not just speculate about what would be good, but to even brag a little,” says Lindgren, an associate professor in Curriculum & Instruction. “We built some of these infrastructure tools that we think can allow the researchers who are here and future researchers to do powerful things. The IDEALL lab is the most obvious example of that. We built that lab not as a tool for one faculty member to do precisely the research that they want to do, which is often what happens in universities, but here we built something that was meant to be used by people across this college and even by people across this campus.”

### THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES INHERENT WITH TECHNOLOGY

Advancing technology ushers in both new challenges and opportunities. It can be a challenge to harness and effectively use the technology to advance learning, society, and quality of life—but when those challenges are met, the rewards can be great.

For example, Allen says, in the next 20 to 30 years, scientists will be able to understand and model the human brain on a computer. “I think we have to be ready for that in terms of what it means for the field of education,” she says. “How can we potentially model these educational processes and see on a computer what’s going to happen if you teach like this, how the brain will react to it? That’s huge.” That is huge—and it’s also just the beginning. Allen is already seeing

presentations on how robots are being taught using deep learning, a subset of machine learning in artificial intelligence. In deep learning, networks can learn while unsupervised, from data that is unstructured or unlabeled.

“In education, we’re not just thinking about humans, but about robots and learning,” she says. “Along with that, we’re going to see our own brains will be augmented with additional hardware. We’re going to be able to record memories, we’re going to be able to process information, we’ll have access to any information, we’ll understand brain waves and transfer them into speech. We’re going to have to understand what that means for learning and how we can take advantage of that for learning.”

The College has fully embraced digital education—instruction and learning that relies on the effective use of technology—and that embrace will only grow tighter. “As we talk about digital education, we’re talking about preparing the next generation for the digital age that’s coming at them at breakneck speed,” says **James D. Anderson, Dean**. “How do we use digital education to help our young talent develop the skills that are necessary for the new economy, and develop them in a much more systemic kind of way?”

**TIER-ED—the Technology Innovations in Educational Research and Design**—is one of multiple research initiatives in the College that will address those and similar questions. TIER-ED examines how new technologies can be used to address the most critical problems in education.

### SIGNIFICANT CHANGES COMING IN EDUCATION

In both the near and distant future,

education will undergo significant changes. Student demographics are changing, with many more students returning to college or coming to higher education for the first time at a later age. And that will ramp up, as will the concept and reality of lifelong learning—particularly as medical advancements lead to longer lives.

“We have 40,000 MOOC students, and what percent of our doctoral students are online students?” asks **Bill Cope**, a professor in Education Policy, Organization & Leadership. “The ground is shifting under what we do on a daily basis. The way these students need to be served is fundamentally different from our historical practices. We’re on the cusp of this huge change, and our College is a huge leader, a national leader in this area.”

“The nature of our work is going to be changing,” Allen adds. “We’ve already seen major companies like Amazon and Google set up their own internal universities. We’re going to see much more attention not just to lifelong learning, but to different educational models. Education may fundamentally change.”

Last year, the College of Education was able to recruit Hopson, an evaluation methodologist, through the President’s Distinguished Faculty Hiring Program. “We are fortunate at Illinois to have a legacy that has served as an archival hub for scholars in evaluation and evaluation research for the last 50-plus years,” he says. “Bureaus evolve. That’s part of their reality. New ideas emerge, new spaces and infrastructures emerge. There’s a torch and a baton to pass. I look forward to the evolving nature of what the bureau will become.”

“The bureau serves in a role to catalyze, to bring connections across disciplines and spaces.”

— Rodney Hopson, Professor, Educational Psychology

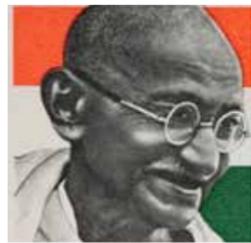


**Imagining the Future of Educational Research**  
Panel Moderator: Gabrielle Allen  
Panelists: Meghan Burke, Rodney Hopson,  
Robb Lindgren, and Luc Paquette

# GANDHI ON GANDHI:

## Lessons Learned From His Grandfather BY TOM HANLON

Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, shares life lessons from his grandfather—and has compiled these lessons in a half-semester course offered through the College of Education.



The twelve-year-old boy stared at his grandfather, who lay on his back on a thin carpet in his house in New Delhi, his eyes closed, his arms resting peacefully across his chest. The grandfather, Mahatma Gandhi, had just been shot and killed outside the house as he was preparing to lead an inter-faith prayer meeting. It was a late January evening in 1948, a pleasant breeze wafting through the trees in the surrounding area, many of them flowering, their fruit ripening. And now the twelve-year-old, grandson Rajmohan Gandhi, continued to fix his eyes on his inert grandfather, believing that the great man would rise up from the dead. After all, Mahatma Gandhi was the beloved Bapu, the Father of the Nation.

“There was an atmosphere of peace, even though he’d just been killed,” says Rajmohan Gandhi, now 83 and still going strong as a research professor in the Education Policy, Organization & Leadership department in the University of Illinois’ College of Education. “Prayer songs were being sung, flowers were everywhere. In my childlike belief, I thought he would get up and start walking again.”

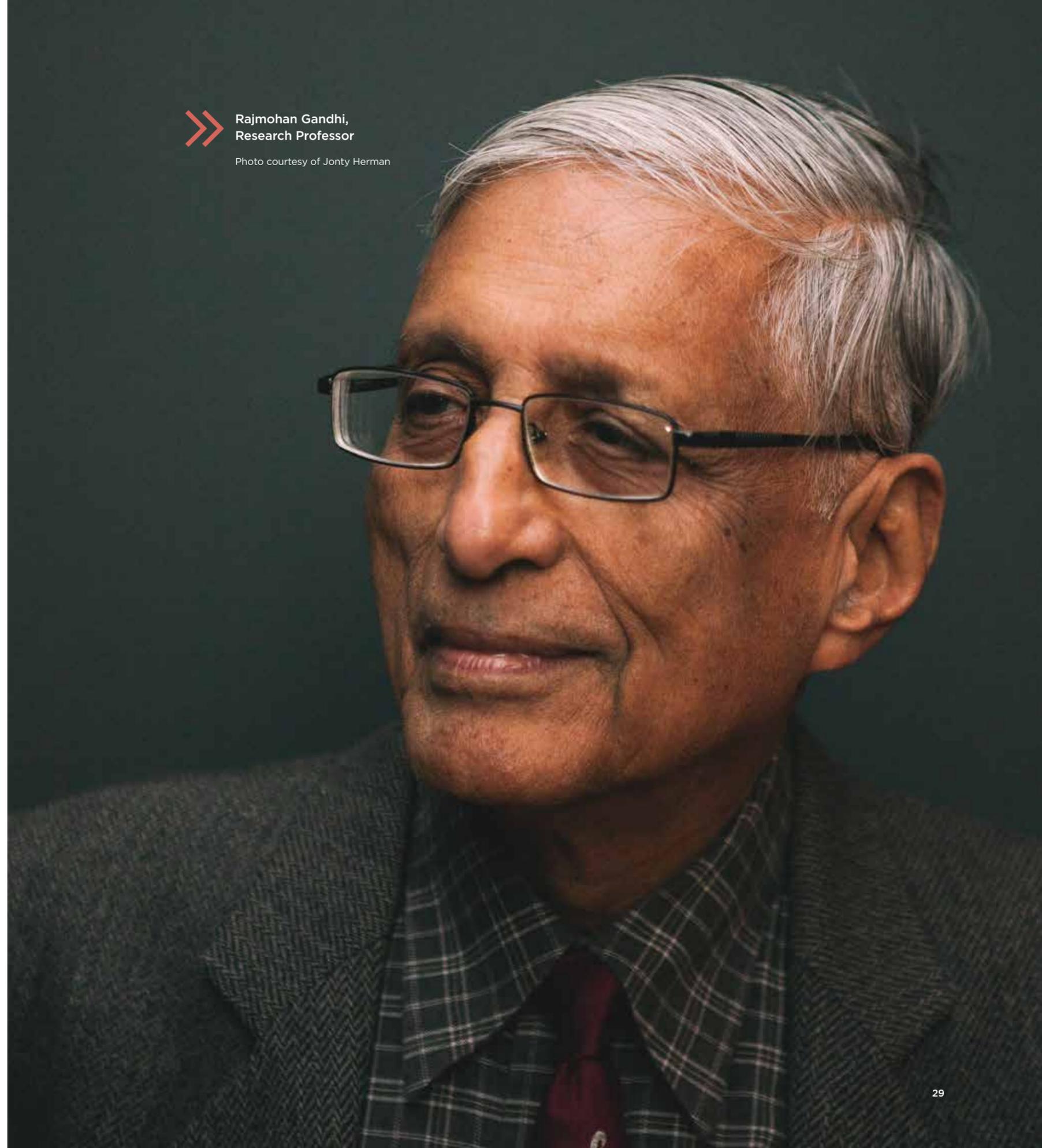
The elder Gandhi did not, but he left behind impressions and desires that have guided his grandson throughout his life.

“There was no sense in me of wanting to know who killed him, let’s find him, let’s punish him,” Gandhi says. “That thought never entered my mind.”



Rajmohan Gandhi,  
Research Professor

Photo courtesy of Jonty Herman



## ONLINE COURSE ON GANDHI

Instead, Gandhi carried forth his grandfather's ideals of overcoming hatred and injustice with nonviolence—a difficult balancing act, he admits. And one which is explored in depth in his eight-week graduate online course, running from March to May, called “Learning from Gandhi.”

“The course ties in education in the broadest sense, and current reality in the world, where tribalism has become dominant,” Gandhi says. Tribalism, he explains, is when people retreat to their own ethnic and religious tents.

“It's a global trend,” he says. “But there has always been this push towards common humanity as well. So it is the clash between this trend towards tribalism and humanity's longing to be understood as a common entity that serves as the context for my course.”

Rajmohan Gandhi is not just the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi; he is a renowned researcher, historian, and biographer. One of his biographies of Gandhi—Gandhi: The Man, His People, and the Empire—won the prestigious Biennial Award from the Indian History Congress in 2007 for the best-researched history book.

## MULTI-FAITH PRAYER MEETINGS

“Justice and reconciliation are common hungers and thirst of humanity,” he says. “Gandhi symbolizes an understanding of this, that you need both justice and reconciliation, that you have to fight and you have to live together. You have very sharp differences with others, and you express those differences sometimes in very stern language, but you have to find ways to live together.”

Rajmohan Gandhi saw firsthand the hatred and violence that ripped at the fabric of Indian society as the country struggled in the late 1940s to achieve its independence from British colonial rule. In August of 1947, that independence was realized. But it was a time of tension and loss.

“India was becoming independent, and India was becoming divided,” he says. “That independence coincided with partition, with the creation of Pakistan. It also coincided with the unfortunate killings involving Hindus and Muslims and also some Sikhs. Half a million to a million people were killed within two months in 1947.”

It was around this time that the young Gandhi was attending the frequent multi-faith prayer meetings that his

grandfather conducted—meetings that brought Hindus and Muslims together.

“These prayer meetings were a standard feature in his life for his last 20 to 30 years,” Gandhi says. “He would host them wherever he was in the country—sometimes drawing 100 people, sometimes 100,000 people, depending on where he was.”

Imagine drawing large crowds of Hindus and Muslims together, then reciting verses from both the Koran and from the Hindu sacred texts.

“There were occasionally some protests,” Gandhi recalls. “And understand, because he is seen as Father of the Nation, these meetings were relayed over the radio throughout the nation. When some people protested having verses read from the Koran, he said, ‘Why are you objecting? If you knew the meaning of these verses, you would be very glad to have this prayer also.’”

## LIFE LESSONS FROM HIS GRANDFATHER

The young Gandhi witnessed the tension and occasional hostility at these multi-faith prayer meetings, and learned a life lesson about how to conduct yourself in such situations. “When people are against you or are attacking you, you respond in a civil and friendly way and you do not give

up on your convictions,” he says. “That is the lesson that I absorbed at the time.”

Rajmohan Gandhi learned many lessons from his grandfather, most centered around justice, healing, and reconciliation.

“Wherever there is division, it is the duty of people like me to breach the division, to bring a return to trust and some kind of partnership, and if possible, some kind of healing,” he says. “That has become my life.”

For example, when he writes about historical times, he says it is “not just fact-finding, but finding the roots of disharmony, the roots of hatred, the roots of division, and seeing how those divides can be breached, how the bitterness be healed and trust be restored.”

That work, he says, has informed his life in the 71 years since Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated—as evidenced by his latest book, *Modern South India: A History from the 17th Century to Our Times*, published last year to stellar reviews.

## TAKING UP THE MANTLE

You might say that Rajmohan Gandhi took up the mantle that his grandfather left. In that sense, though he was only 12 when his grandfather died, Rajmohan Gandhi has been with his grandfather his entire life. The elder Gandhi, of course, influenced a great many leaders across the world, including Martin Luther King

Jr., who learned to use nonviolent ways to fight discrimination and injustice.

“Those who admire Martin Luther King Jr., those who admire Gandhi, they ask, ‘What's our task now? Whether it's India-Pakistan, or Palestine-Israel, whether it's Syria or parts of Africa, what is our role as educators today, how can we educate citizens in the right way?’” he says. “The challenge of an educator and the challenges a citizen faces today, they merge, and I hope to address this joint challenge in my course.

“I want to give people an understanding of what's going on in the world and an understanding of simple human nature and how deep anger and deep divides and deep resentments have to be first understood and then faced and addressed and, if possible, overcome.”

## “I WANT TO SEE THIS NEW WORLD”

Though he officially retired in 2012, he continues to teach a few classes, to write, to blog, to present, because his drive to educate people and bring them together remains strong.

“I want students and educators to be aware of the incredible opportunities they have,” he says. “We have opinions,

but we don't have knowledge, especially about other groups, other people, other races. If the students and educators I work with get inspired to deepen their knowledge, to deepen their scholarship, to understand situations and then respond to what is happening, of course a difference will be made in the world.

“It is this tremendous potential that educators have of influencing reality that excites me. This course that I'm teaching is a wonderful challenge to get to know some future re-makers of the world.”

That new world is something his grandfather longed and worked for, and it has been Rajmohan Gandhi's beacon that he has steered relentlessly toward his whole life.

“Part of me wants to see, burns to see, a new world, one where ‘common humanity’ is not just words,” he says. “I want us all to recognize we are the same underneath. We have different skin colors, different physiognomies, we belong to different religions, we speak different languages, but there is something absolutely common in all of us. And I want a recognition of this.

“I want to see this new world. I may not see it in my lifetime in every detail, of course not. But one tiny step forward every day is more than welcome.”

## ONLINE & OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAMS

### Doctoral Degree Programs Concentrations:

- Diversity & Equity in Education
- Global Studies in Education
- Human Resource Development
- Learning Design & Leadership
- Educational Administration & Leadership

### Master's Degree Programs Concentrations:

- Education Policy, Organization, & Leadership
- Diversity & Equity in Education
- Global Studies in Education
- Human Resource Development
- Learning Design & Leadership
- Educational Administration & Leadership

### Curriculum & Instruction

- Bilingual/Bi-cultural Education
- Digital Learning
- Perspectives & Practices

### Certificate of Advanced Study Concentrations:

- Educational Administration & Leadership
- Educational Administration & Leadership: Teacher Leader Specialization
- Educational Administration & Leadership: Principal Preparation
- Educational Administration & Leadership: School Executive Leadership

### Endorsement Programs:

- Bilingual & English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Technology Specialist

### Certificate Program Concentrations (Non-degree):

#### Education Policy, Organization, & Leadership

- Diversity & Equity in Education
- Global Studies in Education
- Human Resource Development
- Learning Design & Leadership
- Instructional Design Mastertrack Certificate Program

#### Curriculum & Instruction

- Bilingual/Bi-cultural Education
- Digital Learning

## 2018-19 BY THE NUMBERS

# 508

Online and off-campus enrolled graduate students

# 24.5%

Graduate students from underrepresented populations

# UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION & STUDENT PROFILES

With our focus on diversity, technology, in-depth field work, and research, our graduates are prepared to succeed and lead from the classroom to the boardroom.

## OUR PROGRAMS

### Bachelor of Science plus licensure:

- Early Childhood Education
- Elementary Education
- Middle Grades Education
- Special Education

### Secondary Education minor:

Biology, Chemistry, Geology, English, History, Mathematics, Physics

### Bachelor of Science in Learning & Education Studies with concentrations in:

- Applied Learning Science
- Educational Equality & Cultural Understanding
- Workplace Training & Development
- Digital Environments for Learning, Teaching & Agency

## 2018-19 BY THE NUMBERS

608

Undergraduate students enrolled in the College

165

Education bachelor's degrees awarded

54

Secondary education minors awarded

23.5%

Undergraduate students from underrepresented populations

26.3

Average ACT score of our incoming freshmen



## **JACK JOSELLIS WENT TO SPAIN AS A FULBRIGHT TEACHING ASSISTANT**

Jack Josellis was selected for the English Teaching Assistant (ETA) Fulbright program which places Fulbrighters in classrooms abroad to provide assistance to local English teachers.

The program in Spain allows him to pursue his passion for education, language, and travel in an immersive program that “fosters not only valuable leadership qualities, but international relationships predicated on the respectful, informative, two-way dialogue between a given Fulbrighter and their host country.”



# 996

Number of 2018-19 school and community field placements for students enrolled in our teacher education programs



## **HOW DID EDUCATION MAJOR SHELANA MARTIN END UP IN A NATIONAL CENTER FOR SUPERCOMPUTING APPLICATIONS (NCSA) INTERNSHIP?**

The senior in the Digital Environments for Learning, Teaching & Agency concentration under the College’s **Learning & Education Studies (LES)** program, was part of NCSA’s SPIN (Students Pushing Innovation) internship program. SPIN fosters interdisciplinary collaboration, encouraging Illinois undergraduate students, and not just computer science students, to do challenging research related to cutting-edge new technology.

For Martin, who has a background in astronomy, a minor in informatics, and is majoring in Education Technology,

the SPIN program, retrofitting cybersecurity facts into an engaging educational technology format, was a perfect fit. Martin learned how to create content and make it more immersive on an open source learning management system, and how to use information to make the experience more interactive for learners.

LES students have been hired by universities, Goldman Sachs, Walt Disney, and other business organizations. They have also gone on to pursue graduate studies at prestigious institutions like Harvard University.

# GRADUATE EDUCATION & STUDENT PROFILES

We offer Certificate of Advanced Study, Master of Education, Master of Science, Master of Arts, Doctorate of Education, and Doctorate of Philosophy degrees. Our graduate students exemplify leadership in educational research and practice across disciplines.

## OUR PROGRAMS

Graduate students apply to one of our four departments.

- Curriculum & Instruction
- Education Policy, Organization & Leadership
- Educational Psychology
- Special Education

## 2018-19 BY THE NUMBERS

**499**

On-campus graduate students

**243**

Master's degrees awarded Summer 2018-Spring 2019

**57**

Doctoral degrees awarded Summer '18-Spring '19

**16.6%**

International student populations

**34.1%**

Graduate students from underrepresented populations



### Nitasha Mathayas

Ph.D. student, Curriculum & Instruction

### DESIGNING GESTURE-AUGMENTED COMPUTER SIMULATIONS

#### What is the focus of your research?

I study scientific sense-making within novel digital learning environments. I worked with faculty to design a gesture-augmented computer simulation in which middle school students gesture to control the simulation and learn about heat transfer. Controlling the simulation through one's gestures enables learners to draw on their embodied intuitions of movement to make sense of the underlying causal-mechanisms related to heat transfer. I am investigating the interactional and cognitive processes involved when students use this simulation. Through this analysis, I am developing a framework that can help future science educators incorporate new forms of technology into their instructions. I recently published an article in *Science Education* where my colleagues and I examined related data to explore the epistemic value of gesturing in scientific sense-making.



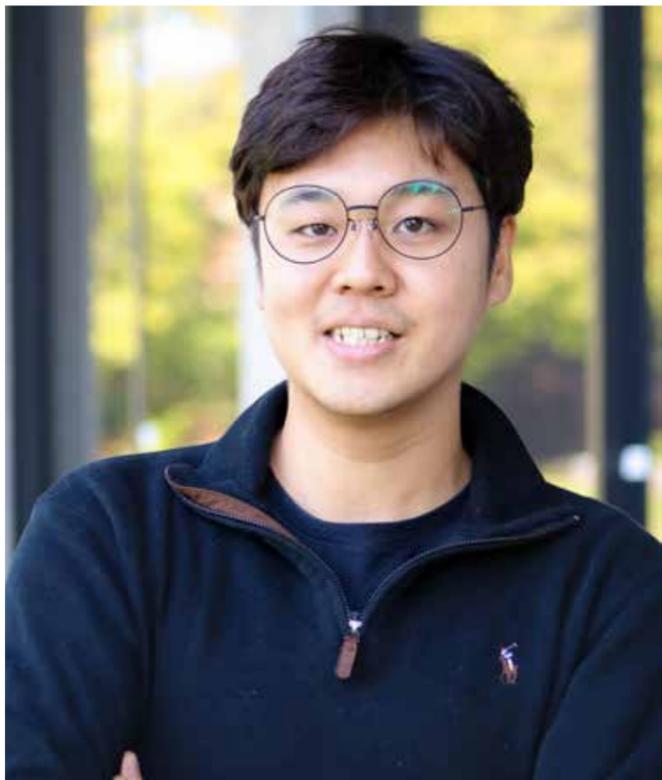
## ArCasia D. James-Gallaway

Ph.D. student, Education Policy,  
Organization & Leadership

### *FORD FELLOW WITH A RESEARCH FOCUS ON THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION*

#### **What is the focus of your research?**

Broadly, all three lines of my research examine African American struggles for educational justice by focusing on intersectional categories of identity. Specifically, my dissertation study analyzes how race, gender, and class, as coalesced identities, differentiated Black students' experiences in the school desegregation process, which sustaining systemic white supremacy and anti-Blackness. My dissertation research has been supported by a Ford Dissertation Fellowship, a University of Illinois Hardie Dissertation Award, and Baylor University's Wardlaw Research Fund Fellowship.



## James D. Lee

Ph.D. student, Special Education

### *RESEARCHING NEEDS OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH ASD IN MONGOLIA*

#### **What is the focus of your research?**

My research focuses on behaviorally-based training and coaching for parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in low-resource settings, particularly in developing nations. This summer, I conducted a pilot, exploratory qualitative research on experiences and needs of parents of children with ASD in Mongolia, as well as a pilot parent training and consultations in applied behavior analysis and autism treatment. I was fortunate to receive the Marissa Zelinger Research Award to disseminate the findings from my research study in Mongolia. The award will help me transcribe, translate, and analyze the interviews that I conducted, and further disseminate the findings in different outlets.



Photo by Mark Cepapas, The Daily Illini

## Amir Maghsoodi

Ph.D. student, Educational Psychology

### *TOP-RANKED PROGRAM WITH AN EMPHASIS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE*

With a small faculty line accepting a maximum of three students a year, the **Counseling Psychology** program for doctoral students was recently placed at the top of national rankings. Accredited by the **American Psychology Association**, the program trains psychologists to apply knowledge developed in the field to issues of practical importance.

Amir Maghsoodi, second-year doctoral student in Counseling Psychology, said he would not have considered the program without its accreditation in APA. With APA, the program allows students like Maghsoodi to connect with various programs across the nation sparking discussions of today's pressing issues with respect to culture, ethnicity and race, Maghsoodi said.

#### **What is the focus of your research?**

My research looks at psychosocial factors that have a particular relevance for members of oppressed and marginalized groups. At present, I study the development and correlates of sense of belonging among college students from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups and first-generation/low-income (FLI) students. I received an Illinois Distinguished Fellowship for 2018-2021 and chose the College of Education for a number of reasons. When visiting the campus as a prospective student, the Counseling Psychology division (and Educational Psychology department as a whole) felt very supportive of students' career aspirations and professional development. There is a vibrant research atmosphere and a culture of open collaboration between students and faculty. I felt that I could explore, develop, and pursue my research interests with freedom and support. I also appreciate the scientist-practitioner approach of the Counseling Psychology division, and I have been receiving top-notch clinical training and supervision.

# RESEARCH IMPACT & **OUTREACH**

Our mission extends beyond our classrooms and campus. We make a difference in people's lives locally, nationally, and globally through invigorating outreach informed by our commitment to community and rigorous research culture.

**Center for Education in Small Urban Communities** serves as the liaison for school-university partnerships.

**Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation & Assessment** brings scholars and practitioners together around issues of cultural context in evaluation and assessment.

**The Early Childhood Collective** provides research and resources for educating and raising young children.

**Education Justice Project** expands higher education within American prison populations.

**Forum on the Future of Public Education** disseminates credible information on key questions facing P-20 education.

**Illinois New Teacher Collaborative** provides statewide leadership for promoting new teacher induction and mentoring programs.

**The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment** surveys the national landscape of higher education learning outcomes.

**Office of Community College Research & Leadership** studies policies, programs, and practices designed to enhance outcomes for diverse youths and adults who seek to transition to and through college to employment.

**Office for Mathematics, Science & Technology Education** enhances student achievement and teaching performance in math, science, and technology.

**University Primary School** is a pre-K through fifth-grade Reggio Emilia-inspired lab school.



 **OCCRL CELEBRATES 30 YEARS  
OF RESEARCH AND LEADERSHIP**



**“We’ve expanded over the years, but our commitment to bridge opportunities to equitable outcomes has remained the same from 1989 through 2019.”**

—Eboni Zamani-Gallaher, Director, OCCRL

BY TOM HANLON

## **I**t started with a grant from the Illinois State Board of Education back in 1989.

Then grants came in from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Adult Education and the National Center for Research in Vocational Education. In the early 2000s, grantsmanship blossomed, and grants began pouring in from state and federal agencies. This, as well as funding from private foundations, has been flowing into the **Office of Community College Research and Leadership (OCCRL)** for 30 years now.

Yet, while the grants have kept the unit running for three decades, the OCCRL has in flourished because of strong and astute leadership—for its first 26 years from **Debra Bragg**, and for the last four years from **Eboni Zamani-Gallaher**.

“There have been other community college research centers throughout the country, but to my knowledge there have been none with the longevity of OCCRL,” says Zamani-Gallaher, a professor in Education Policy, Organization & Leadership at the College of Education.

“We’ve had such a long run because we have always been a strong advocate for community colleges. We acknowledge their challenges, but we also share their strengths, and we’ve been a really good resource relative to generating studies that have had impact on policies and have extended understanding of community college contexts.”

### **Leadership of Debra Bragg**

The OCCRL has focused on broadening participation in two-year college contexts since its inception in 1989. Under the leadership of Bragg, who is now the director of Community College Research Initiatives at the University of Washington, OCCRL garnered over \$17 million from external funding and private foundations. During Bragg’s tenure, the office supported more than 100 graduate research assistants, and continues to do so under Zamani-Gallaher’s leadership.

“Over the years, we have trained a topnotch cadre of researchers,” Zamani-Gallaher says. Many of our graduate research assistants, she says, have gone on to “have wonderful careers—as tenured faculty, senior and executive administrative leaders, accomplishing great things. It’s a point of pride for us.”

In OCCRL’s early years, Zamani-Gallaher says, the majority of the work was in the state of Illinois—much of it funded by the Illinois Community College Board. That research focused on understanding and improving community college education in the state. Zamani-Gallaher had an inside view of OCCRL from 1998 to 2000, when she was a Ph.D. candidate conducting research with Bragg. As Zamani-Gallaher transitioned into her faculty career at West Virginia University and Eastern Michigan University, the two kept in touch and consulted on external evaluation work.

As Bragg was preparing to move to Washington, she was aware that Zamani-Gallaher was open to something new: Zamani-Gallaher was a finalist for an endowed chair/distinguished professorship in community college leadership at the University of Toronto. Zamani-Gallaher learned that she was looking for a successor, which eventually led to an offer to be a faculty affiliate of OCCRL in Fall 2014, with the goal of transitioning into the role of director the following term.

“My first thought was those are big shoes to fill,” Zamani-Gallaher recalls about stepping into the directorship in the spring of 2015. “It’s not commonplace to find an

African American, let alone an African American woman, to head up a research hub at an R1 university. There was trepidation on my part, but there was also excitement because I knew I was being presented with a unique opportunity.”

### **Expanding, but Staying True to Its Roots**

Under Zamani-Gallaher, OCCRL has shifted to a “four-pillars” concept: equity-driven change, comprehensive P-20 educational pathways, transformative leadership, and public engagement.

“It builds on what we’ve done in the past without taking away from the foundation,” she says. “It’s an expansion of that.”

Goals and how they are stated might shift over the years—and need to, in order to remain relevant—but OCCRL’s core purpose remains the same, Zamani-Gallaher says.

“Since its inception, our researchers have addressed student transitions, from high school to community colleges and moving them through and beyond to gainful employment or further education,” she explains. “The common threads throughout all of our research over the years are the core issues of access and equity and outcomes. Because it’s not just that we need more students to persist to degree completion, but upon exit do they have a family-sustaining wage? It is not only that they are graduating but what are they graduating in?”

When Zamani-Gallaher first connected with OCCRL as a Ph.D. student, she

was one of five people on staff. Over time that would grow to well over two dozen core staff, consultants, and affiliates. There are also nearly 3,600 listserv members of OCCRL whose study results and programming activities are disseminated worldwide. Those members include community college practitioners and researchers, K-12 educators, state and federal policymakers, people advancing education at nonprofits and policy think tanks, state board members, and other government employees.

As an example of that unremitting commitment, and of moving in new directions while staying true to OCCRL’s roots, Zamani-Gallaher points to Pathways to Results (PTR), which began 10 years ago under Bragg’s leadership. PTR helps practitioners understand obstacles to student success through disaggregation of data and the adoption of equity-minded practices seen as a critical aspect of raising performance.

“We revised Pathways in 2016 but kept true to its foundation,” says Zamani-Gallaher. In addition, Zamani-Gallaher says OCCRL helps faculty be intentional about being culturally responsive in their teaching. “We help administrators to not be just data driven, but to create cultures of inquiry where they make data-informed decisions that are equity conscious,” she says. “We know all students aren’t entering with the same backgrounds, and we have to be attentive to how we can respond to their needs.”

### **Sustaining Excellence**

“I see us continuing to innovate and continuing to be aspirational in terms of being the best version of our individual and collective selves,” says Zamani-Gallaher. “I want to do the best I can to create and sustain what has been a long tradition of excellence for OCCRL. I’m excited about the future. I want to leave it healthy and hand off the baton and enjoy it from a comfortable distance, watching who has next. Because this isn’t our last decade.”

## **SNAPSHOT OF 2019 OCCRL PRODUCTIVITY**

**69** Research presentations

**31** Publications released

**10** Community colleges were provided with technical assistance through OCCRL’s Pathways to Results

**\$617,297**

Received in new funding

Additionally, OCCRL held several successful racial justice institutes across the country through support from the Lumina Foundation and co-sponsored the **Dean’s Distinguished Diversity Lecture Series**, identifying and coordinating visits for exemplary scholars to share their scholarship at the College of Education.



# ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

BY TOM HANLON

The Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment (CREA) works to change educational and social policies—and the lives of the disenfranchised, including indigenous groups, who are impacted by those policies.

---

**CREA**—the **Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment**—is an international community of scholars and practitioners that promotes a culturally responsive stance in all forms of systematic inquiry including evaluation, assessment, policy analysis, applied research, and action research. In this work, CREA recognizes issues of power, privilege, and intersectionality. Using its base at the University of Illinois, the center provides a resource for organizations and individuals seeking to better understand and apply cultural responsiveness. CREA seeks to produce a body of informed practitioners, published scholarship, professional development opportunities, technical assistance resources, and advocacy, advancing cultural responsiveness across inquiry platforms and settings.

» Rangikura School Ascot Park, Porirua, New Zealand

**B**ack in the late 1990s, Dr. Stafford Hood, then a professor at Arizona State University, began working on several National Science Foundation-funded projects, including one with the Navajo Nation. Subsequently, he worked as an advisory board member on another NSF-funded project of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, led by Dr. Joan LaFrance of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa and Richard Nichols of Santa Clara Pueblo, New Mexico (a federally recognized tribe of Native American Pueblo people) to develop an indigenous evaluation framework.

“Central to doing evaluation work in indigenous communities are the traditions and values of those communities and their practices,” says Hood, now the Sheila M. Miller Professor of Education and professor in Curriculum & Instruction and Educational Psychology in the College of Education. “The importance of culture and cultural context is at the core of the evaluation and assessment work that we do.”

When Hood returned to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2008 (he earned his Ph.D. here in 1984), he brought the mission behind that initial project with him. In 2011, he formally established the Center for Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment (CREA) as its founding director, but his work in that area has remained constant through the years.

“CREA at the University of Illinois is the most recent manifestation of the body of work that began when I was on faculty at Arizona State a few decades

ago,” he says. “This mission, this vision, came with me. It’s my lifelong work.”

### **CREA’s Continuing Growth**

That work is an interdisciplinary effort with an ever-growing cast.

“We have groups in education and across social programs of our society who have been traditionally disenfranchised—the poor, people of color. These groups are not benefiting from our institutions, our systems of education, our political systems, our economic systems,” Hood says. “What we are wrestling with are interdisciplinary-related questions and issues that can’t be solved by one particular group or another.”

**“Central to doing evaluation work in indigenous communities are the traditions and values of those communities and their practices. The importance of culture and cultural context is at the core of the evaluation and assessment work that we do.”**

—Stafford Hood, CREA director

CREA brings together researchers, practitioners, and policymakers from around the world to address the needs of disenfranchised groups.

“We need to have those conversations to better understand culture and cultural contexts,” Hood says. “We need to use what we do, what we learn, what we study, to try to improve the quality and effectiveness of the work that we do.”

Many of those conversations take place at CREA conferences, the first

of which was held in 2013 (the fifth was held this past spring). Beginning with his involvement back at Arizona State, the work attracted people in the areas of education measurement and evaluation, education research, counseling psychology, and educational policy.

“What I’ve been noticing over the last few years is there’s been an expansion of people in the areas of health and social work, and we’re seeing more engineers coming to CREA conferences, particularly in the area of computer science,” Hood says. “So that’s giving us a little bit different footprint than we started with in the late ‘90s and early 2000s.”

### **Ever-Widening Footprint**

That initial footprint took Hood from Tempe, Arizona, to the Navajo Nation and to other indigenous communities across the larger Southwest. It eventually took Hood to Aotearoa (the Māori word for New Zealand), where he worked with the Māori, who are indigenous Polynesians.

“We collaborated with the Māori evaluators in education and some of the service agencies in providing professional development workshops around evaluation and culture and cultural contexts in evaluation,” Hood says. “We have a pretty significant core group of indigenous members of the CREA community not only in North America and Hawaii, but in New Zealand.”

Hood facilitated professional development workshops that were delivered by indigenous scholars and practitioners at CREA conferences

as well as American Evaluation Association conferences. He also remains involved in the continuing refinement and scholarly work focused on indigenous evaluation.

“Our community of scholars and researchers is publishing in journals and we’ve had two books come out of our work so far,” he says. “I’ve been most pleased by the fact that in each of our volumes, a significant body of work was done by our indigenous colleagues, focusing on the evaluation of indigenous programs or programs intended to serve indigenous groups.”

### **“A Lifelong Journey”**

Hood is also pleased with both the growth of CREA’s global community, which numbers scholars and practitioners from 17 countries, and with the younger generation of colleagues that is stepping up in the area of evaluation and assessment and making significant contributions.

Which is good, because the work, the need for CREA, will extend far into the future. The educational and social needs of the disenfranchised are not going away—and neither is CREA.

“We continue to see ourselves as a work in progress,” Hood says. “This is a journey for the work that we do in trying to make a difference, to make a contribution to improve their circumstances. We see ourselves as being socially responsible in doing this work, based on the skills that we have. So we continue to do that. It’s a work in progress, a lifelong journey.”



### **CREA Director Stafford Hood meets with Ho’okua’āina founders, Dean and Michele Wilhelm**

Ho’okua’āina is a non-profit organization using Hawaiian traditions of kalo (taro) cultivation to improve the lives of youth and build a healthy communities. Ho’okua’āina empowers youth to realize the meaning and purpose of their lives by helping them develop life strategies and skills through the cultivation of kalo and Hawaiian values-based coaching.



### Joy Williamson-Lott

M.A. '95, Ph.D. '98, Education Policy, Organization & Leadership

Alumna Joy Williamson-Lott was named dean of the University of Washington's Graduate School. Williamson-Lott earned her bachelor's degree in psychology and speech communications, and her master's degree and doctorate in the History of American Education from the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Prior to joining the UW faculty in 2007, she served on the faculty at the Stanford University School of Education.

PHOTO COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

# DONOR IMPACT & ALUMNI RECOGNITION

We are proud of our over 34,000 alumni and the impact they are making worldwide.

University presidents, charter school founders, international literacy experts, and more—our alumni are leading educational change, shaping policy and practice, and influencing the next generation of educational leaders. In addition to the alumni presented in this year's IMPACT REPORT, in March we honored our 2019 Distinguished and Young Alumni at our annual awards event.

## 2019 DISTINGUISHED AND YOUNG ALUMNI HONOREES

### Patricia Clark

Ph.D. '93, Curriculum & Instruction  
Professor and Chair, Department of Elementary Education, Ball State University, Muncie, IN

### Jennifer Lewis Dillavou

B.A. '82, Curriculum & Instruction  
President of Alumni Association and Associate Vice Chancellor for Alumni Relations, University of Illinois

### Margaret Kobia

Ph.D. '03, Education Policy, Organization & Leadership  
Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs, Kenya

### Ann Larson

Ph.D. '98, Curriculum & Instruction  
Dean and Professor, Department of Middle and Secondary Education, College of Education and Human Development, University of Louisville, Kentucky

### Elegwa Mukula

Ph.D. '04, Education Policy, Organization & Leadership  
Professor of Entrepreneurship, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in Nairobi, Kenya

### Travis Wilson

B.A. '97 Secondary Education, M.S. '08 and Ph.D. '11 Educational Psychology  
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Oberlin College, Ohio

### Joel R. Malin

Ph.D. '15, Education Policy, Organization & Leadership  
Assistant Professor, Department of Education Leadership, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

### Rebecca Woodard

Ph.D. '13, Curriculum & Instruction  
Assistant Professor in Curriculum & Instruction, University of Illinois at Chicago

“ I love this place—I adore Illinois. It’s the people, not the brick and mortar. Illinois continues to be uniquely positioned to do special things for lots of people like it did for me. Like it will do for my son.”

— Ron Rochon, President,  
University of Southern Indiana



Photos courtesy USI Photography and Multimedia



Ron Rochon and family

## The Ripple Effect of Illinois

The Rochon family—alumnus Ronald S. Rochon, Ph.D. '97, EPS, and wife Lynn—visited campus this summer with son Ayinde, who's here to discover his purpose and define his own goals for a life of impact.

BY ASHLEY LAWRENCE

The sound his name makes—**Ron Rochon**, (Ph.D., '97, Educational Policy Studies)—is as fluid and easy as his wide smile, as he introduces himself during his family's visit to Champaign-Urbana, several weeks after his inauguration festivities and official investiture as president of University of Southern Indiana (USI). His reason for being back at his alma mater is yet another blend of a dream realized and a new journey beginning: Rochon's son, Ayinde, is a new graduate student in the Education Policy, Organization, and Leadership (EPOL) department.

"Ayinde has been in this College with me since he was knee high, walking these hallways," says Rochon. "To see my son—taller than me now—just graduated from Indiana University and being accepted to Illinois is such an exciting thing for me as a father. I'm so thankful for the man he's becoming."

The Rochon family walks these hallways again, stopping in offices for mini-reunions with members of their Education at Illinois family. Conversations full of congratulations and laughter surround them, as they move from one floor to the next.

They're accompanied by Dr. Yoon Pak, who met Rochon in 1997 at

Washington State University in Pullman, Washington. In his first teaching role, Rochon was running a summer doctoral program. Pak was a Ph.D. student nearby, at the University of Washington, and says that Rochon awarded her a research fellowship—the one and only time her doctoral work received funding.

"Ron took a chance on me when my own department wouldn't," says Pak. "I am who I am today because of Ron Rochon," says Pak.

Encouraged by one of his Tuskegee University professors (an Illinois alumnus) to continue his studies at the University of Illinois, Rochon arrived on campus to study reproductive physiology in the laboratory of Dr. Janice Bahr, in Animal Sciences (ACES). In the late 1980s, both a female-led research group and an African American graduate student were rarities in this STEM field.

Rochon attained his master's degree and spent two years working at the University of Chicago hospital, focused on reproductive health. But through volunteer work in Chicago schools and correctional facilities, Rochon's interests began shifting from medicine to social issues around education, diversity,

leadership, and policy. He decided to return to Champaign-Urbana, with questions percolating and new aspirations in mind.

Soon after arriving back on campus to pursue doctoral work, Rochon recalls hearing Dr. William Trent give a talk on social justice to the Black Graduate Student Association, further piquing Rochon's interest in equity and access issues. Rochon says Dr. James D. Anderson, in the then-Educational Policy Studies department, made him take a few undergraduate-level classes to ensure education was a path he wanted to follow. "Dr. Anderson became my lifeline, without question: intellectually, emotionally, socially, culturally, he provided the kind of sustenance I needed. And in such an unselfish way," says Rochon.

This fall, Rochon's son Ayinde began his master's degree coursework under the advisement of Dr. Pak. With a bachelor's degree in political science from Indiana University, his options for scholarly foci within his graduate program are practically limitless. Wisely, he knows a specific interest will eventually need to emerge. But Ayinde's open to the same inspiration and influence that guided his father, a generation earlier.

WELCOME TO THE FUTURE

# THE O'LEARY LEARNING CENTER

This new 4,400 square-foot space, outfitted with the latest technology and tools, takes the College's strengths in online teaching and learning, as well as collaborative research, to new heights. A \$1.5 million donation from Richard and Ann O'Leary ushers in a new era for the College of Education.



Jeremy Jones, director of infrastructure and support for the College of Education, shows off the new teaching studio, an important feature of the new O'Leary Learning Center.



**DR. EDWIN J. O'LEARY (1913—1988)**

The center is named in honor of Richard O'Leary's father, Dr. Edwin J. O'Leary, B.S. '40, M.S. '45, Ed.M., '51, Ed.D. '57 who earned four degrees from the University of Illinois. Richard and Ann O'Leary are also Illinois alumni. Their gift exemplifies the family's lifelong commitment to education and learning.



**The O'Leary Learning Center features a state-of-the-art live teaching studio**

"It's the first live teaching studio in the College. The lighting, the audio quality, everything we're doing in that space is creating a professional-looking video session that we transmit to our students," says Jeremy Jones, director of infrastructure and support for the College of Education.

But it's not just about the looks, he adds. It's about what it does for the quality of online instruction.

"Through the live studio, instructors can regain that personal connection with students by being able to see them, listen to them, and see their body language, all of which is important. Instructors can see cues and change content based on those cues," Jones says.

The live studio might be the showpiece of the O'Leary Learning Center, but it is only one of several components of the space. The northeast corner of the College's lower level (the "garden level"), where the Center is located, is home to a collaboration room, a main conference room and several smaller conference rooms, and two classrooms for STEM instruction.

The collaboration space will be used by interdisciplinary teams engaged in educational research projects—

anything from student-led innovations and early phase prototyping efforts through grant-funded collaborative projects. The space will allow for face-to-face, virtual, and hybrid meetings.

"It's designed to help stimulate that creativity and collaboration across multiple units," Jones says.

The main conference room is connected to the collaboration area and includes an offshoot of four smaller rooms for discussions and project work. One of the STEM classrooms has five 55-inch touchscreen monitors for students and an 86-inch touchscreen for instructors; the other has five giant glass writing surfaces, the contents of which can be projected onto a large monitor that all in the room can see.

"We have multiple cameras that can zoom into the writing boards so that the writing or equation can show up on the projection screen," Jones says.

The classrooms have video and audio capabilities, enabling streaming of instruction, and the rooms are designed to be powered by personal devices.

The College of Education is already deeply immersed in collaborative multidisciplinary efforts across campus, and Jones believes the O'Leary Learning Center will further entrench them in those efforts, helping to open up ever more opportunities for the College.



**Using your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) can fund programs in the College of Education**

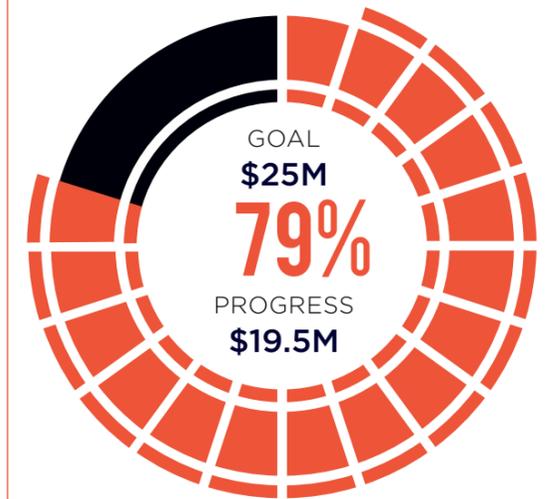
In 2015, **Barb** and **E.L. Gentry** created a scholarship with their IRA gift to support graduate students within the College of Education.

"The scholarship was important to us, as we wanted to support the next generation of educational leaders and relieve some of the financial burden of attaining their graduate degree," say the Gentrys. "Funding the scholarship from our IRA made the process really simple and saved significant taxes. We have enjoyed meeting the students we have supported, and look forward to those we will meet in the future."

The University of Illinois holds a special place for both E.L. and Barb. E.L. worked for the university for over 30 years in Budget and Resource Planning and Barb holds three degrees from the College of Education in the teaching of mathematics.



You can make a tax-free distribution from your IRA directly to the University of Illinois Foundation and support scholarships, fellowships, or programming in the College of Education. Fulfill your IRS-Required Minimum Distribution and invest in Education. Change a student's future and impact the future of education by contributing toward College-led initiatives at Illinois.



With your help, the challenges of the future will be met today. We are raising **\$25 million** to support the future of the College of Education at Illinois.

**OUR PRIORITIES**

1. Invest in scholars
2. Invest in students
3. Invest in knowledge and experiences
4. Invest in research and outreach

---

EDUCATION AT ILLINOIS  
GREAT MINDS  
**THINK**  
**ILLINOIS**

---

**I ILLINOIS**  
College of Education

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
1310 South Sixth Street, MC-708  
Education Building  
Champaign, Illinois 61820

[education.illinois.edu](http://education.illinois.edu)

**#THINKEDILLINOIS**