Another Great Year at Pace: The School of Education Celebrates Spring!

As the summer rapidly approaches, we barely have time to reflect on all the great things that have been happening within the School of Education and the greater Pace community, before starting another busy summer and preparations for the 2006/07 academic year. But we should take, at least a moment, to do so—and to pat ourselves, our students, our alums, and our faculty—on the back for such wonderful and varied accomplishments. Some recent highlights include:

- The School of Education enjoyed a successful spring Lecture Series. Distinguished guest educators, Dr. David Berliner, Ms. Ann Cook, Dr. Carl Glickman, Dr. Monty Neil, and Dr. Thomas Sobel, addressed the series’ theme: “Maintaining a Progressive Agenda in an Era of Testing and Measurement.”
- The SOE hosted a film series, “From the Ridiculous to the Sublime: Images of Teaching in Film.” Half the films were shown in White Plains and half in NYC. Featured films were: “Paperclips,” “Goodbye, Mr. Chips,” “To Be and To Have,” and “Madhot Ballroom.” We were honored to have NYC Department of Education Deputy Chancellor of Teaching & Learning, Carmen Farina (Pace Alum, 1988) as the discussant for the final film. See below for our interview with Dr. Farina.
- The Pace Faculty Institutes (5/16 in Westchester and 5/17 in NYC) was a rewarding experience, as Pace staff and faculty and Pace High School faculty worked with Jay McTighe in sessions, “Design for Understanding: Sharing Responsibility for Learning.”

We hope all of you have had a wonderful spring, and we wish you a wonderful, relaxing summer.

ALUM PROFILE: CARMEN FARIÑA, NYC Schools Deputy Chancellor for Teaching & Learning Pace SOE Class of 1988

NYC Schools Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, Carmen Fariña, has been involved in education for 40 years. She has held various positions within the City’s public school system—teacher, administrator, and district superintendent. She has also worked as an adjunct instructor. Pace is proud to count Dr. Fariña among one of its most distinguished alums. In 2004, Chancellor Klein asked Carmen Fariña to be Deputy Chancellor and to serve as instructional leader for the system’s 100,000+ teachers.

Dr. Fariña took time out to chat with a Pace SOE graduate student about her career, NYC teaching, and her experiences at Pace University.

Why did you choose Pace University? I chose Pace University because of convenience, location and the willingness of the university to have classes scheduled around my professional commitments. Classes were scheduled at times that made it convenient for me to travel to class after work. Classes were scheduled Monday to Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Pace University has both convenience and location.

Was there one professor who made a special impression? David A. Bickimer. Some people major in education, I majored in Dr. Bickimer. He was a reflective thinker. The class sizes were small, and the environment was one embracing a sense of community. There were no endless minutes of lecture notes. The class was engaging from beginning to end. Classroom learning constituted meaningful interesting dialogue, case studies and a sense of community. He recommended that we read The Prince by Nicolo Machiavelli. It is very important to ‘know your enemies’ and keep them close.

Did you feel yourself a part of a greater community at Pace? I enjoyed the Pace University sense of community because the social events were focused and caring and executed with intent. This provided an opportunity for me to get involved, and make effective useful networking contacts— contacts that were appropriate for my professional development and my field of study. Pace had networking opportunities that were true connection hubs for teachers and educators. The time spent sharing was time spent creating.

What are your thoughts about growing up in NYC and attending public schools? I am a product of this system; I have spent more that 40 years in this system. In 1975, every department in the Public school system was cut. Teachers were excused across the entire city. Every teacher, regardless of the discipline—Art, History and Special
we have a long way to go.

learners. We have made progress, however, but of Special Education and English Language provided at aqueduct levels; these were in the areas in which the services were not being pro-
vided. In addition, I needed to address two sense of community within the schools and the system. In addition, I needed to address two areas in which the services were not being pro-
vided at aqueduct levels; these were in the areas of Special Education and English Language learners. We have made progress, however, but we have a long way to go.

What are some initiatives with which you've been involved?
In 2004 one of my initiatives was to build a sense of community within the schools and the system. In addition, I needed to address two areas in which the services were not being pro-
vided at aqueduct levels; these were in the areas of Special Education and English Language

What is one of your current initiatives?
The “Gender Initiative” - there is a large dispar-
ity in the graduation rates of boys and girls. More girls are graduating than boys. I have a personal relationship with education, and my life is this profession. My grandson Charlie is two years old, and I would like him to grow up with other children like him that are also graduating. This is part of why I am creating events that reflect males in positive role models.

Tell me about your passion for Social Studies.
(Ms. Fariña authored a multicultural interdiscipli-
ary program called “Making Connections.” The program used historical fiction, reading material that is age appropriate with the Social Studies Curriculum.) Social Studies is important and should be taught because we must have knowledge of our mistakes, know who we are, and learn how cultures work together.

Reflecting Back
During your years in education, serving in various capaci-
ties/ wearing many hats—teacher, principal, curriculum coordinator, Superintendent, Associate Professor and parent (items are not listed in order of priority)—if you had to choose a single word, group of words, phrase—how would you describe the changes that have occurred looking back 161976?
The biggest change in education is it has become everybody’s business—business schools, law schools, corporations, businesses—everybody has a vested interested in being a part of education. The “Adopt a School” programs are very common place. The current chancellor is a lawyer—education has become everybody’s business.

After forty dedicated years in education, Carmen Fariña will be retiring at the end of the current academic year. And the Pace SOE community wishes her well!

The SOE Welcomes New Faculty
Hello, my name is Linda Vereline and I joined the faculty of the School of Education in Sep-
tember. I am teaching and coordinating the Teach for America program. I’ve worked in education for 30 years.

Before coming to Pace, I was an assistant professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Long Island University/Brooklyn Campus and the program di-
rector of the New York City Teaching Fellows, an alternative certification program for new teachers. Prior to that, I worked at the Institute for Literacy Studies (ILS) at Lehman College. While at Lehman, I taught courses in the teach-
ing of writing and the development of interdisci-
plinary curriculum. I worked closely with teach-
ers and administrators in public middle schools throughout New York City on issues of instruc-
tional and structural reform. Working with my ILS colleague Barbara Batton, I co-authored a study of literacy practices in a New York City elementary and middle school. During my time at Lehman, I also served as an Associate Direc-
tor of the New York City Writing Project, an affiliate of the National Writing Project.

I have directed after-school programs for Project Reach Youth, a community-based organization in Brooklyn and served as a consultant for the Robert Bowne Foundation, which supports the literacy-based efforts of after-school programs. I began my career as a teacher of English in middle and high school.

I have a B.A. in English literature from Douglass College and a Masters in Education from Rut-
gers University. I have presented at a number of conferences, including the National Council of Teachers of English, the American Association of Higher Education and the Curriculum and Pedagogy Group. My research in English Educa-
tion has focused on middle school children’s small group discussions about both literature and revision. I am currently working on a study of first year teachers and their work with their university liaisons and an article about collabora-
tive descriptive inquiry practices.

Opportunities for Alums: Advanced Degrees & Certificate Programs
Oftentimes alums, having graduated and worked in the field, find they want to explore other areas of education. Perhaps they started working in general education but are now interested in special education. Some are interested in working in the areas of reading and literacy or technology. Still others are interested in pursuing careers in school administration.

There are programs for each of these specialties at Pace. The programs are specialized, and they are meant to support concurrent teaching. Candidates who complete a program will be eligible for an additional certificate or extension in the indicated field. We encourage you to reach out to the program coordinators for more information.

Educational Leadership (NYC Campus only)
David Avdul (davdul@pace.edu) or Charles Bonnici (cbonnici@pace.edu)
Special Education
Westchester: Leslie Soodak (lsoodak@pace.edu)
NYC: Dianne Zager (dzaeger@pace.edu)
Literacy
Westchester: Rochelle Frei (rfrei@pace.edu)
On Friday, April 28, 2006, Pace University’s School of Education hosted Literacy Day at P.S. 134 in Manhattan. Over 200 school children from P.S. 134 and P.S. 137 attended the event. Award-winning children’s book author and illustrator, Neil Waldman, read his book about a child’s imaginary meeting with Vincent Van Gogh, called *The Starry Night* (Boyd’s Mills Press, 1999), to all the children assembled. Afterwards, the children wrote their own stories based on Mr. Waldman’s book. Current SOE juniors and seniors from the New York City campus were on hand to help the students write their stories, as were several Pace NY faculty. When the students finished their writing project, they were invited to join Mr. Waldman at the microphone to read their stories aloud. Each child who attended the event was given a copy of Mr. Waldman’s book. In addition, SOE students and faculty held separate fund-raising auctions, raising over $1,000 for Sister St. John’s Center for Literacy Enhancement in White Plains. The Center provides literacy enrichment to children of all ages. Currently they are accepting applications for their 4-week summer program, which meets mornings, from 7/5-7/27/06. For more information, call (914)422-4135.

**Alum Profile:**

**Rich Sicignano, MST**

**Class of 2003**

Rich Sicignano graduated from Fox Lane High School ’90. He received a BS in Water Resources from Oneonta ’94, and worked as a hydrogeologist in Colorado before coming to Pace University’s SOE Westchester Campus to complete a Masters in Teaching. He graduated in December of 2003. Rich was a geologist in Colorado before becoming a teacher. He had earned a BA in Hydrology before he changed his focus to science education. He started teaching in January 2003 at Ossining High School. He has been there three and a half years. He says that this year, things are getting better—the “magic year three” for new teachers.

Who was your most memorable professor?

Dr. Mary Rose McCarthy – for Educational Psychology. Her methods in the classroom involved lots of inquiry. There was clear evidence of her passion for Educational Psychology.

Tell me about your students.

I teach High School science grades to grades 10 through 12. My subject is Earth Science and with an additional science elective – Forensics. A full third of my student population is Latino and they have been in the United States less than one year.

My passion for science is infused in my teaching. My classroom is structured with lots of hands on inquiry based activities that facilitate real world connections for my students.

How do you incorporate technology into your classroom?

We use lots of technology in the classroom including a digital projector, White board and we have a Multi media center anchored in science. We also use a number of web-based applications in our classroom. Some of these sites are: Webquest, Google Earth, PASCO integrated and Probeware. These applications support scientific inquiry. Our classroom is more doing than sitting still. Google Earth is a phenomenal resource for earth science teachers because it uses satellite imagery.

What is your classroom like?

I believe that teachers must give 110% everyday. We must commit to learning something new from our students everyday. Teachers must be open to the dynamic and different environment that is the classroom. It’s important to remember that each class has a different dynamic and each class is rich and rewarding.

What is your teaching philosophy?

Time spent with the student must involve more than listening. More than answers must be provided. Can the student answer - what is the point of me learning this? The student needs to be able to answer this for him/herself.

Teaching must be authentic and involve real world situations. It must have an application aspect – how will the student apply what is learned? Students must take away more that a grade. I would like to give my students some of my passion for science.

What does a good teacher do in his/her classroom?

The teacher cannot be lazy in the classroom. Teacher laziness translates to students that you do not care. The teacher establishes the dynamic, and the students give and get based on the teacher dynamic. Teaching the content is easy. The teacher must create a connection/relationship with students (respect between you and the class); this makes the environment fun. I make connections with my students, and this helps to ensure their success. I tell jokes - but work time is separate. Fun contributes to an interesting class.

I enjoy going to work; I have 65 little friends (can you figure out the connection?)
IN MEMORIAM

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved colleague and friend

Donna Eustace

Donna served with dedication as the Staff Assistant in the New York City department of the School of Education for the past 16 years. She worked with both undergraduate and graduate students, staff, and faculty. She was a tirelessly helpful and ever-smiling presence at the School of Education. Donna was also a very proud undergraduate alumna of Pace University, having earned her Bachelor of Science in May 2005.

The Pace School of Education extends our deepest sympathies to Donna’s family and friends during this painful time.

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A memorial service is being planned for Friday, October 13, 2006. For more information, contact Prof. James Reed at jreed@pace.edu