

P E A B O D Y

reflector

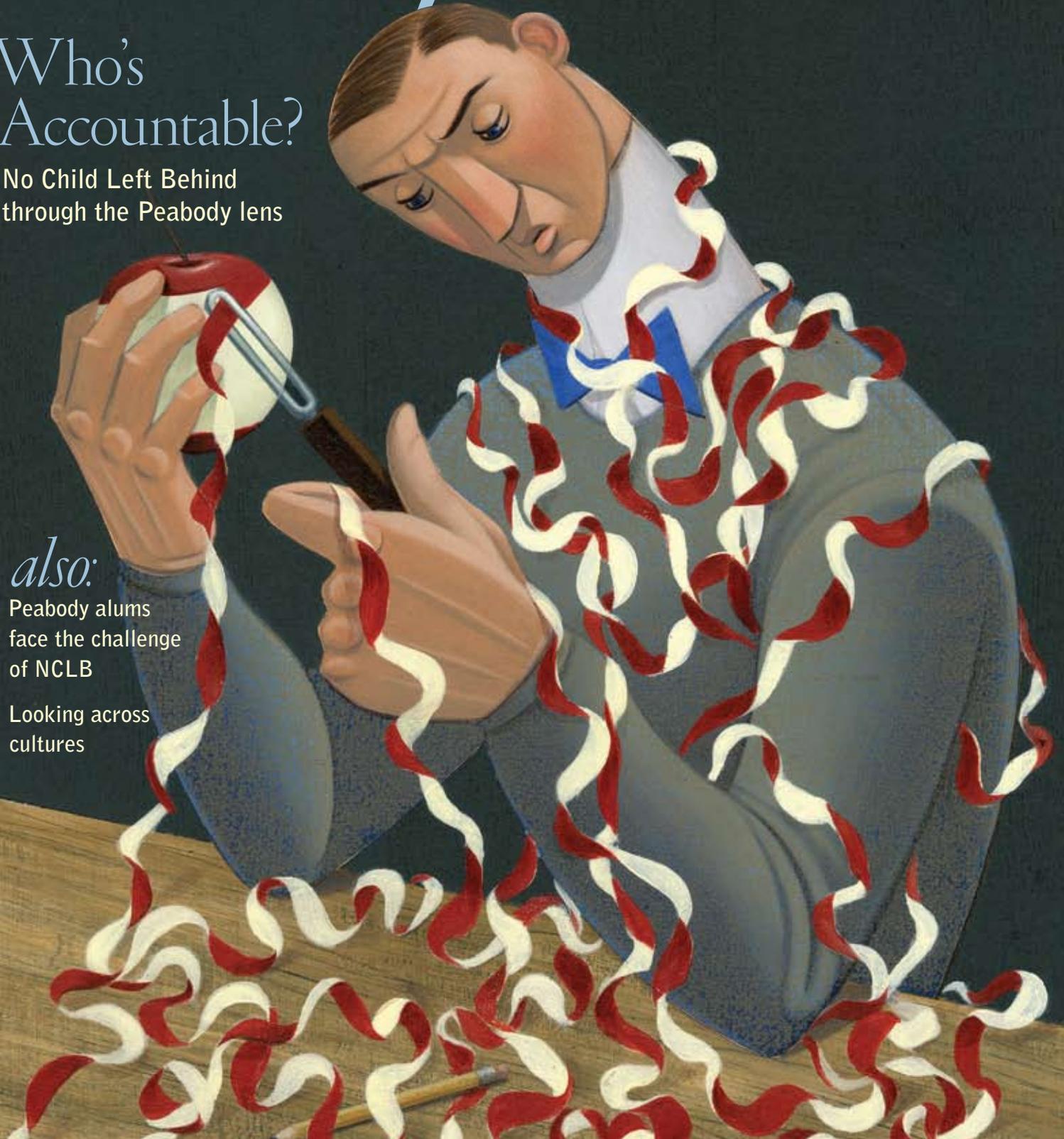
Who's Accountable?

No Child Left Behind through the Peabody lens

also:

Peabody alums face the challenge of NCLB

Looking across cultures



Artism: Project Onward

February 12 – May 30, 2007



Visual artists with autism were showcased in "Artism: Project Onward," a program of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, on display at the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center this spring. Project Onward supports the creativity of artists with developmental disabilities by providing work space, art materials and professional guidance in a communal studio at the historic Chicago Cultural Center. Project Onward was founded upon the belief that artists with special needs deserve a voice in the world of art and ideas, and that their extraordinary work has a universal audience.

—Lain York, Preparator

Above Left: Windy City Pussy, George Zuniga's pastel on paper; Above Right: Autumn by Michael Smith; Above: Party of Four by George Zuniga

Visit Peabody College's Web site at <http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>

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On the cover: Illustration by Jon Krause. Read more about No Child Left Behind beginning on p. 14.

The Peabody Reflector is published biannually by Vanderbilt's Peabody College of education and human development in cooperation with the Vanderbilt Office of Advancement Communications. The magazine is mailed free of charge to all Peabody alumni, parents of current Peabody students, and to friends of Peabody who make an annual gift of \$25 or more to the College. Correspondence, including letters to the editor and Class Notes submissions, should be mailed to: *The Peabody Reflector*, Office of Advancement Communications, VU Station B #357703, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37235-7703 or by email to reflector@vanderbilt.edu.



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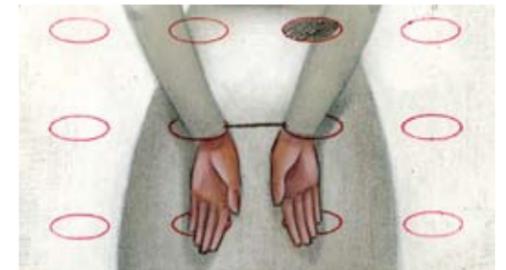
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DAN LOFTIN

With No Child Left Behind up for reauthorization in 2007, it's appropriate that this issue of the PEABODY REFLECTOR should examine the role the legislation has played in the recent work of the college. Peabody's teacher preparation efforts, as well as the broader education research that we conduct here every day, have been challenged by the momentous changes NCLB has brought in a short time to the Pre-K–12 landscape. With its emphasis on accountability, NCLB has implications for anyone concerned with how people learn and how greater learning can be fostered.

At least to a certain extent, NCLB has been good for education researchers. Peabody has reaped its share of federal grants to conduct randomized field trials, study teacher induction and school leadership, and even to help train the next generation of education researchers through the Learning Sciences Institute's Experimental Education Research Training (ExpERT) program.

At the same time, our commitment to educating leaders for tomorrow's classrooms has not changed. This spring, we created and charged a Teacher Education Task Force with developing a plan to ensure the future of a quality teacher education program at Peabody.

We're not alone in wrestling with how research and practice should fit together. Some schools of education have chosen to focus exclusively on teacher preparation, while others seem content to maintain two different emphases running on two unconnected tracks. Conversely, we believe that tightly linking research and practice strengthens each. Connecting these to education policy offers the college even wider avenues of influence.

We must forge these connections between research, practice and policy because the issues that motivated the passage of NCLB in the first place have not gone away. Our society is still faced with an education system that is not meeting the needs of all its learners. The achievement gap remains. Poorly qualified teachers still teach predominantly in underperforming schools attended by at-risk students. And looming beyond these concerns is the troubling question of American competitiveness.

Given these conditions, it's likely that NCLB, or a similar successor, will be with us for the foreseeable future. Peabody is in for the long haul, too, and we'll continue to do what we have always done: create the knowledge and provide the leadership—from classrooms to conference rooms—to ensure that people of all ages and backgrounds can live, learn and flourish throughout their lives.

CAMILLA BENBOW

Patricia and Rodes Hart Dean of Education and Human Development

Revisiting Scopes

WHAT A WONDERFUL BIT OF writing by Frye Gaillard in the Fall '06 PEABODY REFLECTOR in praise of John Thomas Scopes; but even this 1925 "Monkey Trial" hero "wasn't sure he had actually done it [taught evolutionary biology]." The real hero of the Dayton publicity stunt was an educator and former school principal of Dayton High School, Prof. Joseph "Joe" Crockett Fooshee.

Although the Rhea County Superintendent of Schools was Walter White at the time of the trial, Prof. Joe Fooshee had been the high school principal when George W. Hunter's textbook, *A Civic Biology: Presented in Problems* (N.Y.: American Book Co., 1914), had been mandated by the state for high school use. On the fifth day of the trial [Thursday, July 16], William Jennings Bryan spoke for the prosecution "turning the pages of Scopes' alleged textbook." The "regular biology teacher, W. F. Ferguson, refused to be a part of a test case," and Scopes, who was the football, basketball and baseball coach, and who taught math, physics and chemistry, agreed to take part in the trial. Scopes had substituted for Ferguson in a biology class when the teacher was sick near the end of the school term. Yet, Scopes stated at the trial, "I wasn't sure I had taught evolution."

Prof. Fooshee had left the Rhea County high school post and assumed such a role in White County, TN, thereby avoiding the trial and the publicity/notoriety it

might have brought him.

Richard M. Cornelius's article in *History of Rhea County* (1991) gives an extensive review of the trial. The Fooshee connection was told to me by Prof. J.C. Fooshee's son, the late Malcolm Fooshee, in his Rockefeller Plaza office in New York City. He was proud of his studies at The University of the South (Sewanee) and his Rhodes Scholar position at Christ Church College at Oxford.

STEWART LILLARD, MLS'70
Silver Spring, Md.

"To Ed.D. or Not?"

I DID AND I'M GLAD.

After earning B.S., M.A. and Ed.S. degrees and being a secondary school teacher and principal, as well as a college professor and administrator, I became a civil service educator for the Department of Defense.

As I approached age 50, I was given a no-strings-attached sabbatical. Following advice from a Great Books advocate at the University of Georgia, I elected to pursue an Ed.D. in adult education. On the sixth day of June, 1970, I was awarded the doctorate.

Thirty-six years later I agree that "the real issue is adaptation and revision."

The Ed.D. was icing on the cake after earning an undergraduate degree at a state teachers college and two advanced degrees from George Peabody College for Teachers.

As a retired octogenarian, I'm still involved in independent

research, voluntary teaching and community service.

JOHN A. VANDERFORD,
MA'49, EdS'56
Jacksonville, Ala.

AS A 1979 GEORGE PEABODY College Ed.D. graduate, I must confess that I totally agree that currently the Ed.D. has been compromised to satisfy market, not academic, requirements across our nation. I firmly believe all Ed.D. programs should require completion of a dissertation (similar to my program in 1979) as part of its core curriculum. Not only will this requirement give program graduates more professional credibility, but, more importantly, it will encourage research and publication in the education field, making for better educators and adding to research findings sorely missing today.

I know that completion of my Ed.D. degree was one of the most rewarding aspects of my life, and I will always be thankful to George Peabody College and Vanderbilt for affording me the opportunity to participate in their quality educational program. I still believe it to be the best educational program in our nation. Keep up the great work!

FREDERICK PHILIP, EdS'78, EdD'79
Panama City, Fla.

Letters are always welcome in response to contents of the magazine. We reserve the right to edit for length, style or clarity. Send signed letters to the Editor, *Peabody Reflector*, VU Station B #357703, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37235-7703, or email reflector@vanderbilt.edu.



NEIL BRANE

Peabody graduates cheer on their friends and fellow graduates at Commencement ceremonies on May 11.

Peabody rises two places in U.S. News rankings

Vanderbilt's Peabody College earned high marks in *U.S. News & World Report's* annual rankings of graduate and professional schools, which were released March 30.



Peabody rose to No. 3, and its special education program was once again ranked the best in the nation. Peabody, which was ranked No. 5 in 2006, is now tied with Harvard University's Graduate School of Education at No. 3. Teachers College, Columbia University, was ranked top in the nation, followed by Stanford University.

In addition to the No. 1 special education program, highly regarded Peabody programs include administration/supervision (No. 2), curriculum/instruction (No. 10), educational psychology (No. 9), education policy (No. 5), higher education administration (No. 9) and elementary education (No. 9).

"We are very pleased by our ranking in this latest survey," said Dean Camilla Benbow. "It reflects the high quality of our students and the research productivity of an excellent faculty."

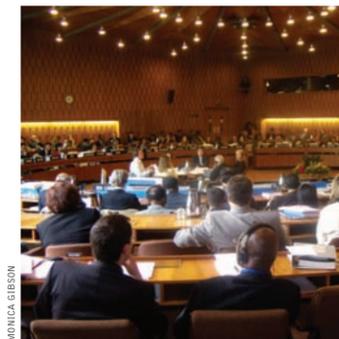
"The rankings also indicate that our longstanding efforts in key areas like special education, education policy, Pre-K-12 and higher education administration continue to produce valuable

contributions to education practice," she said.

Peabody student wins international internship with United Nations organization

Monica Gibson, a graduate student working on her master's degree in public policy at Peabody, was offered an internship at the U.S. mission to UNESCO in Paris. She was one of two American interns serving this spring.

As an intern, Gibson shared in daily operations of the office, attended meetings and prepared briefings for the ambassador. She also focused on a project of special interest and explored compulsory education in developing countries.



MONICA GIBSON

"If people know about other cultures, then they'll learn to appreciate and value the people. Tribal and religious conflicts would dissipate," Gibson said. "It's a message that we need to embrace here in the U.S. as well—that if we learn to celebrate diversity, then we can see the humanity in others."

New Susan Gray endowed chair awarded to Kaiser

Peabody College has created an endowed chair to honor one of its most influential faculty, the late Susan Gray. Ann Kaiser, professor of special education and psychology and deputy director of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center's Research Program on Families, has been named holder of the new chair.

"Dr. Kaiser is a superb scholar in the area of language interventions for children with developmental delays and disabilities," said Dan Reschly, chair of the Department of Special Education at the time of the October announcement. "She is an unusually perceptive scholar

and colleague. She is an outstanding university citizen who will carry the chair title with dignity and class."

The establishment of the new chair was announced October 20 during a lecture and reception in honor of Susan Gray, who died in 1992. The chair was created with funding from an anonymous donor.

During her tenure at Vanderbilt, Kaiser has served as chair of the Department of Special Education and as acting associate dean for graduate studies and research. She is the author of more than 125 articles and chapters on early language and behavior interventions for young children with disabilities and children growing up in poverty. Kaiser has been the principal investigator on research and training grants from the U.S. Department of Education, the National Institute of Mental Health, the U.S. Department of

Health and Human Services and the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development. Her primary area of research is early intervention for children with developmental disabilities and children at risk.

Special education leader named Peabody distinguished alumnus

Melvyn Semmel, Ed.D'63, a researcher and educator who helped shape the nation's understanding of students with disabilities, was named Peabody's 2007 Distinguished Alumnus. Dean Camilla Benbow presented Semmel with the award during Commencement on May 11.

The annual award recognizes significant career and community achievements, as well as a reputation of excellent character and a respected and ethical work record.



DANA JOHNSON

Kaiser



DANIEL DUBOIS

Melvyn Semmel, EdD'63

"Melvyn Semmel's research has profoundly influenced the field of special education," said Dean Benbow. "His work has shaped teaching practices in this discipline and informed and transformed federal policies relating to students with disabilities. We are very proud to count him as an alumnus and are delighted to be presenting him with this well-deserved award."

Semmel started his career as a special education teacher in Harlem and the Southeast Bronx after working with street gangs as a group social worker. After graduating from Peabody with an emphasis in mental retardation from the Department of Psychology and Human Development, Semmel went on to be the founding chair of special education departments at the State University of New York at Buffalo and at the University of California-Santa Barbara.

He has published approximately 150 scholarly articles, mentored dozens of doctoral students and received more than \$19 million in research funding. Among his many career achievement awards, he was the inaugural recipient of the Research Career Award from the Council for Exceptional Children.

Semmel retired as a professor emeritus from the University of California at Santa Barbara in 1994. Since his retirement, he has devoted most of his professional time and energy to international policy consulting, evaluation, research and *pro bono* volunteer work.

Miller named Founder's Medalist

Courtney Cordell Miller from Austin, Texas, received this year's Founder's Medalist for highest honors. Graduating with a bachelor of science in human and organizational development, she received



NEEL BRAKE

Miller

numerous academic honors during her time at Peabody, including the Nora C. Chaffin Scholarship, given to one undergraduate who displays service to the university through student government, religious, literary and scholastic activities. She was a leader within the Gamma Beta Phi honor society, the Mortar Board leadership society, the Athenians Junior Honorary and the Order of Omega, a Greek honor society. Miller also tutored children through Vanderbuddies and developed and ran a family game night for senior citizens at Villa Maria Manor. She plans to attend the University of Virginia School of Law in the fall.



Voices of Peabody Web site now live

The new "Voices of Peabody" Web site is live. This site has audio links and transcriptions of the stories of faculty, students, administrators and others who shared their memories of the merger of Peabody College with Vanderbilt in 1979. To access it, go to: www.library.vanderbilt.edu/peabody/vop

*Have you seen our new Web site?
Check it out at peabody.vanderbilt.edu.*



NEEL BRAKE

Peabody student Gavin Lillevig, a junior majoring in HOD, enjoys the Picnic with the Professors in April.

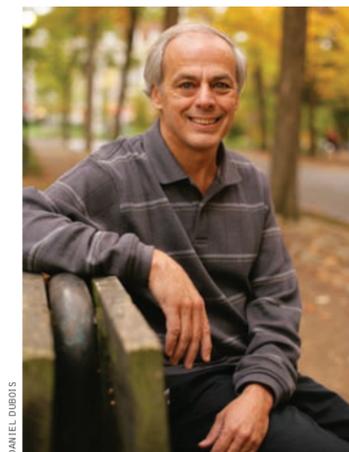
Report identifies 11 strategies to help students become better writers

A report co-authored by Vanderbilt literacy expert Steve Graham, co-holder of the Currey Ingram Professor of Special Education and Literacy chair, identifies 11 strategies for improving writing skills in the nation's adolescents.

"We undertook this research to determine what we could do to change writing achievement and writing instruction in this country," Graham said. "We've identified 11 strategies as being effective at teaching students how to write and improve their achievement."

Data from the National Assessment of Education Progress

indicates that approximately 70 percent of American 4th through 12th graders are writing at or below minimum proficiency standards. The report, "Writing Next:



DANIEL DUBOIS

Graham

Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High School," is designed to address this critical shortfall in student learning and achievement. It was released by the Alliance for Excellent Education and commissioned by Carnegie Corporation of New York. It is a companion publication to the Alliance's 2004 report, "Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy." The report was co-authored by Dolores Perin, associate professor of psychology and education at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Graham and Perin conducted an analysis of existing experimental and quasi-experimental

research on a variety of writing instructional methods and were able to glean from this comparison data information that identified the most effective strategies.

The full report is available at www.all4ed.org/publications/WritingNext/WritingNext.pdf.

Peabody grads filling teaching shortage for visually disabled

Recruiting talented students to pursue their doctorates in education is challenging. Recruiting them to specialize in working with a unique group of students—those with visual disabilities—has proven, over the past 10 years, to be a nearly losing battle nationwide.



Carlsen

Vanderbilt's Peabody College of education and human development has emerged to fill that gap, and graduates of its Program in Visual Disabilities in the Department of Special Education now comprise a large percentage of an elite group of scholars set to become leaders in the field.

"During my daily work I get to help people," Tessa Wright Carlsen, a Vanderbilt doctoral student, said about her career choice. "I teach people who are visually impaired how to get around, such

as spatial and cane skills. You end up adapting anything that you are going to use with the student. You can't buy this curriculum off the shelf."

Carlsen is among a group of 21 doctoral students at universities across the country who are fellows in the new National Center for Leadership in Visual Impairments (NCLVI), which is headquartered at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry. Five of those 21 students earned their master's degrees in Peabody's Program in Visual Disabilities. Carlsen, who earned her master's at the University of Louisville, brings the number of fellows with a Vanderbilt connection to six, nearly a third of the total.

"We believe Tessa and her NCLVI colleagues will have a broad impact on this field," said Anne Corn, professor of special education, ophthalmology and visual sciences. "We are especially proud of the number of former students from the Program in Visual Disabilities who have been selected through a highly competitive process to become NCLVI fellows, and of our program's ability to recruit and graduate teachers with the skills to become leaders in the fields of visual impairment and blindness."

The NCLVI was created in response to the critical shortage of teachers for children with visual disabilities, including blindness and low vision, as well as orientation and mobility specialists who teach independent travel to these students.

NCLVI provides for four years of full tuition and a living stipend for 21 new doctoral students. Vanderbilt is among a consortium of 14 universities that serves as the NCLVI's governing body.

Initiative with Texas Education Agency to evaluate teacher performance incentives

Vanderbilt University and the Texas Education Agency have teamed up to evaluate the largest performance-based incentive initiative for educators in the nation. The National Center on Performance Incentives, based at Peabody, won a competitive bid process to perform the five-year study.

"The signature activity of our evaluation will be analyses of performance-based incentive programs at approximately 1,200 Texas schools and their impact on student achievement; teacher turnover, mobility and quality; teacher behavior; and institutional and organizational dynamics," NCPI Director and Research Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Education Matthew Springer said.

Texas Gov. Rick Perry started the incentive program in 2005 as part of the Governor's Educator Excellence Awards Program (GEEAP). The Texas Legislature expanded the program in 2006. By 2008, GEEAP will award \$330 million to public school educators.

GEEAP is made up of two different incentive programs. The first, the Governor's Educator Excellence Grant, offers \$10 million each year to teachers serving economically disadvantaged children. The second program, the Texas Educator Excellence Grant, offers \$100 million to educators at 1,160 schools. Like the GEEG, schools must serve economically disadvantaged children and meet certain educational performance standards and improvement benchmarks.

"Neither of the incentive award programs is based solely

Learning Sciences Institute Local Connections for National Impact



LSI Associate Director Thomas Palmeri and faculty investigator Isabel Gauthier were instrumental in bringing the Temporal Dynamics of Learning Center to the LSI.

Seventy-six million dollars in grants. Fifty-two research projects. One hundred investigators. Three national research centers.

These are just some of the accomplishments the Learning Sciences Institute has racked up since its launch in 2003. Not bad for three-and-a-half years' work.

"We are defining the learning sciences and selling our definition as the national definition," said Andrew Porter, director of the institute and Patricia and Rodes Hart Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy. "As the only university with three national education research centers—the National Center on School Choice, the National Center on Performance Incentives and the Temporal Dynamics of Learning Center—Vanderbilt and its Peabody College is very visible and in a true position of leadership."

How humans learn is studied by researchers in some way nearly everywhere on the Vanderbilt campus, from how the brain stores and processes information, to how best to teach middle schoolers math, to how to teach robots to "learn" and work for us. However, bringing these diverse researchers together has always been a challenge, one that the LSI was designed to meet.

"Everyone is fascinated with how the brain works. I think a study of the learning sciences with a connection to medical, education, biomedical engineering and computer science is the way of the future for us," said Virginia Shepherd, LSI's co-associate director and a professor of pathology and medicine. "The major function and advantage of the LSI is creating a connection between researchers that they wouldn't have otherwise. My own role in the center is to ensure a

strong connection between the medical center and the university's other schools. We're trying to stimulate as many cross-connections as possible."

"We are always seeking to identify boundary-crossers—people willing to work at the borders of their own work and cross borders into other areas of work," Porter said. "It's not easy, but when it does work, it's spectacular. We created an affiliation category for faculty called LSI Investigators. The investigators hail from five Vanderbilt colleges and 18 departments. The goal is to build a true community of scholarship in the learning sciences."

Looking forward, LSI leaders hope to establish a learning sciences minor for doctoral students, add more senior faculty and become more active in education reform efforts.

"We need to continue to build bridges between basic research in neuroscience and psychology and applied research in education," Porter said. "Thanks to the Vanderbilt administration's foresight in creating the LSI, the university has placed itself at the forefront of this rapidly growing field."

Though he is stepping down as LSI director to become dean of the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education in the fall, Porter said he is confident the LSI will continue to shape the direction and character of learning sciences research.

"The LSI's journey is just beginning," he said. "There is much more work to be done."

To learn more about the LSI and watch a video about its work, visit www.vanderbilt.edu/lsi/videogallery.html.

continued on page 10

on student performance on state tests,” Springer said. “Teaching excellence also takes into account such factors as mentoring of other teachers, teaching in subject areas that face a shortage of teachers, an individual’s level of education and experience, and whether the teachers are working in schools that are considered difficult to staff.”

In accordance with the program’s statutory requirements, NCPI will evaluate the GEEG program over the next three years and the TEEG program over the next five years.

“Our evaluations will focus on who receives the awards, as well as how those awards affect the recipients and the schools,” Springer said. “We are also interested in understanding whether differences exist between schools that receive the grants every year and schools that only receive the grants once or twice.”

Vanderbilt policy center taking pulse of education in Tennessee

The Vanderbilt Peabody Center for Education Policy is undertaking an ongoing initiative to generate, share, debate and discuss the latest information on the state of education in Tennessee.

“In keeping with Vanderbilt University and Peabody College’s longstanding commitment to enhancing education in our home state, we’re leading a variety of projects to sharpen the debate about what our students, teachers, administrators and school communities need to thrive,” James Guthrie, center director and professor of public policy and education, said.

The center’s first initiative of the new year was the release of what will be an annual poll



ISTOCKPHOTO/THOMAS GORDON

to gauge Tennesseans’ attitudes toward education.

“Our poll found that Tennesseans do not see education as the paramount public policy issue,” Guthrie said of the December 2006 poll. “Even so, Tennesseans appear to be concerned about their K-12 education system. They do not give it a high grade and they are not sure it is on the right track.

“They are not eager to spend more money on the system, yet they would like teachers to be better paid. And interestingly, a majority blame parents for the state’s education problems,” he continued. “More than anything, this poll points toward a need to increase discussion and insight into education issues in Tennessee. Our goal is to provide research-based information that all interested parties can use to have that discussion and make decisions that benefit our students and our communities.”

The poll surveyed 601 Tennesseans who reported voting in the 2006 election. The full poll and its results are available at www.vanderbilt.edu/News/TCEP2007Poll.pdf.

Developing our brightest minds

Who will be the next Albert Einstein? The next Stephen Hawking? A new report from Peabody researchers reveals the complex mix of factors that create these intellectual leaders: cognitive abilities, educational opportunities, investigative interests and old-fashioned hard work.

“The talent and commitment necessary to develop as a scientific leader require both personal attributes and learning environments that are truly beyond the norm,” study authors Camilla Benbow, Patricia and Rodes Hart Dean of Education and Human Development, and David Lubinski, professor of psychology, wrote. “Not surprisingly, the personal attributes of future science, mathematics, engineering and technology leaders reveal that it takes much more than exceptional abilities to truly develop exceptional scientific expertise.”

The report is based on 35 years of research from the Study of Mathematically Precocious Youth, a 50-year study that tracks individuals identified as exceptionally

gifted at a young age across their lifespan. Begun at Johns Hopkins University in 1971, the study is now based at Peabody and is led by Benbow and Lubinski. The current report reflects data collected from over 5,000 study participants. It was published online by the journal *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.

“These findings come at a time when our nation is gathering its diverse resources to ensure that we are positioned to compete in a flat, technology-driven world,” Benbow says. “Supporting and cultivating our most intellectu-

ally gifted students is critical to maintaining our economic competitiveness globally. This research will help educators identify those students who have the most potential to become exceptional professionals and leaders in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.”

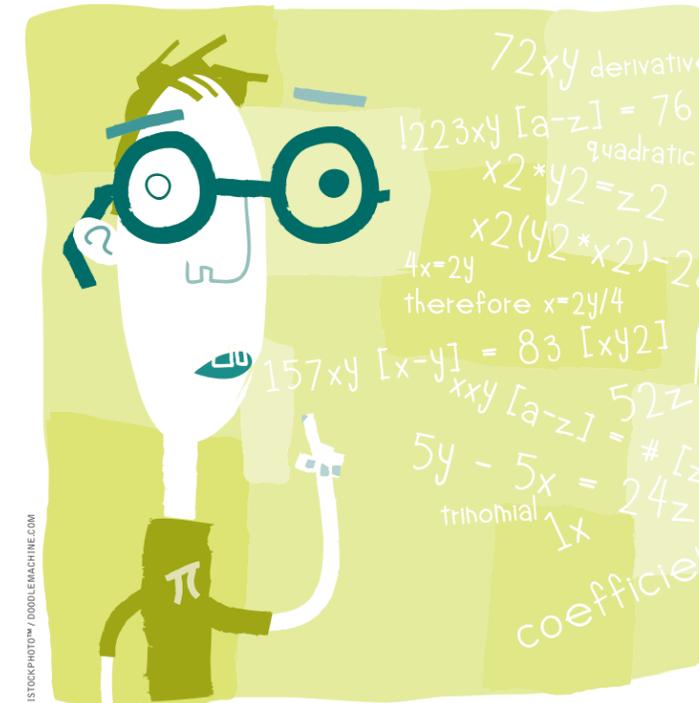
“We found that mathematical gifts and a variety of aptitudes have a significant impact, but that special educational opportunities and commitment can dramatically increase this impact,” Lubinski adds. “These students are intellectually gifted, and those gifts are

most fully realized when they have the full support and understanding of their teachers, their parents and their social network.”

Benbow and Lubinski found that, while this group of students as a whole had exceptional mathematical ability, it was far from homogenous, with a great diversity of talent and interests. These differences have a direct impact on participants’ future career choices and success, some of which were outside of traditional scientific and mathematic fields.

“Exceptional verbal ability is characteristic of participants whose favorite courses, college majors and occupations were in the social sciences and humanities, whereas higher levels of mathematical and spatial abilities characterize participants whose favorite courses, college majors and occupations were in engineering and math or computer science,” the authors wrote. “Given the ever-increasing importance of quantitative and scientific reasoning skills in modern cultures, when mathematically gifted individuals choose to pursue careers outside engineering and the physical sciences, it should be seen as a contribution to society, not a loss of talent.”

The research was supported by funds from the Templeton Foundation, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development and the Strong Research Board.



ISTOCKPHOTO/DOOBLE MACHINE.COM

For more information on many of these stories, please see http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/news_and_events/index.htm.

Is traditional certification the best way to assure teacher quality?

Yes With teacher quality long recognized as the most powerful school-based factor in student learning, there is a profound irony in the argument that structures to assure teacher quality are irrelevant.

The goal of certification is to provide quality assurance—to ensure a level of competence among members of the teaching profession.

Critics of certification typically offer two kinds of arguments. The first is that traditional preparation programs are costly in time and dollars and have failed to provide evidence that they make a difference in teacher effectiveness.

This argument confounds programs with certification criteria. Weak teacher preparation programs certainly do exist, and they should either improve or close. Abolishing performance-based criteria for entry into the field would only remove one of the primary means we have of identifying these weak programs and allow them to continue.

That said, data have begun to emerge that show a connection between teacher preparation and student outcomes. A team of economists and educational researchers for the New York City

Teacher Pathways Project has found that particular design features of teacher preparation do make a difference in student achievement gains, whether in “early entry” programs (alternative programs that place candidates in classrooms before—not in lieu of—coursework) or more typical university-based programs. These elements include opportunities grounded in practice like close study of student work and thinking, and congruence between field placements and eventual teaching jobs.

The second argument is that lacking sure measures

We need teachers with high-level training and we need the confidence that they can meet student learning needs.

of teacher quality, our efforts are best spent on recruiting adults who have a commitment to students and a college degree in a targeted subject area. These critics assert that certification poses a barrier to meeting a looming teacher shortage, especially in subject areas of high need, e.g., math and science.

Quality teaching involves more than commitment and content. Teachers must possess not only solid subject matter knowledge, but also the ability to design learning experiences and organize subject matter in ways that

make the content meaningful to diverse groups of learners. They must recognize that students’ differing academic, behavioral, cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic histories inform student learning. Quality teachers build on diversity to connect students to subject matter. They search for and recognize typical patterns of student thinking and respond with carefully selected instructional tools to assist students in taking the next steps in learning.

These dimensions of good teaching are difficult to assess—but the answer is not to abandon the effort. Standards for licensure must correspond to effective practice.

Currently, research teams around the country (including Peabody) are working to design efficient measures that link teacher understanding and practice with student learning outcomes. Other groups are examining the implications of new assessment approaches for state licensure structures.

If we are to meet the teacher shortage effectively, such efforts are vital. We need teachers with high-level training and we need the confidence that they can meet student learning needs. Certification is more critical than ever.



BY Marcy Singer-Gabella,
RESEARCH ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION

BY Matthew Springer,
RESEARCH ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC
POLICY AND EDUCATION

No The widely-publicized release of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 compelled a sustained period of public interest in elevating achievement in American public schools. As student performance increasingly dominated education policy, state testing programs and outcome-based expectations proliferated. The trend culminated in 2001 with enactment of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The new paradigm of test-based accountability in education largely marginalizes the current system of teacher certification, if not renders it irrelevant.

Over the last decade, researchers have undertaken numerous studies of teacher effectiveness by exploiting massive longitudinal files of student achievement data. These studies began with William Sander’s work in Tennessee and have expanded since to Texas and Florida and to the large school districts of Chicago, New York and San Diego. They show large variation in achievement test-score gains between classrooms and teachers, suggesting that teachers exert substantial and accumulating influence on student achievement. Indeed, one study demonstrated that a string of five above-average teachers can overcome the deficit typically reported

between economically disadvantaged students and their more advantaged peers.

While researchers have found significant variation in teacher effects within school

...whether a teacher is successful at instilling learning is largely unrelated to the type of certificate the teacher holds, their education, or their licensing exam scores.

districts, and even within schools, they also have consistently found that these effects are highly idiosyncratic. That is, whether a teacher is successful at instilling learning is largely unrelated to the type of certificate the teacher holds, their education, or their licensing exam scores. On average, there is not much difference between certified, alternatively certified, and uncertified teachers, despite the presence of wide variation in teacher effectiveness within each of these pathways. Success in the classroom does not depend on the current process by which teachers are certified and the labor market is regulated.

This is not to say teacher certification programs are completely irrelevant. Teacher competency tests can screen out the academically incompetent or unscrupulous practitioner. Student-teaching can

start teachers on the road to learning the science of being a teacher. Criminal background checks can prevent the potentially dangerous from entering the classroom.

And, from the most general of perspectives, certification may protect the public interest by regulating the market if consumers lack expertise to judge quality of service.

Recognizing that existing certification practices are weak predictors of teacher effectiveness, and that teacher quality is the most important influence on a child’s education, the time has come to re-think how federal and state governments regulate the teacher labor market. Policy makers need to move away from regulating the market before a teacher enters the classroom. Instead, they should examine how a teacher performs in the classroom, while acknowledging that schooling is a multidimensional enterprise and should not rely on a single measure of student performance.

We invite readers’ ideas for future “Versus” topics. If you have ideas or wish to submit commentary, please send it to the Editor, Peabody Reflector, VU Station B #357703, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37235-7703, or email reflector@vanderbilt.edu.

No Child

LEFT BEHIND

Who's Accountable?

According to Peabody researchers,
NCLB gets a mixed score

by Lisa A. DuBois

To many federal legislators, No Child Left Behind is like the cavalry sent to rescue the American educational system. To many teachers, the federal mandate is simply another shackle, more paperwork and red tape, as they try to stimulate and expand the minds of the young. But to many involved in educational research, No Child Left Behind is akin to the leg of an elephant. The information they are gathering about that leg is helpful and important, but it is also becoming increasingly clear that the animal resting on the appendage is far more gargantuan and complex than originally imagined. Still, many look forward to embarking on a quest, albeit imperfect and unpredictable, to unravel the mysteries of the beast.



Certainly, experts and non-experts across the nation do not dispute that the American system of education is not where it needs to be. Right now, for example, the United States is tied with Zimbabwe for achievement in 8th grade mathematics. Today, over 80 percent of African American and Latino 8th graders say they plan to attend a two- or four-year college. Yet, once there, many are not prepared for a rigorous post-secondary education. Between 40 and 60 percent of college students need remedial work to catch up, and between 25 and 50 percent of these students drop out after their first year. These data imply that although the existing K-12 system is graduating students, it is not necessarily preparing them for life beyond high school.

The Bush Administration's answer to this conundrum has been to rigidly implement the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. Enacted during the president's first term and up for reauthorization in 2007, NCLB requires that 100 percent of American public school students reach set proficiency standards in reading and math (and as of 2008, in science, as well) by the year 2014. Individual states set their own standards and all students, regardless of family

“NCLB makes a lot of sense if it would work. It's saying to schools, you can't ignore some of your kids just because they're tough to teach.”

—ANDREW PORTER

income, race, ethnicity, or disability must comply. Schools whose students fail to achieve these goals face increasingly onerous penalties and sanctions.

Academicians are studying NCLB's impact on a number of fronts. Andrew Porter, Patricia and Rodes Hart Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy, believes that NCLB, while flawed, is in many ways “a beautiful thing,” because it has beamed a spotlight on the need for equity, opportunity and accountability from all schools. “You can't just forget about your poor kids, or forget about your English language learners, or your special ed kids, or your black or Hispanic kids, or your boys. You've got to do well by everybody.... NCLB is better than anything we've

ever had in the past on that score,” he says. “Think about a kid from a low-income family. NCLB makes a lot of sense if it would work. It's saying to schools, you can't ignore some of your kids just because they're tough to teach.”

Also, Porter adds, deliberations have now effectively shifted from input and process to what teachers are teaching (content) and what students are accomplishing (proficiency), which he considers a healthy change from past educational reform movements. NCLB approaches the problems of the education system from the perspective of the students matriculating through it. Every public school student must take a state-designed reading and math assessment every year in grades 3 to 8, and also during one high school year, usually grade 10. These assessments hold schools accountable for student proficiency by requiring them to reach the stated benchmarks, known as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Students in those schools that fail to meet AYP goals for two consecutive years are given “an escape hatch,” meaning they can choose to attend a different school. Schools that fail three years in a row are given a carrot in the form of supplemental services like funds for tutoring and enhanced teaching materials. After five years of a school's failing to meet targets, the measures become more punitive—that school can be taken over by the state, reconstituted, restructured or shut down.

As with any nationally mandated reform that imposes sanctions for noncompliance, NCLB has generated angst and hand-wringing among those in the trenches—teachers, principals, parents and superintendents—particularly concerning issues of accountability. In fact, accountability debates crop up at every turn: Is it fair to hold schools accountable? Are these standardized tests valid measures of content and proficiency? And are sanctions the best way to address accountability issues?

Is it fair to hold schools accountable?

Porter, for one, favors school accountability, because it addresses the educational framework on a very specific local level. However, he also is pressing for “symmetry in accountability,” meaning that teachers and students should likewise be held responsible

for achieving certain benchmarks. “If you're going to have accountability for schools, then you should also have accountability for students. You don't want schools to be left hanging out to dry for students who don't try,” he says. “When education is successful, students, teachers and administrators roll up their sleeves and work together.” NCLB does not currently address this existing accountability gap.

By the same token, Porter is bothered that NCLB was set into motion with an endpoint that guarantees failure. The goal of having 100 percent of students achieve 100 percent proficiency by 2014 is so unattainable that even countries with the most proficient educational systems in the world would not use that as a target.

“Demanding 100 percent proficiency is the only way we could have gotten started,” counters Stephen Elliott, Peabody professor of special education and the Dunn Family Professor of Educational and Psychological Assessment. Elliott is an international expert on testing accommodations and alternate assessments for children with disabilities. When NCLB was being formed, disability advocacy groups wanted schools to be held accountable for the inclusion of their children, realizing that every disabled child certainly would not be able to meet the national standards. Yet they also didn't want disabled children to be given short shrift or for the bar to be set inappropriately low just so schools could slide into compliance. The resounding consensus, says Elliott, was that these groups had to advocate for 100 percent proficiency, pushing the limits so that disabled students can get the educational tools and services they need. NCLB opens a window for them to design a criterion, set expectations, see if students can reach them, and then readjust them as necessary.

“This is an experiment and we're learning as we go,” Elliott says, acknowledging that some schools have failed to meet AYP goals because their special needs students were unable to pass the assessment tests.

Are standardized tests valid measures of content and proficiency?

Porter believes that the testing industry, which is making a mint from the explosion in demand for



“The Feds have authorized me to leave your child behind.”

MICHAEL SHAW, THE NEW YORKER, 2007/THE CARTOON BANK

more standardized tests from pre-school through graduate school, is actually pretty good at what it does. The validity of the content of these tests is a less critical issue than our nation's tendency to water down curricula and have teachers in charge of courses they were never trained to teach. Teachers, meanwhile, complain that they have to “teach to the test.”

“That's cheating,” claims Elliott. “They should be teaching to the standards the tests are aligned to. Curriculum, testing and standards are all being aligned, which is the backbone of the accountability issue. The finger-wagging should be on the instruction. Our tests today are far better than they were a decade ago because of this legislation.”

Ironically, two of the biggest drivers forcing the refinement of standardized testing are children with disabilities and low-income gifted students. Because special needs children are included in AYP, researchers have been studying which kinds of multiple-choice questions, for example, are best at illuminating a child's mastery of content without being skewed by that child's decision-making and reading challenges. Most standard multiple-choice tests give the taker four or five options; but according to Michael Rodriguez of the University of Minnesota (*Educational Mea-*



Teachers, meanwhile, complain that they have to “teach to the test.”

edge and believed they performed better with the opportunity to have extra time if they needed it.

For low-income, minority and English-language learners, NCLB has yanked the veil off the ever pervasive “achievement gap” in American education. Simply put, affluent children are receiving a better public education than those whose families are struggling. After studying this dilemma for years, Porter and others have found that the achievement gap between preschoolers who come from wealthy families versus those from impoverished families is enormous, as big as it will ever be—before these children ever go to school.

Once they reach school age, the gap does not increase during the school year. Minority and poor youngsters make achievement gains parallel to their more affluent peers. Unfortunately, says Porter, “Minority and poor kids lose more achievement in the summer than do white and more affluent kids. All the spread in the achievement gap happens when they’re not in school in the summer time.”

These two factors—that the achievement gap is greatest among preschoolers and that the gap widens every summer while children are not in school—means that schools are being asked to fix a societal problem that extends beyond the confines of the classroom. Donna Y. Ford, Betts Professor of Education and Human Development in the department of special education, and Gilman W. Whiting, director of Vanderbilt African American Diaspora Studies, have initiated the Vanderbilt Achievement Gap Project to bring about large-scale change by addressing contributing factors on a local level. Ford believes that a major obstacle to closing the achievement gap is that schools that serve large numbers of underprivileged children are not offering them the kinds of rigorous curricula that will enable them to excel. In other words, expectations for disadvantaged populations have been set too low.

Ford says, “If we don’t put more poor kids in gifted programs in K–6, how are we going to get them into AP classes in high school? They’ve had

nine years of not being challenged, so how can they survive? The ability is there and the potential is there, if given the opportunity.”

The data support her argument. Researchers from the private Center for Performance Assessment identified schools in which 90 percent of the students are poor, 90 percent are members of ethnic minority groups, and 90 percent also meet high academic standards. Some of the common characteristics these schools share include a strong focus on academic achievement and frequent assessment of student progress with multiple opportunities for improvement (*Challenge Journal: The Journal of the Annenberg Challenge*, Winter 2001/02).

One approach for more accurately evaluating achievement, again being driven by advocates of students with disabilities, is to offer more formative assessments. Rather than giving students a single “do-or-die” test at the end of the school year to measure their progress, Elliott and others are promoting the idea of delivering shorter, lower stakes assessments, delivered two or three times during the school year. They’re finding that good formative tests are predictive of how proficient students will be by the end of the year.

Elliott explains, “The lowest functioning kids can make progress, even if they may never be proficient.”

“Across the nation, one of the fastest spreading reforms is interim assessment,” Porter says. “The upside to interim assessment is that teachers find out how well students are performing all along. The downside is what do you do when you find out they’re not doing so well? Nobody’s answering that question.”

In 2005, NCLB asked states to compete for the opportunity to replace AYP with improved performance plans, considered by some researchers to be a superior index of proficiency, but, out of all the submissions, only North Carolina and Tennessee had the models and infrastructure to execute such a plan. “One of the most fragile areas of NCLB is the ability of states to manage the data,” Elliott says. “Many statistical experts are going to work in the lower pressure, higher paying testing industry. So we’re leaving people in the states who don’t have the technical skills to manage the information.”

One solution to this conundrum is to completely nationalize NCLB assessments, both in terms of content and proficiency. Porter is an avid proponent of this idea. Right now, each state has invested in its own content standards for math and reading. Unfortunately, a child from, say, Colorado, who moves to a new school in Georgia, may suddenly face an entirely different curriculum in the same school year. Concentrating all the energy that is now being used to develop materials, standards and assessments for 50 different states into the creation of one voluntary national standard, says Porter, “would mean enormous efficiency and would undoubtedly result in tremendous improvements in quality. If you’re sinking all your resources into building one really great test, you can do a great job.”

While national content standards may receive some level of support, Porter is also advocating for

One approach for more accurately evaluating achievement, again being driven by advocates of students with disabilities, is to offer more formative assessments.

voluntary national proficiency standards, considered a less popular option. Right now, there are far-flung variances between states in benchmarks for achievement, and in most cases, a larger percentage of students reach proficiency on the state tests than on a comparable nationwide instrument, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

“In some states, the difference is enormous,” Porter says, “like the difference between 30 percent and 90 percent.”

Are sanctions the best way to address accountability issues?

In its current form, one of NCLB’s most glaring glitches is its inability to impose the kinds of sanctions that result in student achievement. After a school fails for three consecutive years, students are supposed to receive the benefits of tutoring and supplemental services.

surement: *Issues and Practice*, Summer 2005), the best format for truly gauging knowledge is one that presents three multiple-choice options. It turns out that this format is the best determinant of content mastery for non-disabled students, as well.

Elliott and his colleagues have also been examining testing accommodations and their influence on the scores of students with special needs. They discovered some unsettling data. As expected, children with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) tested better when given special accommodations, such as private settings, reading support and extra time. However, children with no perceived special needs also scored higher on standardized tests when given these same accommodations. Surprisingly, the highest functioning children were the only ones who actually used the extra time they’d been given. But all groups of students reported feeling a psychological

“Supplemental services haven’t worked as well as we hoped they would,” Porter says. Some districts aren’t receiving the funding for these services in time to help the students, but more crucially, schools don’t know what services they need until after their students have taken and failed the AYP assessment. So, they are faced with constantly moving targets.

Once a school misses its benchmarks two years in a row, students are allowed to transfer to schools that have not been identified as needing improvement. This has not panned out for a variety of reasons, Porter says. First, the better performing schools don’t want to risk their AYP status by accepting an influx of students who’ve failed to meet the benchmarks. Second, in some cases, every school in the district is failing to reach NCLB guidelines. The sanction becomes irrelevant, because students have no place to go. Finally, poor and non-English speaking parents may find the logistics of transferring their children out of a neighborhood school to be too overwhelming to be worth the ordeal.

Today, the achievement gap between underserved children and children of privilege stands at a full standard deviation, which in raw terms means that vast numbers of kids are undereducated.

According to Ford, the solution will not be a band-aid or a simple promise to move kids to a new school. Instead it will require an intrinsic, primordial transformation across the education network. “If you move a child from an economically disadvantaged background and from a school that isn’t rigorous into a school with a more rigorous curriculum, that child is going to need a lot of support not just to catch up, but to keep up,” she says. “That’s an equity issue. You can’t just put children in a new school to frustrate them and make them fail. You have to believe in them and support them.”

Now that NCLB is entering its first phase of reconstituting low-performing schools, the Bush administration is pushing to have private school vouchers added to the law, a proposal opposed by the

National Education Association and others involved in collective-bargaining agreements.

The next wave will be NCLB’s effect on higher education.

Today, the achievement gap between underserved children and children of privilege stands at a full standard deviation, which in raw terms means that vast numbers of kids are undereducated. Closing that gap by one standard deviation would, for example, bring a child at the 50th percentile up to the 84th percentile, a phenomenal gain. Porter contends that such a jump can happen if America improves the quality of its teaching.

“If we could get every kid to have a good teacher every year and if the effects of having a good teacher had a shelf life and were cumulative, it wouldn’t take much of a change per year to add up to a standard deviation,” he says. “We’ve got 12 years. If students could move up a tenth of a standard deviation every year, we’d get up to 1.2 standard deviations.”

The onus, says Ford, is on the nation’s universities to step up and prepare highly qualified teachers with high expectations who will enter the field and teach our children. To accomplish that, she thinks universities should revamp their courses so that student teachers start their practica earlier in college and spend more of their training out in the field gaining experience in a range of educational settings.

For all its many flaws and pitfalls, Porter, Elliott and Ford agree that NCLB has served the public well by forcing the conversation about education in the U.S. It has sparked new energy and directed attention to equity issues that have long been swept under the rug. NCLB obligates Americans to acknowledge the inadequacies in our school systems.

“That’s the best thing NCLB could have done,” says Ford. “The numbers are so dismal that we couldn’t ignore them any longer. NCLB showed us the numbers. That’s why I appreciate it. I don’t blame NCLB solely for the problems we’re having. It could have been any other piece of education legislation, and we still would have had to face these numbers.”

THE VANDERBILT Achievement Gap PROJECT

BY Ashley Crownover

With decades of theory and research focused on eliminating the academic achievement gap between black and white students, you’d think it would be as much an artifact of the past as legally enforced segregation. But to the contrary, “research shows that the gap is widening,” says LSI investigator Gilman W. Whiting, and increasing diversity among the U.S. population means the gap will continue to grow—unless there is a comprehensive effort to address all its causes, from disparities in health care to institutionalized racism.

Making that effort is something Whiting (director of undergraduate studies, Vanderbilt African American Diaspora Studies) and fellow LSI investigator Donna Y. Ford (Betts Professor of Education and Human Development, Department of Special Education) do every day in their personal and professional lives. Their initiative, the Vanderbilt Achievement Gap Project, aims to expand that effort to the institutional level, enlisting the support and participation of

the Vanderbilt and Nashville communities to create programs that raise awareness and make a direct impact on students.

“We want to bring more visibility to the issue,” Ford says, “particularly on campus and in the surrounding areas. Large-scale change has to first be implemented locally.” Ford and Whiting see the project as an opportunity for Vanderbilt to take leadership on a pressing educational and societal problem.



DANIEL DUBOIS

It’s About More Than Academics

Whiting and Ford

There are many factors that contribute to the achievement gap, Ford explains. “It’s not just what goes on at school,” she says, “it’s what goes on at home. And it’s not just whether you can read or write, it’s how healthy you are and how fit you are.” These “concentric rings of influence” include cultural, familial, school, social, and psychological factors. Efforts to ameliorate the gap must therefore be crossdisciplinary, collaborative, and comprehensive, embracing the perspectives of many fields, from sociology to medicine, and encompassing both research and practice, outreach and social change.

The project’s collaborative approach is essential to its success,



DAVID L. DORR

The Vanderbilt Scholar Identity Institute

Very seldom will you hear of masculinity tied with the achievement gap, says Gilman Whiting, but the Vanderbilt Scholar Identity Institute, held for the first time last summer in collaboration with the organization 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee, does just that. The two-week program for black males in Grades 5–9 focuses on students' self-identity and self-esteem, with particular emphasis on fighting the notion that being successful means "acting white." Alarmingly, recent studies conducted by Whiting and Donna Ford reveal that not only teachers, but students themselves, share the common notion that achievement is acting white, while behaving tuggishly and "ghetto-like" is acting black.

"The goal is to get black males to see themselves as studious, as academicians," says Ford. "If you really like yourself, and ideally love yourself, you are just comfortable in the skin you're in, when somebody says you're acting white or you're a sellout, it doesn't bother you because you know what black means, or you feel that you know what black means, and black means being successful—academically, socially, economically."

and begins with its co-directors. "I bring a perspective from the African American Diaspora Studies side," says Whiting. "Together with Donna, and her notable work in special [gifted] education, right from the beginning we have a collaboration that you don't usually see."

Both researchers feel that studies on the achievement gap run the danger of maintaining the status quo while purporting to address the problem. "People conceptualize things differently," says Whiting, "and we see regurgitation of prior research. So we ask, What is new? Give me a new idea, because obviously this was said 10, 15, 20 years ago, and we've done nothing about it. What is new now?" Ford agrees, adding, "We've found only one study that has looked at teachers' perceptions of why the achievement gap exists. How are you going to close the achievement gap if you don't know what teachers are thinking? What families are thinking? What black students are thinking?" To help fill this "gap on the gap," Ford and Whiting have conducted a number of studies examining students', teachers', and families' perceptions related to the achievement gap, and are currently completing a report on their work with teachers.

A Project With Many Components

Of the Vanderbilt Achievement Gap Project's many planned endeavors, two are already underway: a monthly lecture series highlighting both research and practice, and a summer institute for young black males (see sidebars). Additional upcoming initiatives include an online resource bank/clearinghouse featuring data sources, links, articles and a newsletter; a Diversity Institute for Nashville educators (Summer 2008); and eventually, courses for Vanderbilt students on the achievement gap. Organizations supporting or participating in the work include the Vanderbilt Provost's Office, the Learning Sciences Institute, the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities, the Bishop Joseph Johnson Black Cultural Center, the Center for the Study of Religion and Culture, and the 100 Black Men of Middle Tennessee.

The project's various aspects are united by their common goal of moving beyond research and into action. "Researchers have a lot of information on the achievement gap," says Ford, "and the findings don't trickle down to the real world. I want this [project] to reach the schools and, just as importantly, the community, the families. We've researched and theoreticized all day long, now let's do something with this information."

Making it Work

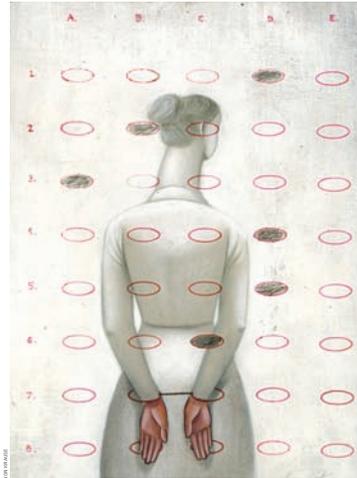
Peabody grads talk about meeting the challenges of NCLB in their schools and classrooms

by Lisa Robbins

"It flips my kids out." Julia Weller Pfitzer, BS'00, says bluntly.

She's referring to what one would have to assume is an unintended consequence of No Child Left Behind: On as many as 30 days out of the year's 180 school days, her fifth graders will find a substitute teacher at the front of their class—at least for part of the day—while Pfitzer attends in-service programs.

"This is the biggest effect NCLB has on me," she says.



JOHN HANCOCK



COURTESY OF DEBORAH ANDERSON DELAINO

“I think NCLB does make you, as a teacher, think twice about the struggling students. I think there are fewer kids falling between the cracks than ever before.”

—DEBORAH ANDERSON DELAINO, BS’81

Pfizer teaches in Washington, Indiana, at Helen Griffith Elementary, which was designated a “choice” school this year. It is Pfizer’s first year as an elementary school teacher; her prior experience includes teaching preschool in an urban Head Start program. Washington is a rural town of 12,000 residents in the southwestern corner of the state. Griffith qualifies for Title I funding, with about 63 percent of its students eligible for free or reduced price lunch. Under NCLB, children in Title I-funded schools have the choice to transfer to a better school in their district if their school fails to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the same subject area for two consecutive years.

“Because we’re a choice school, we have special in-service,” Pfizer says. “I’m not saying the training’s not helpful. I believe in professional development. But if there was money for the summer—or after school, or some other time that doesn’t take away from time with the students—that would be so much better. My principal doesn’t like it any more than the teachers do.”

Indiana conducts its educational assessment tests in the fall. The good news is that Pfizer’s school did achieve AYP in this fall’s testing. However, that will not change her school’s choice designation for this

year or next, which means the special in-service program continues.

An increased emphasis on test-driven, standards-based assessment may be the most obvious effect of NCLB on public education as a whole. But the legislation’s particular effects vary along with the districts, schools, classes and teachers to which it applies.

Deborah Anderson Delaino, BS’81, has taught at Cloverleaf Elementary School for 20 years. It is a county-run school in Cartersville, Georgia, a small but growing city about 40 miles northwest of Atlanta.

“We used to be at the periphery of Cartersville, but the city has grown around us,” Delaino says. “It was very affluent when I started here, with a lot of high-level kids and a small group of struggling kids. We now have a large population of English language learners, and Cloverleaf qualified for Title I funds for the first time three years ago. Our student population has gone from about 450 to more than 730.”

Cloverleaf, unlike Pfizer’s school, has been meeting its AYP goals. Delaino describes recent changes in light of NCLB more as a matter of degree than of kind.

“We’ve always done a lot of test-prep type things,” explains Delaino, who now teaches third grade. “But our tests are changing to be more closely aligned with national standards—that is, they’re adding things. There’s never less! So we’re seeing changes in all our curricula.

“One of the biggest things we’re required to do is a lot more teaching of writing,” Delaino says. “We were just talking about this at school. We didn’t feel that we had a lot of training in that area, and we do think that needs to be addressed to prepare teachers. They want us to incorporate writing more across the curriculum, even in math, and some of us feel a little intimidated by it.”

However, the real problem that emerges as Delaino describes her day is not one of content. It is one of time. There’s not enough of it.

“In math, they want us to do much more with manipulatives,” Delaino says. “Our reading program is three-tiered, and we struggle to get every component into the day. We have to do shared reading, guided reading and differentiated instruction. It’s

tricky timewise. But I still make time for the things I’ve always done. I still read aloud. That’s important.”

On the positive side, Delaino says, “I think NCLB does make you, as a teacher, think twice about the struggling students. I think there are fewer kids falling between the cracks than ever before.”

Kathryn Brandon, MEd’06, who teaches third grade at Nashville’s Eakin Elementary School, also finds that time is a critical issue. The ultimate goal of one hundred percent proficiency among students clashes with the need to cover all the very particular standards included on Tennessee’s assessment tests, called TCAPs.

“I’m not saying standards are not important,” Brandon says. “But the ability to slow down and cover something really well just isn’t there. Today, for example, I was teaching the concept of area. About half got it and half didn’t, but I don’t have another day, because there’s more to cover before TCAPs come in April.” Tennessee’s third-grade math standards include calculating the areas of squares and rectangles.

As a new teacher, Brandon cannot compare her experience to that of the pre-NCLB world, as Delaino can. But she says that at Eakin, known as a well-performing school in its district, the teachers seem committed to transcending a test-driven educational culture.

“I think that the love of learning and discovery can suffer in that kind of environment,” Brandon says. “That’s the challenge.”

Assessment scheduling, too, can make a big difference in how NCLB affects a school. At Eakin, test prep takes center stage in the spring, which gives teachers and students more time to prepare, but also means that the tests loom for a longer time. In Indiana, which tests in the fall, Pfizer experiences a very different school-year rhythm.

“We had about six weeks to prepare. It was pretty stressful for everyone,” Pfizer says. “Now that the testing is over until next year, I feel that what I do in my classroom is make sure that the children are good learners, which I don’t necessarily think is the same as being good test-takers. I go back to using a lot of group work, technology in the classroom and

differentiated instruction. My school is supportive of that. We get to loosen up a little bit, and we get the test results back that year, for use in the spring.”

According to Peabody’s Marcy Singer-Gabella, assistant research professor of education, Peabody prepares its graduates for the increasingly standards-based, assessment-driven work environment they face by continuing to emphasize student understanding.

“My impression is that teachers are feeling more pressed than ever to be very strategic and limited,” Singer-Gabella says. “They don’t feel free to do extended inquiry-based units. They have very strong pressure to cover very particular content and skills. They feel a safer route is to divide curriculum up into much smaller chunks and to say, ‘Okay, on this particular day, we’re doing this particular work to meet this standard.’

“But at Peabody, though we teach our students about the policy context and climate into which they are going, we definitely do not teach them to teach

Standardized tests are about accountability, but there is also professional accountability to student learning.

to the test. Teaching needs to start with a look at students’ thinking and learning. Teachers need to figure out what their students make of what they are being taught. To do that, teachers need a more complex notion of assessment than just testing.”

Singer-Gabella, like other faculty at Peabody, says that NCLB is posing challenges to all education schools. When it comes to the testing issue specifically, however, one thing is clear.

“Standardized tests are about accountability, but there is also professional accountability to student learning,” Singer-Gabella says. “Tests provide data on students at one point in time and are a way of parsing content, but they are a low level of what we want our teachers to achieve.”

A Transcultural Point of View

Profile: Katherine Taylor Haynes, PhD'06

BY Kurt Brobeck



For Katherine Taylor Haynes, an interest in the educational experiences and achievements of immigrant Latino students comes easily. The daughter of a former Foreign Service officer who spent much of his career in Latin American countries, in her youth she often found herself presented with opportunities to understand new cultures. As an undergraduate student at Hamilton College, Spanish literature and Latin American studies were natural choices for her major and minor. At Harvard Graduate School of Education, she pursued a master's degree in international education policy. Both her past experiences and her education lent themselves to work at the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank.

Last May, she received her Ph.D. in leadership and policy studies from Vanderbilt. And while most would consider that a major milestone, Taylor Haynes places the achievement in a somewhat broader context. "I began working on my dissertation just as my son, Alexander, was born. And I completed it just as my second baby, Christopher, was born," she says. She is still not entirely sure which was harder: giving birth to a child or giving birth to a dissertation.

For the latter, Taylor Haynes conducted an extensive series of semi-structured interviews with first- and second-generation Latino immigrants to explore their involvement with their children's

schooling. Most of her interviewees were from Mexico. Although Latinos comprise the fastest growing segment of the population, relatively little research exists about their experiences or the roles they play in education. Moreover, existing studies have tended to be conducted in the large cities that serve as the principal gateways for Latino immigrants: Los Angeles, Miami, and Chicago among them. "Or they've been conducted in places like the Southwest, where the Latino population dates back for generations," Taylor Haynes says.

Increasingly, however, immigration is having an impact on smaller cities and rural areas, says Taylor Haynes, who points out that Nashville experienced an almost five-fold growth in its Latino population from 1980 to 2000. Tennessee as a state has the 6th fastest growing Latino population in the country. "Latinos are increasingly present in Nashville and in smaller rural towns, and this is challenging organizations. The resources for immigrants in rural areas are very different from those available to Latinos in a large city."

Developing a better understanding of the expectations parents and students bring to the educational process is important, given recent estimates that nearly half of Latino students drop out. Teachers, superintendents, school boards, local legislators and policy-makers are struggling to understand the implications of the latest wave of immigration and to

develop strategies to help Latino students succeed.

Working with her major adviser, Claire Smrekar, associate professor of public policy and education, Taylor Haynes developed a qualitative methodology to examine how Latino parents' generational status and educational attainments influence the resources they employ in their involvement with their children's schooling. The results of her study are compiled in her dissertation: "Negotiating Constraints and Opportunities for Capital Transformation: Stories of Latino Parents' Involvement in Their Children's Education."

To identify subjects for her study, Taylor Haynes turned to churches and community centers—organizations that are on the front lines of meeting the immigration challenge. "These places are doing an admirable job," says Taylor Haynes. "The resources they offer, such as English language classes, really make a difference. The churches Latinos choose shape who they meet as well as their access to social and information networks." In addition to generational status, parents were selected based on educational attainment level. The average educational attainment level was equivalent to the 6th grade. A number of these immigrant families arrived in the country illegally.

Smrekar says, "Katherine's dissertation provides the rich texture, depth and deep description that is often missing in the statistical

briefs on illegal immigration. She blends a scholarly perspective on work structures, social networks and school organization with insightful analysis of immigrants' experiences."

Specifically, Taylor Haynes identified three types of capital that interact and come to bear on parental involvement: cultural capital (linguistic competency and the ability to interact across cultures), social capital (primarily

Although Latinos comprise the fastest growing segment of the population, relatively little research exists about their experiences or the roles they play in education.

social, civic, religious and informational networks), and decision-making capital (the roles parents construct for themselves, their sense of personal efficacy, and their perception of opportunities for involvement). Taylor Haynes's concept of decision-making capital is developed from a model devised and elucidated by Peabody professors Kathleen Hoover-Dempsey and Howard Sandler in their own studies of parental involvement.

What Taylor Haynes observed is that decision-making capital is largely created through the acquisition of cultural and social capital, with the latter becoming more important as Latino families establish longer tenures in the U.S. For example, first-generation immigrants with low educational

attainment were generally monolingual and therefore had limited social networks, principally in the form of family. The stories they told were of hardship and sacrifice.

These parents also had very limited involvement with their children's schooling. Taylor Haynes applied the work of Reed, Jones, Walker & Hoover-Dempsey (2000) on parent role construction. Their model describes three typical roles: school-focused, parent-focused or partnership-focused. First generation immigrants with less education tended to play school-focused roles, deferring to teachers and schools in the matter of their children's education. Based on their own cultural backgrounds, they would consider it disrespectful to question a teacher's knowledge, classroom skills, or the way their children's schools are administered. Their very limited English ability constrains their involvement with their children's education.

First-generation immigrants with greater educational attainment and stronger language skills, and second-generation immigrants, especially, are more likely to take on parent-focused or partnership-focused roles. Those who construct parent-focused roles find it important to support, encourage and be involved with their children's education, though they still cede ultimate authority to teachers and schools. Partnership-focused parents are more likely to see themselves as full collaborators in their children's schooling and to view their participation as invited by the schools themselves. Not only do these parents have cultural capital in terms of language skills and the ability to interact across cultures, their networks are more likely to include non-Latinos, and they are

more likely to use these networks to further their interests.

In part because they empathize with the situation faced by their parents, the second-generation parents were also more likely to assist immigrants who are recently arrived. In fact, Taylor Haynes was surprised by the extent of their volunteer service within the Latino community. "Nine out of 10 did things like *pro bono* legal work, taught English classes, offered health counseling or supported victims of domestic violence—depending on their areas and levels of expertise," she says.

Asked if anything else surprised her about the results of her interviews, Taylor Haynes describes findings that dispel received wisdom—dating back generations—about immigrant ambitions. "Until recently, we have thought of America as a melting pot, with immigrants striving to be fully assimilated into the prevailing culture," she says. "What I found is that even the first generation views their native Spanish language as an asset they want to pass on to their children. And the second generation does not want to be compelled to assimilate. Becoming a monolingual English speaker is not the goal. Instead, they want to create a model of being more, becoming bilingual and perhaps even trilingual. They often retain ties to their country of origin, while also aspiring for their children to have more economic opportunities and achieve greater educational attainment."

Taylor Haynes believes that schools should involve more of these bilingual parents as translators, interpreters and cultural liaisons to the Latino community, especially to new arrivals whose communication with their

children's school is affected by language barriers. She would also like to see schools offer more after-school care programs to provide homework assistance to children struggling to learn English and to enable their parents to take ESL and continuing education classes. At the classroom level, she suggests parent-pairing programs, which would match newly arrived immigrant parents with those who are more established. "These kinds of programs, along with school-sponsored social events, could foster stronger networks and ease the hardship some of these families face," says Taylor Haynes.

Following graduation, Taylor Haynes was named a fellow of Vanderbilt's Center for the Americas, where she has joined the Transnational Literacies Workgroup headed by Robert Jiménez, professor of language, literacy and culture. She is also a research associate with Peabody's Center for Evaluation and Program Improvement.

To judge from the impression accorded her early research, Taylor Haynes will be a welcome asset. As Smrekar puts it: "Katherine is one of the most insightful, dedicated young scholars with whom I've had the privilege of working. She is well on her way to developing a record of impressive scholarship that contributes to improved public policy and public understanding."

To learn more about the Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler model, visit: www.vanderbilt.edu/Peabody/family-school.

Information about the Center for the Americas is at: www.vanderbilt.edu/americas/English.

PEABODY COLLEGE SUPPORTERS

July 1, 2005–June 30, 2006



Dear Friends,

I have been very fortunate in my life, not only to have had wonderful mentors, a supportive family, and children to be proud of, but to have been introduced to Peabody College so many years ago. Like you, I have been witness to many of Peabody's successes and, this spring, when I heard about *U.S. News & World Report* magazine's ranking us alongside Harvard University as No. 3 in graduate education in the country, I felt proud—very proud, in fact.

The opportunities I have had in life have made it possible for me to place Peabody College at the top of my philanthropic focus. Peabody students and faculty continue to impress me. The College's small program size allows for frequent faculty interaction and strong student involvement. Together, they make things happen, developing new ideas for learning, not only within our community but around the nation. The opportunity for our students to engage in study beyond Nashville remains an important part of Peabody and Vanderbilt's educational experience.

I am delighted to be a supporter of Peabody, as I'm sure you are.

Thanks to your continued support, Peabody continues to flourish. Groundbreaking advances in the study of education and human development are commonplace here. Our research remains cutting edge, and our funding grows every year.

I would particularly like to acknowledge those members of the Peabody Roundtable donor society we recognize on the following pages. As a charter member of the Roundtable, it has been especially heartening for me to watch our membership increase over the years. The Roundtable is the foundation of philanthropy for Peabody. During the past year, its members' vital support allowed the College to take advantage of unique opportunities and to quickly address important needs.

Restricted giving was directed toward faculty support, scholarships, facility upgrades and other special programs.

As of June 2007, Peabody's *Shape the Future* campaign reached \$50.7 million! This achievement represents tremendous generosity on the part of thousands of Peabody supporters—and I have no doubt we can stretch further, with scholarship support and endowed chairs remaining our top priorities. As your campaign chair, I can only say that I am overwhelmed by your commitment, involvement and dedication to Peabody.

On behalf of Peabody's outstanding, deserving students and dedicated faculty, thank you.

In appreciation,

H. Rodes Hart, BA'54
Chair, Peabody Campaign
Shape the Future Campaign

VANDERBILT
THE FUND

This report reflects gifts made to Peabody College between July 1, 2005, and June 30, 2006. Where known, alumnae of Peabody College and Vanderbilt University are listed by their full names.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this report. If an error has been made, we offer our sincerest apology and ask that you bring it to our attention by contacting the Peabody College Development and Alumni Relations Office at 615/322-8500.

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Rodes Hart (BA'54) visits with Bill Hagerty (BA'81, JD'84) and Ruth Hagerty (MA'61, EdD'84) at the 2006 Roundtable Dinner. Ruth was one of the evening's educator honorees.

THE ROUNDTABLE DINNER
SAVE THE DATE • NOVEMBER 2, 2007

On Friday, Nov. 2, 2007, The Roundtable will celebrate its 25th anniversary at a gala event at Loews Vanderbilt Hotel. Roundtable members who make annual gifts of \$1,000 or more to Peabody College will be invited to join us on this very special evening. Members who give \$2,500 or more will have the opportunity to honor an outstanding educator. Betsy Wills (BA'89, MEd'02) is chairing this year's event.

Patti Hart Smallwood chaired the spectacular 2006 Roundtable Dinner last September. Roundtable members and college leaders joined Dean Camilla Benbow and Peabody's *Shape the Future* Campaign Chair Rodes Hart for an evening celebrating the ongoing success of Peabody College. The generosity of Peabody alumni, parents and friends, along with the legacy of inspiring educators, were honored.

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IDA LONG ROGERS WAS AN IMPORTANT PART OF PEABODY'S PAST.

NOW YOU CAN MAKE SURE HER NAME LIVES ON IN THE FUTURE.



Of all the outstanding educators who have walked the halls of Peabody, few had greater influence than Ida Long Rogers.

Ida's relationship with Peabody began in 1950, when she began working toward her master's degree in education, and continued for nearly 55 years. Through her work as an administrator, faculty member, and as an expert on higher education, Ida touched the lives of hundreds of students. She traveled the world to help shape higher education, but her greatest influence was always felt right here at Peabody—and she remained an active part of the Peabody community until her death in 2004.

As a tangible memorial to this unforgettable leader, several alumni have launched an effort to create the Ida Long Rogers Endowed Graduate Scholarship at Peabody College. This scholarship will ensure that her passion for higher education will live on through the students it benefits.

To date, just more than \$40,000 has been raised toward the goal of \$100,000. There are many ways you can give, including online. To learn how you can add to this scholarship, please visit our giving Web site at peabody.vanderbilt.edu/gift.xml, or call the Peabody Development Office at 615/322-8500.

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Dedicated to the support of Vanderbilt University's Peabody College, The Roundtable was established in 1982 by alumni, parents and friends who recognized the exceptional role of Peabody as a private institution with a public mission. Through their gifts of \$1,000 or more annually, Roundtable members continue to advance Peabody's essential work in teacher education, school reform, social policy and human development and help assure Peabody's place in the top tier of American institutions in these fields. To join, visit our giving Web site at peabody.vanderbilt.edu/gift.xml.

The Roundtable levels are:

Cornelius Vanderbilt Founders Level	\$25,000 and above
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*Alumni who graduated from Peabody within the past 10 years.

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**PEABODY'S SHAPE THE FUTURE
CAMPAIGN GOING STRONG**

As of June 1, 2007, gifts counted toward Peabody's *Shape the Future* campaign totaled \$50.7 million—and we are stretching further.

A key element in Peabody's success is our student body. We continue to seek and attract the nation's very best students. However, the cost of attending Peabody is more than what most of our families or graduate students can afford and, therefore, sufficient scholarship and loan funds are necessary.

Recently, an anonymous, unrestricted gift of \$1 million from a Peabody alumnus was allocated toward the College's most important need: scholarships. This new endowment will provide an opportunity for students who would be unable to experience a Peabody education without this kind of thoughtful philanthropy.

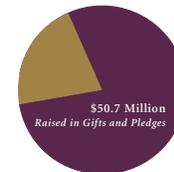
In November, alumna Cherrie Farnette (BS'67, MA'68) honored her late parents, Imogene and Henry Forte, by memorializing them in the Peabody Library. Her gift will name the Youth Collection Room and support the K-12

collection and the Peabody teacher education program. The Fortes, who were good friends of and longtime donors to Peabody College, devoted their lives to improving education.

Gifts to existing scholarship funds continue to be an excellent giving opportunity. Memorials to the Jeanne and Alfred W. Lasher Jr. Scholarship Fund, honoring the late Mrs. Jeanne Lasher, will provide additional funding for deserving students. The Lasher family's commitment to Peabody and its mission is deeply appreciated.

In February, longtime friends of Peabody College Rodes (BA'54) and Patricia (BA'57) Hart gave \$2 million to create a new faculty chair at Peabody. This will be the fourth chair they have endowed at the College. The Harts' continued support and generosity brings greater visibility to Peabody's intellectual contributions to the fields of education and human development, and allows the College to attract the very best faculty in their fields.

PEABODY'S SHAPE THE FUTURE CAMPAIGN



CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

- STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS
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- UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

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Please Note: Class Notes appear only in the printed version of this publication.



Save the Dates
 October 12-13, 2007

If it's October, it's Reunion/Homecoming time at Peabody. The weekend kicks off with our annual Pioneer luncheon on Friday, Oct. 12 for Peabody alumni who graduated 50 plus years ago. But that's just the beginning of an entire weekend of fun and friends.

Reunion years include all those that end with a 2 or 7.

To find out more, go to <http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/x3500.xml> or call 615/322-8500.

We'll see you in October.

PEOPLE



Above: Anne hard at work in New Orleans. Right: Anne in front row, fourth from left.

Joyce "Anne" Dodson Trower, BS'52, MA'56 *Always Time to Help*

Anne Trower seems to be a perpetual motion machine when it comes to helping other people. She and fellow church members of the Ladue Chapel Presbyterian Church in St. Louis spent a week in March helping Hurricane Katrina victims in Houma, La. It was her second trip to Houma to rebuild houses virtually destroyed by the devastating hurricane.



Trower, a native of the small town of Mill Springs in western Kentucky, chose to attend Peabody because of the influence of an aunt who was an alumna.

"Peabody had the program (elementary and junior high education) in which I was interested," she says. "I went down there and just loved it. I felt very comfortable. I made friends and my instructors were so kind and good. Everything about my years there was wonderful."

After earning her bachelor's degree, Trower taught at a grammar school not far from the campus while attending graduate classes at Peabody. She then spent a year teaching Army and Air Force children in a small town near Frankfurt, Germany. After returning to the states, she finished her master's degree in education at Peabody and taught for many years in University City, a St. Louis suburb, where she also met her late husband, Willard Trower.

While a graduate student at Peabody, the college provided a scholarship for her to spend a summer at Harvard taking two education courses. Trower is now giving back to Peabody by establishing a \$160,000 charitable gift annuity toward graduate scholarships and has also left Peabody in her will.

"I wanted to do something for the school that had been good to me, and I also wanted to do something for somebody who wants to go to school, but doesn't have the funds," she says. "I thought this might be a good way to use money in a productive way. I also get some income. It's a good investment."

—Lew Harris

The house Trower and members of the team worked on this year required a new roof, new ceilings in all the rooms, new tile and a new tub in the bathroom. They also did a lot of scraping and painting on the outside and pruned shrubs that had overgrown. Both times they were in Houma for a full week. Trower says she got great satisfaction out of the project.

"I think I got more out of it than the people we helped," she says. "You just feel like you are supposed to help your neighbor. You are supposed to love your neighbor as yourself. My parents taught me early what is right."

—ANNE TROWER

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25TH ANNIVERSARY HOD Reunion Reception

Friday, October 12
Mayborn Building, Peabody Campus

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We don't want to lose touch with you!

Susanne Frensley, MEd'94 and Christian Sawyer, MEd'02 *Dynamic Duo*

Hillsboro High School teachers Susanne Frensley and Christian Sawyer both realized they had a knack for teaching as a result of their experiences as volunteer tutors.

Over the course of four years, I had three students I worked with and to whom I felt very connected."

Sawyer's first experience tutoring was to help a friend who had failed most of his high school

Both Frensley and Sawyer have been honored far beyond the norm for their teaching excellence.

Frensley was honored as the Tennessee Teacher of the Year for 2007 and is only the fourth Metro Nashville Schools teacher named in the 46-year history of the award. She and other state winners were honored by President Bush in an April White House Rose Garden ceremony.

She teaches Advanced Placement (AP) Art History, Art Survey and World Geography. For the last 10 years, about 90 percent of her students have passed the AP Art History exam. She works extremely hard to recruit non-traditional AP students. "We have a 40 percent Caucasian, 40 percent African American and 20 percent mixed population at Hillsboro," she says. "I think it's really important that our AP classes come as close as possible to reflecting those percentages."

Sawyer was named by the National Council for the Social Studies as one of two national winners of the 2006 Outstanding Secondary Social Studies Teacher of the Year award. He was also named as the 2006 Tennessee Outstanding Secondary Social Studies Teacher of the Year. Sawyer teaches AP European history, AP Human Geography, and English.

Sawyer's enthusiasm is evident in his eyes, students say. "They tell me I have crazy eyes," Sawyer says with a laugh. "They say, 'When we get the answer right, your eyes go crazy.'"

—*Low Harris*



Both Frensley and Sawyer have been honored far beyond the norm for their teaching excellence.

Frensley grew up in the affluent town of Bronxville, just north of New York City. A local parent had a connection with a church in East Harlem. "Twice a week, she would take a station wagon full of students into East Harlem to a church that had formed a partnership with a middle school in the neighborhood," Frensley recalls. "We were a resource for students to get their homework done and ask questions.

classes and wanted to join the Air Force. A big sticking point was that he first had to pass the Air Force entrance exam.

"He didn't go to my school but I worked with him nearly every weekend for several months," Sawyer recalls. "When he passed the Air Force entrance exam, I thought, 'Wow! That's something that really made a difference.'"

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Cutting Edge Beauty

PHOTO BY Neil Brake

Spring at Peabody never changes in its beauty. This shot of the dogwoods in bloom near West Hall looking toward the Wyatt Center—or Social-Religious Building as pre-1990 alums of Peabody know it—could have been taken 50 years or more ago. However, the work going on in the building definitely looks toward the future. To read more about Peabody’s cutting edge work, see the article on the Learning Sciences Institute, housed in the Wyatt Center, p 11.



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Joyce "Anne" Dodson Trower, BS'52, MA'56, is always on the go. But she recently slowed down long enough to create a Charitable Gift Annuity. Read more about Anne on page 38.