



2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

"MAKE A MARK ON THE WORLD THAT CAN'T BE ERASED."

- Maya Angelou



A GROUNDWORK FOR THE FUTURE

During my 14-year tenure as dean, working with incredible students, faculty, and staff has been the honor of a lifetime. From preparing new generations of educators for careers in Nebraska classrooms to leading the charge in emerging health fields, together, we have tackled ambitious and meaningful work.

I would like to share with you that my career is coming full circle. This summer I will be stepping down as dean, and following a sabbatical year, I will return to teaching in the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences. Dr. Neal Grandgenett will lead the college as interim dean, and associate dean duties will be shared by Dr. Kris Swain and Dr. Jason Coleman.

It has been a privilege to serve this community—as an Omaha Public Schools’ elementary teacher, as UNO faculty member, and as dean of our college. I’ve learned that the average tenure of an academic dean is 4-5 years, and I have been asked, “How did you stay so long?” A simple question, but the answer is anything but.

Maya Angelou’s quote on the cover encourages us to leave a lasting impact on the world that can endure through time, and this is what I have tried to do throughout my career. Working in higher education offers the opportunity to improve lives, and being dean has provided a space for me to create impactful projects with lasting influence—and to help others do the same. Our college has prioritized innovation, collaboration, and transformation, and it is impressive to reflect on how much we have achieved together. On these pages, you will see some of these notable highlights.

“IT HAS BEEN A PRIVILEGE TO SERVE THIS COMMUNITY—AS AN OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS’ ELEMENTARY TEACHER, AS UNO FACULTY MEMBER, AND AS DEAN OF OUR COLLEGE.”

In this annual report, my final as dean, you’ll read about innovations laying the groundwork for the future. Discover two graduate programs: a new Dyslexia Specialist Certificate and the established Educational Leadership degrees, now 100% online and accessible for teachers and administrators seeking advanced education. Learn about two recent student trips that offered Biomechanics, Health & Kinesiology, and Speech-Language Pathology students a firsthand, on-site experience in their future professions. Find out more about new grants providing financial and academic support to Counseling students studying to be licensed mental health professionals. Read how the Teacher

Education Department is finding solutions to improve teacher recruitment and retention. There are many more stories to tell, and I hope you enjoy reading about the accomplishments of the students and faculty in our college.

It takes all of us working in concert to positively impact the lives of people in our community, state, nation, and around the globe, and I want to thank YOU—our community partners, alumni, donors, and friends. YOU have been essential to our accomplishments, and as I reflect on my years as dean, I truly appreciate your support of our students, faculty, and programs.

Gratefully,

Nancy A. Edick



14 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP

DEAN EDICK'S KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

COMPLETED THE FUNDING AND SUPERVISED THE MOVE OF THE COLLEGE'S HEADQUARTERS FROM KAYSER HALL TO A NEWLY-RENOVATED ROSKENS HALL, WHICH HOUSES COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND STUDENT TRAINING FACILITIES SUCH AS THE COMMUNITY COUNSELING CLINIC, SPEECH-LANGUAGE CLINIC, AND EARLY CHILDHOOD PLAY LAB.



SUPPORTED CREATION OF THE DIVISION OF BIOMECHANICS AND RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT, LEADING TO CONSTRUCTION OF UNO'S FIRST STAND-ALONE RESEARCH FACILITY, THE BIOMECHANICS RESEARCH BUILDING, AND TWO OF UNO'S LARGEST RESEARCH GRANTS: \$10.1M AND \$10.3M COBRE FUNDING FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH).



GUIDED THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND KINESIOLOGY (H&K) THROUGH A NAME CHANGE, GROWTH OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING, AND TWO BUILDING RENOVATIONS, INCLUDING THE UPCOMING RESEARCH, ENGAGEMENT, AND COMMUNITY HUB, OR REACH LAB.



SPEARHEADED NAME CHANGE OF THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SCIENCES (CEHHS) IN 2019, CELEBRATING THE COLLEGE'S TREMENDOUS 10-YEAR GROWTH AND INNOVATION.



PROMOTED EDUCATION IN THE OMAHA-AREA COMMUNITY THROUGH NEW PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN TEACHERS, INCLUDING SERVING AS THE FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF THE CADRE PROJECT, AND HELPING LAUNCH THE TEACHER SCHOLARS ACADEMY AND A NEW \$14M GRANT-FUNDED PARTNERSHIP WITH THE OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS.



SERVED AS THE FIRST ROTATING DEAN FOR THE STEM TRAIL CENTER, AND HELPED SECURE THE FUNDING AND GUIDE THE PLAN FOR RENOVATION OF THE LOWER LEVEL OF ROSKENS HALL FOR THE CENTER'S FUTURE HOME.



SUPPORTED COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS INCLUDING SERVING ON THE MOEC EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE AND ON THE BOARDS OF PROJECT HARMONY, COMPLETELY KIDS, AND KIDS CAN.



DEMONSTRATED COMMITMENT TO RESEARCH, WITH THE COLLEGE'S EXTERNAL FUNDING INCREASING FROM \$1.1M TO \$9M DURING DEAN EDICK'S TENURE, AND INTERNAL FUNDING BOOSTED TO \$1M PER YEAR.



RECEIVED THE CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL AT THE MAY 2023 COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY.

GRANTS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS FACED BY STUDENTS PURSUING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDER CAREERS

The Department of Counseling was recently awarded two grants totaling \$1M from UNMC's Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN) through the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) Award Program.

The grant funding will provide improved support to graduate students pursuing careers as behavioral health providers in UNO's Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. The goal is to address Nebraska's shortage of behavioral and mental health providers, especially in diverse and underserved communities, by focusing on program recruitment and retention, as well as training and supervision.

According to Department Chair Tina Chasek, Ph.D., LIMHP, LADC, students face various barriers during their advanced education, which can hinder their ability to complete their program successfully. These barriers include long unpaid clinical internships, difficulties finding quality supervision, and obtaining advanced training in specialized areas.

"Providing extra support during clinical experiences will allow students to finish the program and go on to apply for provisional licensure as a mental health practitioner in the State of Nebraska," explained Chasek.

The grants will support program recruitment and clinical training experiences, as well as fund a clinical training instructor to manage UNO's Community Counseling Clinic. The department also hopes to double the number of students completing practicum, expand internships and quality supervision, offer advanced clinical training in areas such as tele-behavioral health and evidence-based suicide and crisis interventions, and provide living stipends and financial support for licensure.

“MANY STUDENTS DON'T THINK ABOUT COUNSELING AS AN OPTION WHEN THEY THINK ABOUT CAREERS IN THE HEALTH CARE FIELD. WE WANT TO CHANGE THAT.”

- DR. TINA CHASEK

Julie Hefflinger Professorship in Counseling

"We are excited to have the resources to engage diverse groups of students to help them learn about career possibilities in the behavioral health field," said Chasek. "Many students don't think about counseling as an option when they think about careers in the healthcare field. They think of traditional health care professions like doctor, nurse, physician assistant. We want to change that by showing the pathway to a licensed counseling profession."

GRANT DETAILS:

ADVANCED CLINICAL TRAINING FOR COUNSELORS IN TRAINING

PI: Charmayne R. Adams, PhD, LIMHP, NCC

COUNSELOR TRAINING RECRUITMENT AND CLINICAL PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

PI: Abby Bjornsen-Ramig, PhD, LP

\$1M
IN GRANT FUNDING FROM UNMC'S BHECN

\$482K
WILL GO DIRECTLY TO STUDENTS

REMOVE FINANCIAL BARRIERS



EXPAND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



COUNSELING FEATURED FACULTY

According to Assistant Professor Thang Tran, Ph.D., school counselors are the heartbeat of P-12 education.

"School counselors support and strengthen all critical aspects of school culture, including caring for their students' and families' felt needs, academic growth, fostering a vision for college, career readiness, and social/emotional development," explained Tran.

A former school counselor himself, Tran leads the School Counseling program in UNO's Department of Counseling—work he is honored to do.

"My students teach me as much, maybe even more, than I teach them," said Tran. "I continue to be grateful for the small but important role I get to play in impacting this next generation of counselors, educators, and leaders."

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS NOW 100% ONLINE

For over 30 years, UNO's Department of Educational Leadership (EDL) has fulfilled an essential need across Nebraska for P-12 administrators as well as school district and nonprofit leaders. EDL's programs recently transitioned to a 100% online format, providing professionals and aspiring leaders with additional flexibility to pursue advanced degrees in Educational Leadership. The fully online format also creates expanded learning opportunities for students throughout the U.S. and in other countries.

"We are excited that our established, high-quality graduate programs are even more accessible to those looking to grow their leadership skills," said Department Chair Tami Williams, Ed.D.

The department offers three degree programs—a Master of Science Degree in Educational Leadership, an Education Specialist (Ed.S.) degree, and a Doctoral Degree in Education (Ed.D.). An administration endorsement is also available for students who have completed a master's degree and are seeking principal certification or special education supervisor certification.

"Courses are taught by experienced faculty researchers who bring a range of knowledge as former school district leaders. All of our part-time faculty work in the field and bring their practical knowledge and connections to the academic setting," explained Williams. "Students really gain an understanding of how the concepts they are learning in class apply to the real world."

Other program features include engaging coursework, fieldwork, and professional development experiences, allowing students to build skills and create connections. Optional in-person networking events like the Lead Like a Maverick event and the Fall Leadership Dinner are held biannually, and offer students a space to interact with peers and the broader Omaha educational community.

Students are also provided with unique research opportunities to explore trends and issues in education, including access to a new partnership with the Nebraska Department of Education through the Nebraska Education Policy Research Lab.



PROGRAMS NOW 100% ONLINE



50% OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN THE OMAHA AREA HAVE ONE OR MORE DEGREES FROM UNO




OPTIONAL IN-PERSON EVENTS TWICE A YEAR

“OUR ALUMNI EXCEL IN LEADING EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS AND MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS.”

- DR. TAMI WILLIAMS

"By the time they complete their degree, students possess invaluable practical leadership experience, along with a strong set of creative and critical problem-solving skills," said Williams. "Our alumni excel in leading educational innovations and making a positive impact on educational systems."



ED.D. PROGRAM BOASTS A 90% GRADUATION RATE

FIRST DOCTORAL PROGRAM AT UNO



EDL AWESOME ALUMNI

**DÉRNECIA PHILLIPS
ED.D. IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION '23
OWNER, DAL EDUCATION & CARE SOLUTIONS**

DérNecia Phillips, Ed.D., has collected several titles in the past 18 years. Mother. Student. Wife. Teacher. Principal. Mentor. Business owner.

When Phillips walked across the stage during UNO's May Commencement, she added Doctor to the list.

"For this to have been such a long journey, for it to all be coming to a close in such a beautiful way, my heart is just so full," she said.

As an undergraduate student, Phillips' heart was set on law school, but everything changed when she became a mother. Realizing the importance of great teachers for her son, she pursued a career in education. UNO's CADRE Program provided the skills she needed, and Phillips quickly earned two master's degrees, leading her into school administration. However, tragedy struck, and her academic journey was put on hold.

Despite the setbacks, Phillips found support from her UNO professors, especially Jeanne Surface, Ed.D., who maintained contact through the challenging times. "We do not want students to fail, so we're going to help them all the way along," Surface explained. "Some students start and stop along the way...but we really push them to be successful."

During the hiatus, Phillips started her own education consulting business, inspired by her late father. Today, she continues to mentor others and believes that learning should be an exciting and collaborative experience for students.

"Learning doesn't have to be this thing where we're sitting in rows and it's quiet," Phillips said. "Learning should be noisy. Learning should be fun. Learning should be something that is done with students, not to students."

WATCH DÉRNECIA'S STORY:



THE PROGRAMS:

ED.D. IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Designed for educators who have completed foundational work in school leadership and hold a current administrative certificate. Most EdD students pair their work with the requirements for a superintendent's certificate.

EDUCATIONAL SPECIALIST (ED.S.) DEGREE

Designed for the experienced practitioner who holds a master's degree and administrative certificate and wishes to complete the requirements for a superintendent's certificate.

M.S. IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Designed for educators who hold a teaching certificate and wish to complete the requirements for a principal or special education supervisor certificate. Administrative Certificate Endorsement also available for those with a master's degree.



STUDENTS EXPLORE SPORTS MEDICINE AND BIOMECHANICS WITH THE PROS DURING MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL EXPERIENCE

Over spring break, students from the School of Health and Kinesiology (H&K) and the Department of Biomechanics traveled beyond the classroom for a sports medicine- and biomechanics-focused Major League Baseball (MLB) Spring Training Experience in Arizona.

Accompanied by faculty members Adam Rosen, Ph.D., ATC, Brian A. Knarr, Ph.D., and Sam Wilkins, Ph.D., ATC, eighteen students from UNO's Biomechanics, Kinesiology, and Athletic Training programs spent a week immersed in MLB spring training activities while meeting with sports medicine clinicians and sport scientists from the Cactus League.

“AS SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO WORK IN PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL, IT WAS AMAZING TO SEE HOW THINGS ARE DONE BEHIND THE SCENES.”

- CHU-HAN CHEN,
H&K GRADUATE STUDENT

Students attended spring training games at Goodyear Stadium and Surprise Stadium, and toured the Kansas City Royals facilities with Athletic Trainer Brad Groleau, a 2019 H&K alumnus. They also visited Creighton University's Phoenix Health Sciences Campus, where they were given a tour and lecture by former director of performance integration for the Los Angeles Angels, Ryan Crotin, Ph.D., CSCS, RSCC, a baseball injury expert and vice president at ArmCare.com.



“It was an incredible experience to talk with people within professional baseball to learn more about rehabilitation measures and what it is like to work with professional athletes”, said Chu-Han Chen, a first-year graduate student in UNO's Athletic Training Program.

Other highlights included watching Team USA at the World Baseball Classic and attending a game at Peoria Sports Complex. A post-game tour of the complex by biomechanist Kate Weiss, Ph.D., CSCS, the sports science director for the Seattle Mariners, showcased the facility's state-of-the-art simulated pitching system and customized baseball bats.

“As someone who wants to work in professional baseball, it was amazing to see how things are done behind the scenes,” Chen said. “Biomechanics plays just as big a role in professional baseball as athletic training does. I hope to work closely with biomechanists in the future.”



H&K STELLAR STUDENT

MATTHEW SCHULTZ
KINESIOLOGY/PRE-ATHLETIC TRAINING STUDENT
UNO WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL TEAM CAPTAIN, '22-23

Matthew Schultz's unwavering passion for basketball first sparked his connection with UNO, beginning when he joined the Nebraska Red Dawgs, a junior wheelchair basketball team for youth with physical disabilities. For eight years, Matthew and his mother Tricia made the weekly journey from Des Moines to attend Saturday morning practices on campus with Coach Mike Kult, who also served as coach for the UNO Wheelchair Basketball team, which celebrated its final season this April.

When asked about the impact of wheelchair basketball in his life, Schultz explained that the sport helps participants push beyond what they previously thought possible. “Wheelchair basketball gave me the opportunity to say, ‘Maybe I can do this, maybe I can take that next step forward.’ It gave me something to fight for.”

Schultz sees his time at UNO as a journey that has come full circle—reconnecting him with his former coach, bringing him back to the H&K Building, and allowing him to pursue his passion for Athletic Training. “Athletic Trainers were influential on me. I remember being that kid that got hurt and had to sit on the sidelines and wait while my body healed. So to help kids recover faster with new technology and methods, it's very rewarding.”

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Sofia Jawed-Wessel, Ph.D., H&K associate professor and director of the Midlands Sexual Health Research Collaborative, is a 2022 Changemakers in Family Planning grantee from the Society of Family Planning Research Fund. The funding supports scholars of Color to develop their research skills and leadership.

UNMC's UNeMed presented the Most Promising New Invention of 2022 Award to H&K researchers Song-young Park, Ph.D., and doctoral student Cody Anderson at the annual Innovation Awards event. Their invention, a system for measuring blood pressure in wearable electronic devices such as smart watches, produces an accurate and reliable way for people to track their blood pressure in real-time.

In June, JP Rech, student in the UNO Physical Activity in Health Promotion Lab, successfully defended his dissertation. Rech studied the effectiveness of interventions that promote physical activity in preschool to third grade classrooms with funding from the Buffett Early Childhood Institute (BECI) Graduate Scholars program. Through his project, Rech hopes to identify activities that work within classrooms and help teachers see the value of more physical activity. “Most kids are not active enough,” said Rech, “This is an age where they're really supposed to be exploring and learning through interactions with different environmental factors and those around them.”

READ MORE ABOUT
JP'S RESEARCH ON
THE BECI WEBSITE:





SCHOLARSHIP HONORS A LIFELONG DEDICATION TO EDUCATION

“True love stories never have endings.”

Written many years ago by aviator-turned-author Richard Bach, these words hold different meanings to different people.

For Martha Bruckner, Ph.D., a two-time University of Nebraska at Omaha graduate and executive director of the Metropolitan Omaha Educational Consortium (MOEC), her love for education will not end with her retirement in June, just as her love for her husband of more than 30 years did not end when he passed away in 2021. And, thanks to a generous and thoughtful gift from Martha, the impact the couple had on students in the area for more than 45 years will live on through the Robert E. Bruckner, Ed.D., Memorial Scholarship in the UNO College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences.

Bob Bruckner was a longtime elementary school educator and principal in the Westside Community Schools. He retired from Westside in 2008 as director of elementary education for the district. Similarly, Martha worked as a teacher, assistant principal and principal at Ralston High School. After working as an associate professor in educational leadership at UNO and as an associate superintendent in the Millard Public Schools, she served as superintendent of the Council Bluffs Community School District for 10 years before accepting her current role.

“Establishing a scholarship in Bob’s memory seemed to be a fitting way to honor his lifelong dedication to education,” Martha said. “I wanted to find a way to continue to show my love for Bob; giving to ‘our’ university in order to enrich others seemed to be the perfect way to do that. I hope the scholarship will provide great opportunities to others who are drawn to the profession.”

Martha and Bob first met as doctoral students at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. She said that their paths crossed numerous times and that they would jokingly debate the importance of working in elementary schools versus at the high school level.

“We both valued education and realized the value it added to our lives,” Martha said. “We were both given the privilege of school leadership and later accepted district leadership roles in different districts. After Bob retired and I became a district superintendent, he was a wise support to me and many others in educational leadership roles. Bob was the ‘wind beneath my wings.’”

Because preschool education was so important to Bob, Martha also has established a scholarship program within the Westside Community Schools to support families of young children who need assistance to access early education opportunities.

Martha has been recognized for her own commitment to improving lives through education. She is the recipient of the UNL Teachers College Walter K. Beggs Award for Outstanding Service to Education and the Distinguished Alumni Award from the UNO CEHHS. As superintendent of the Council Bluffs Community School District, she oversaw a 20-point improvement in the district’s graduation rate that was supported by focused work occurring at all levels throughout the district.

What are Martha’s plans for retirement? “I hope to have fewer formal plans and a less hectic schedule, but I’m eager to find some new ways to be useful,” Martha said. “I’m entertaining ideas or offers.”



ONLY IN NEBRASKA: A CAMPAIGN FOR OUR UNIVERSITY’S FUTURE

Last November, the University of Nebraska announced the public launch of Only in Nebraska: A Campaign for Our University’s Future.



The campaign, which includes the UNO College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences, has three priorities which mirror those of UNO and the university system:

1. Relentless focus on student access and success;
2. Enhancing faculty, academic and clinical excellence; and
3. Transformational research and innovation.

Student scholarships and support will expand opportunities for life-changing educational experiences and professional opportunities that contribute to a better quality of life for graduates and the communities in which they live and work. The college offers affordable, inclusive and dynamic learning opportunities that place students at the center, provide high-quality educational programs and actively engage in the community.

Increased funding for endowed chairs and professorships and support for faculty recruitment and retention will elevate the excellence of CEHHS and the university. Faculty members play a critical role in the success of UNO’s students and overall research and engagement enterprise.

Expansion and renovation of existing facilities on campus will accommodate innovative research and community outreach in areas such as cardiovascular biomechanics, the STEM TRAIL Center and the Research, Engagement and Collaboration Hub (REACH). Enhancing the college’s facilities will help grow and diversify scholarly activity and benefit our community, fulfilling the metropolitan mission of CEHHS and UNO.

As of March 31, 2023, a little more than half of the CEHHS overall goal had been raised from 1,883 unique donors. While the CEHHS campaign goal is in sight, there is still a long way to go.

To become part of this historic campaign through a gift that will benefit CEHHS, please contact Shane Bumsted at 402-502-4105 or at shane.bumsted@nufoundation.org. Or, scan the QR code to give now.



NEW DYSLEXIA SPECIALIST CERTIFICATE EQUIPS EDUCATORS WITH TOOLS TO BETTER SUPPORT STUDENTS

According to researchers, around 20% of students in the U.S. have dyslexia*, a learning disability that causes people to struggle with language skills including writing, spelling, pronouncing words, and reading. Early diagnosis and intervention are critical, and the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders (SECD) is working to help fill a gap in educator training.

“THE DYSLEXIA SPECIALIST CERTIFICATE PROGRAM EQUIPPED ME WITH ESSENTIAL TOOLS TO DEVELOP EXPLICIT AND SYSTEMATICALLY STRUCTURED LITERACY LESSONS TAILORED TO MY STUDENTS’ NEEDS.”

- KATE BEAN, K-5 LITERACY INTERVENTIONIST

The department’s new Dyslexia Specialist Certificate, a one-year, 100% online graduate program, enables educators to expand their knowledge about dyslexia in order to best serve students in the classroom. The certificate program can support students as they prepare for national certification, if they choose.

Through a collaboration between SECD and the Teacher Education Department, graduate students can customize their experience and gain content knowledge in dyslexia and the Science of Reading by adding dyslexia certificate coursework to a Master of Science in Special Education or a Master of Science in Literacy.

Assistant Professor Amanda Kern, Ph.D, conceptualized the certificate program in 2021, and the department welcomed the first cohort of educators this fall.

“Many of them already have advanced training in reading – they’re reading specialists, reading coaches, interventionists, school psychologists – but they don’t know enough about dyslexia,” said Kern. “They were saying, ‘I didn’t know about this. I don’t know about dyslexia.’”

Current student Kate Bean, a K-5 Literacy Interventionist at Morton Elementary School, said the program has significant value, equipping her with essential tools to develop explicit and systematically structured literacy lessons, customized to her students’ individual needs.

“I recommend the program as a supercharged boost to anyone wanting the skills to teach reading to all students,” said Bean. “Throughout the program, I have not only received unwavering support from dedicated professors but also had the opportunity to immerse myself in current research.”

In the future, due to new legislation LB 298, Nebraska will begin to collect and report information regarding dyslexia to state officials. Kern believes that additional data could significantly improve the way schools assist students with dyslexia.

“Data will give [schools and districts] power and they’ll be able to really show change and make informed choices in planning and in resource allocation,” explained Kern.

** Statistic from the Yale Center of Dyslexia and Creativity
Content for this piece was obtained from articles by the Omaha World-Herald and UNO’s MarComm*

CAN LEAD TO NATIONAL CERTIFICATION

15 GRADUATE CREDIT HOURS

1 YEAR

100% ONLINE

14 STUDENTS IN FIRST COHORT

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY STUDENTS DEVELOP SKILLS DURING GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

Thanks to a new partnership with Creighton University’s Occupational Therapy program and Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC), the Speech Language Pathology (SLP) program recently collaborated on a global experience focused on interprofessional services and cultural competencies. Kristina Peterkin, M.S., CCC-SLP, and Shari DeVeney, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, led the development of the course, Speech-Language Global Interprofessional Clinical Experience. During the January term, Peterkin with four SLP graduate students traveled to the Dominican Republic for a nine-day intercultural learning experience as part of the course.

According to Peterkin, the course helps aspiring practitioners to develop their clinical skills with hands-on experiences in the field, while gaining a deeper understanding of the practice of cultural humility and cross-cultural care. The students provided services at different clinical sites including a hospital and school in Santiago and toured historical and cultural sites. In addition, the students hosted clinics and delivered services in a rural community, or campo, while staying with local families.

Christina Aguilar, a second year SLP graduate student, sought out this unique cultural opportunity to challenge herself—and to expand her language skills and competence as a future

SLP professional. For the trip, Aguilar set a goal of creating therapy plans on the go while still providing quality services.

“At the local school, we evaluated a child who wrote some of his letters backwards, so we did hand-over-hand motions to help him practice. I found it imperative that we teach him how to correctly write a J as that is the first letter of his name,” explained Aguilar. “After practice with visual and verbal cues, he successfully wrote a J with minimal support. I drew dots outlining his name in his notebook so he could continue his success after we were gone.”

Katie Springer said the experience allowed her a deep dive into cultural values and beliefs different from her own in the U.S. “This was something outside of my comfort zone but provided many valuable experiences that increased my cultural competency and clinical skills.”

Springer and her peers presented information to children and parents during sessions called charlas. “Completing a charla in Spanish was something that challenged me in a way I have not been challenged before. Trying to speak a new language in front of a crowd was an uncomfortable moment, but I kept telling myself that I am grateful to be here and sharing this information, even if I was not producing perfect Spanish. I provided recommendations to support early language development, and I know parents within the community loved hearing what was offered,” said Springer.



FUTURE TEACHERS OF COLOR SUMMIT INSPIRES NEXT GENERATION OF EDUCATORS

In March, the Teacher Education Department (TED) hosted the second annual Future Teachers of Color Summit on UNO's campus. The summit brought together high school students and UNO teacher candidates for a two-day event filled with keynote speakers, panel discussions, and networking opportunities. Participants attended presentations from current UNO education students and education professionals in the community, as well as visiting scholar from California State University, Dominguez Hills, Miguel Gutiérrez, Ph.D., and Chancellor Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, the first woman of color to serve as UNO chancellor.

According to event founder and TED faculty member Gabriel Gutiérrez, the Future Teachers of Color Summit provides a unique opportunity for aspiring educators of Color to build a supportive network and gain inspiration by bringing together individuals who may share similar experiences and backgrounds.

"By fostering a sense of community, the summit can inspire and energize attendees, equipping them with new strategies and tools to succeed in their future careers," explained Gutiérrez.

Gutiérrez founded the Summit in 2022 with colleagues Ferial Pearson, Ed.D., Derrick Nero Ed.D., Willie Austin, Ed.D., and Sandra Rodriguez-Arroyo, Ed.D. The team developed the event with funding from an NU System Inclusive Excellence Development Grant with the goal of recruiting and retaining diverse students to the field of education and the university.

Gutiérrez believes the Future Teachers of Color Summit is an essential step towards creating a more diverse and equitable education system.

"By empowering more people of Color to become teachers, the summit can help address the lack of diversity among educators, ensuring that students of Color have access to role models and educators who share their cultural background and experiences."



TEACHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT TEACHER RECRUITMENT, RETENTION

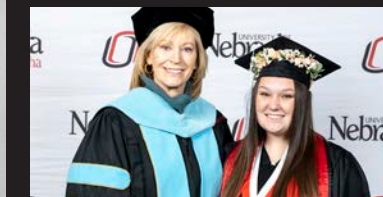
Building on CEHHS' legacy of responding to the needs of the community, the Teacher Education Department is forming new collaborations with school districts across the Omaha metro to attract and retain teachers. The department is focused on closing the workforce gap in education, ensuring that area elementary and secondary students have access to an exceptional education that prepares them for college and beyond.

New funding from Omaha Public Schools (OPS) supports four initiatives at UNO that will create more pathways into the teaching profession and expand professional development for current teachers. A \$14.8M grant supports funding for graduate courses for qualifying OPS teachers to build capacity for dual enrollment and to address strategic district initiatives. The grant also provides scholarships for aspiring educators through UNO's Teacher Scholar Academy program and Teacher Academy Project.

According to Dean Nancy Edick, "the creation of pathways to promote the teaching profession throughout the community and the state is a longstanding priority of the college and that new funding and expanded partnerships will broaden the college's impact."

Other collaborations include working with district leaders to design graduate coursework and cohorts based on the needs of each district. In addition to working with OPS, Teacher Education faculty are developing collaborations with Millard Public Schools, Bennington Public Schools, Elkhorn Public Schools, Westside Community Schools, and others. These new partnerships will build educators' skills in areas like mathematics and early literacy, help advance teachers from a bachelor's to a master's level of education, and promote more targeted career areas such as school library, special education, and ESL/bilingual education.

MEET UNO'S NEWEST TEACHERS



TEAGAN VAUGHAN
B.S. IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
GRADUATE STUDENT IN THE
CADRE PROGRAM

Teagan Vaughan is the first graduate of UNO's Teacher Scholars Academy, a program launched in 2019 that connects high-achieving teacher education students with teaching careers in Omaha. Her graduation represents a milestone in addressing the state's teacher workforce needs.

"Going through the Teacher Scholars Academy, you get a deeper understanding of the career field," explained Vaughan. "I'm proud of taking on a challenge like this. Education can be hard, but it's definitely worth it."



AMY LOPEZ HERNANDEZ
B.S. IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Amy Lopez Hernandez is a first-generation college student, and the first in her family to obtain a bachelor's degree. "I'm so glad I chose UNO and CEHHS to shape my path as a future educator," said Lopez Hernandez. "I met some incredible

professors that supported me along the way as I went through the Educator Preparation Program. Not only did they support me, they are impacting the lives of other students to make it to the finish line."

During her time at UNO, Lopez Hernandez gave back as much as she received, serving as UNO Student Body Vice President, president of the Teacher Education Diversity Organization, president of UNO Collegiate Panhellenic Council, and a UNO Ambassador. This fall, she will teach Spanish at OPS' new Buena Vista High School.



MALCOLM RECEIVES \$238K FROM NSF TO STUDY ENERGY REQUIREMENTS OF WALKING IN OLDER ADULTS

As we age, our bodies become less energy efficient, transforming simple activities like walking into a daunting effort, and the reason why is not fully understood. With funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF), research led by UNO, in collaboration with UNL, leverages machine-learning to investigate the metabolic cost of different phases of the gait cycle. Biomechanics researchers at UNO are conducting motion-capture experiments to influence the different phases using a robotic waist tether. Data from these experiments will be used to develop machine learning algorithms that estimate fluctuations in the energetic cost at a sub-stride cycle resolution.

This research is expected to create practical applications for gait rehabilitation. "Being able to detect the energetic cost of different phases of the gait cycle would enable us to design improved assistive devices such as orthoses or exoskeletons that specifically target the costliest phase of the gait cycle," Philippe Malcolm, Ph.D., UNO Principal Investigator, said.



CEHHS students and researchers recently engaged with attendees of the FEI World Cup Finals, held this April at the CHI Health Center. In preparation for the FEI finals, as well as future research studies, the Movement Analysis Core (MOVAN) team, led by David Kingston, Ph.D., collected data at Far Hills Farm, thanks to owner Lisa Roskens and head trainer Shana Winkel.





MYERS HELPS ROLL OUT “BIOMECHANICS LAB IN A SHOE”

A fitness technology company co-founded by Sara Myers, Ph.D., Elvee Performance Technologies, recently rolled out its first product, ELVEE, “a biomechanics lab in a shoe.” The shoe insert can monitor fitness performance by determining movement and joint patterns, weight distribution and ankle power in real-time, indicating if an injury is developing.

According to Myers’ co-founder, Bobby Izuta, changes in a person’s gait can indicate pre-dementia or other

health-related issues. The inserts can also be used in a military setting to indicate human performance when conditions vary, such as assessing the impact of new equipment on a soldier navigating an obstacle training course.

This highlight was adapted from an article written by the Nebraska Business Development Center

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH) FUNDING

- › **Successful renewal of \$2M+** in Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) Award
- › **David Kingston, Ph.D., receives R15 funding for \$488k** for project, Mechanics of overground, dry, and aquatic treadmill walking in children & adolescents with cerebral palsy



“ I CHOSE UNO BIOMECHANICS BECAUSE IT IS ONE OF THE LEADING RESEARCH ENVIRONMENTS IN THE WORLD WITH AMAZING FACILITIES, OFFERING A HIGH CHANCE OF SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

ANAËLLE CHARLES, MS
DOCTORAL RESEARCH ASSISTANT

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- › Dean Nancy Edick receives the Chancellor’s Medal at the May Commencement Ceremony.
- › Dr. Sara Myers elected president of the American Society of Biomechanics and honored with a Woman in Science Award by Nebraska Cures.
- › Dr. Sofia Jawed-Wessel received a UNO Faculty Excellence in Engagement Award.
- › Dr. Kay Keiser received a UNO Outstanding Graduate Mentor Award.
- › Dr. Sandra Rodriguez-Arroyo received a UNO Alumni Outstanding Teaching Award.
- › Dr. Charmayne Adams honored with the Black Mental Health Educator of the Year Award.
- › Dr. Tami Williams selected as president of the Nebraska Association of Professors of School Leadership.
- › Dr. Jason Coleman received the Community Collaborator of the Year Award from the Great Plains IDEA-CTR.
- › Dr. Tina Chasek was awarded the 2022 Counselor of the Year Award through the Nebraska Counseling Association.
- › Omaha STEM Ecosystem’s Julie Sigmon recognized with a Friend of Science Awards by the Board of the Nebraska Academy of Sciences.
- › Dr. Adam Rosen and Dr. Sam Wilkins inducted into UNMC’s Interprofessional Academy of Educators.
- › Dr. Marcia Adler received a Community Program Partnership Award from NOAH, the North Omaha Area Health Clinic.
- › Dr. Martha Bruckner received a Mercy Heritage Award.
- › Dr. Kelly Gomez Johnson is the inaugural STEM TRAIL Center Leadership Fellow.
- › Dr. Apryl Poch received a Professional Achievement Award from the Keuka College Alumni Association.
- › The Technology Support Team– Director James Johnson, Denny Hanley, and Jim Wolfe–received an NU ITS Cybersecurity Champion Coin Award.
- › Karima Goodman received a KUDOS Award from the Nebraska Board of Regents.
- › Charlene Tate-Vinson received a Recognition Award from the UNO Staff Advisory Council.
- › The Omaha STEM Ecosystem received the AIM Institute Community Builder of the Year Award.

HIGHLIGHTS

BIOMECHANICS

Biomechanics faculty were awarded **30 new grants for a total of \$3.6M in funding.**

Biomechanics programs had a total of 90 students, **more than double the number of students five years ago.**

UNO Biomechanics has made a total impact of \$27.54M on the Omaha metropolitan economy, according to a study by Dr. Christopher Decker from UNO’s Department of Economics.

COUNSELING

In 2022, 202 student clinical and internship placements were made, totaling **37,100 hours of service provided in the community.**

Funded research for 2022 totaled \$1,113,771, an increase of almost \$1M dollars. Every faculty member is working on a grant funded project.

Eighteen practicum students were placed in the Community Counseling Clinic, providing **905 clinical hours to the community.**



EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Over 100 guests joined the department for the Fall Leadership Dinner at Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium, featuring alumna Dr. Liz Mulkerrin as keynote.

Educational Leadership supported Leadership Academies in Millard, OPS, Ralston, Westside, and Elkhorn school districts for staff and teachers who aspire to become principals or leaders on the building/district level.

Faculty partnered with alumnus Dr. Jim Sutfin to create the Superintendent Academy Micro Credential, beginning Spring 2024.

HIGHLIGHTS (CONTINUED)

HEALTH & KINESIOLOGY

The Research, Engagement, and Community Hub, or REACH Lab, secured phase 1 funding and construction began on the H&K Building.

The Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) re-accredited the Master of Arts in Athletic Training for a full 10-year period.

H&K faculty received over \$1.2 million in external funding, an increase of 76% from the previous year.

TEACHER EDUCATION

The AAQEP (Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation) and NDE (Nebraska Department of Education) visit in October led to successful accreditation.

In partnership with MOEC, the METLINK Literacy Conference returned to in-person events with two conferences in 2022 and over 100 teachers in attendance at each conference.

With an Online Program Grant Innovative and Learning-Centric Initiatives grant, faculty converted 40 graduate classes to online sections to support the transition to online Teacher Education graduate programs.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

Research productivity (ex. presentations, publications, and grants) for the department had a one-year growth of 52%.

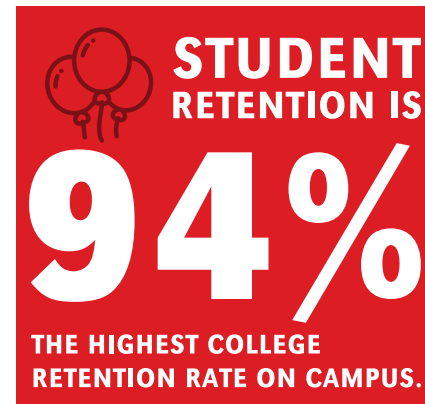
In Summer 2022, the first cohort of four graduate students started the Accelerated Special Education Program.

The final eleven-student cohort of the OPS Career Ladder in Special Education started their final year of the partnership.

THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC ADVISING AND FIELD EXPERIENCES

Field Experiences placed 250 teacher candidates in Clinical Practice experience, a 16.2% increase from the previous year.

Academic Advising's seven advisors and one peer advisor held 3,267 total academic advising meetings with students.



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI LUNCHEON

In April, CEHHS recognized five outstanding alumni with Distinguished Alumni Awards at the annual Distinguished Alumni Luncheon event.

- › **Award of Distinction**
Dr. Martha Bruckner, UNO
- › **Distinguished Service Awards**
Tim Hron, RADIUS
Denise Marshall, Columbus Community Hospital
- › **Professional Achievement Award**
Dr. Shavonna Holman, UNL
- › **Promising Professional Award**
Lacey Wolf, Playful Speech & Feeding



CEHHS ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

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