Message from Dean Kenneth Teitelbaum

Welcome back! I hope you had a most pleasant and relaxing winter break and are ready for the new year, with all its stimulating challenges, frustrating difficulties, and joyful accomplishments.

2009. It’s difficult to get used to such a number. What’s significant about it? Offhand, I can’t think of one reference for that number in books, films, etc. I was going to make some sly comment about 2009 being a prime number, so that the math aficionados among us could be impressed, but in fact it’s not. I guess if I can rely on Wikipedia, maybe it’s significant because this year has been designated as the International Year of Astronomy, International Year of Natural Fibres, and International year of Reconciliation. So if you’re a star-gazer who enjoys renewable fibers and practices conflict resolution on a regular basis, perhaps it’s your year!

At any rate, I do hope that the new year will be a good one for all of you personally and for our College more collectively. We have a lot to look forward to. During the spring alone, barring severe financial difficulties (the prospects of which are unknown as I write this), we will be hiring up to nine new faculty colleagues and three new department chairs. (Every academic unit will be very busy with at least one search during the next several weeks.) We will also be sponsoring three noontime brown bag seminars, with the next one offered on Tuesday, February 3 by Assistant Professor Phil Anton of the Department of Kinesiology on “Research and Rehabilitation: Using Exercise to Help Cancer Patients.” In addition, we will be putting the final touches on our first annual magazine (to be distributed in the fall); hosting our second annual Ice Cream Social (sometime in late April or early May) and our second annual PhD Graduates Dinner (on Wednesday, May 6); and having our Spring College-Wide Meeting on Friday, May 1, from 3:30-5:00. And, of course, so much more will be taking place as well.

I hope it’s a wonderful year for you. As always, let me know if I can be of any help.

No-Agenda Lunches with the Dean

One of the aspects of being Dean that sometimes troubles me is the amount of time I spend working in my office or at formal meetings. I miss having more direct and regular (informal) contact with faculty and staff from across the College. So this semester I am introducing No-Agenda Lunches with the Dean on a first come-first served basis. That is, I am scheduling four times during the semester to get together for a one-hour pizza lunch (my treat) with 3-8 people. I will come in with no agenda; no announcements or topics to discuss. Instead, it will be an informal opportunity for us to talk about whatever you want to find out more about, let me know more about, or just to shoot the breeze with several College colleagues and me and see what comes up. Here are the dates (noon to
1:00, Wham 109 conference room):

- Monday, January 26
- Tuesday, February 24
- Wednesday, March 18
- Thursday, April 23

If you’re interested in joining me for one of these lunches, please sign up as soon as you can. To do so, contact Carol Reynolds (3-7313; crenolds@siu.edu) to reserve a space. If we have to cancel for some reason, I’ll try to let you know at least by the day before. (And of course if this doesn’t work out for you, but you’d like to talk with me, please consider making an appointment to see me.)

Mailings to Superintendents

Last August I began a twice-a-semester mailing to regional superintendents, about 160 in number, to share the scholarship of our faculty and staff with local school administrators, teachers, and others. My first mailing in late August included a terrific manual produced by Jessica Campagna, Krystal Cooper, Jill Greising, Jenny Martin, Kirsten Schaper, and Rebecca Trammel of our Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders, which provides guidance for teachers on planning small group activities to teach basic skills to young children diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder or other developmental disability. My second mailing in late October included four research articles, with summary of findings and recommendations added for each one, from the KidsHealth KidsPoll project that Health Education faculty members Steve Brown and Dave Birch were engaged in. This project comprised a series of 10 surveys of students ages 9-13 regarding their perspectives regarding health-related issues; the four articles that I sent related specifically to bullying, sleep, worries, and self-harm. If you have something that you think would be helpful to this effort – pertaining to young children, younger or older adolescents, teachers and other educators, or parents and other family members – please work with your chair/director to bring it to my attention. I can also include important announcements; for example, for the last mailing I included information about the Saluki Opportunity Scholarships for which full-time educators are eligible. My next mailing will be at the end of this month; the final one of the year will probably be in late March.

Second Annual Trip to New Orleans

Educ8kdz is a student organization of our Early Childhood Education Program in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. As prospective early childhood educators, they embrace eight commitments in particular: advocacy, diversity, the whole child, the family, the global community, leadership, guidance, and professional development. As part of their work, they traveled during spring break last year to New Orleans to help out at a school in the Recovery School District and two child care centers near the Lower Ninth Ward, in the continued aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. As they put it, “Our participation in the rebuilding of a community that has to deal with this catastrophic event will help us to learn how to handle difficult things that happen in our lives.
A team of nine students from the organization and three faculty members are preparing to return to New Orleans, leaving Carbondale on March 7 and returning on March 14. They will re-visit the school and child care centers, helping to paint, building a playground, hosting family literacy and math workshops, assessing K-2 students, and reading to children. This is an expensive venture for them, however, and they are looking for sponsors. They have thus far raised about one-third of the funds that they will need. Here are some options (with all donations being tax deductible):

- Sponsor-a-Student for a day: $25
- Sponsor-a-Student for a week: $175
- Sponsor-a-Van (seven passengers): $385
- Sponsor Fuel: $240

For information on how to give, and more about the trip, please contact the educ8kdz faculty advisor (Dr. Christie McIntyre, cherimc@siu.edu) or organization fundraising chair (Sharun Holman, sholman@siu.edu).

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**Need for Community Volunteers**

The communities of southern Illinois have significant needs and sometimes individuals make these needs directly known to me. Here are two ways that members of our COEHS community can help, right here in our own neighborhoods:

Margaret Nesbitt and Ella Lacey are two prominent African-American residents of Carbondale (and, in the case of Ella, a former SIUC faculty member and distinguished alumna of our College) who spend a great deal of their time helping children at the Eurma C. Hayes Center (441 East Willow Street). Margaret is Chairman of the Center and Ella is on the Board of Directors. On January 7 they came to see me about their need for volunteers for their *“I Can Read” (After-School) Program*, which provides early intervention for children in grades K-5 who are at risk of academic failure. About 30+ children participate in the program on a regular basis (Monday to Thursday, 3:00-5:00), from Thomas, Parrish and Lewis elementary schools. The problem they face is that many of the students on our campus who volunteer to help out are not able to commit to a regular schedule and so too often there are not enough volunteers to work with the children on their reading skills.

What can we do? First, individuals can contact Margaret to volunteer on a regular basis for the “I
Can Read” Program. As indicated in the program materials, “We believe that through one-on-one and small-group assistance, reading needs can be assessed and proactive measures taken to elevate individual reading skills. . . . The benefits of this program have been overwhelming!” If you’d like to help out, call Margaret at 618-457-4995 or 618-559-5004. In addition, Lynn Smith (CI) and Nancy Mundsenk (EPSE) were at the meeting with me and we talked about the possibility of the field placements for some of our classes being linked to the “I Can Read” program at the Center. They had some great ideas and we will follow up at a second meeting on February 11.

In addition, on January 6 I received a phone call from Doris Vogt, who is the Director of the Reaching For Kids and Youth of Massac County, Inc. Program. This is a non-profit organization, established in 2000, that offers after-school programs in Massac County, funded by the Illinois Department of Human Resources Teen REACH grant and several other smaller grants. Their programs are in operation at least 180 days, 3 hours per day, serving students in grades 4-8 at three sites (Brookport Elementary, Metropolis Elementary, and Massac Junior High). Their after-school teachers work with students to improve learning skills and provide academic and homework assistance. In addition, the program provides recreational, sports, crafts and cultural activities for the students (as well as nutritional meals) and helps to organize community service projects (e.g., to the local nursing homes and the Marion VA Nursing Home). As stated in their materials, “Our agency is prevention oriented and we do programs to assist students to develop with an appreciation of education and knowledge to pursue their careers later in life.” Among the agencies that bring programming to the after-school program are University of Illinois Extension, Southern Seven Health Department, Massac Memorial Hospital, Anna Fellowship House, National Guard, Massac County Mental Health, Shawnee Community College, and Southern Illinois University.

This organization is looking for volunteers (SIUC faculty, staff and students) to help with their after-school programming. It can take the form of an ongoing project (as part of a class or student organization) or a visit from one person to share information about a specific topic or skill. (Someone from the SIUC College of Science recently visited to talk about earthquakes.) If you’re interested in helping out, please contact Doris at 618-524-4370 (or reachingforkids@jmwcorp.com) – and please let me know if you do follow up. Thanks.

New Visitor Parking Spaces

The College has been able to obtain three visitor parking spaces for our exclusive use. The spaces are across from the Wham Building, on the side next to the soccer field. Carol Reynolds in the Dean’s Office is in charge of their allocation. If you need a parking space for someone (for an hour? or a day?), be sure to request one from her as soon as you can. It’s on a first come-first served basis.

Did you know that...

- Frackson Mumba (CI) and Morgan Chitiyo (EPSE) have published a paper in a European journal on how general education high school science
teachers decide on what science content to teach, how to teach it, and how to assess their students in inclusive classes. The study was conducted in two high schools in southern Illinois and funded by a SIUC Faculty Seed grant. See Frackson Mumba & Morgan Chitiyo (2008). High School Science Teachers’ Curriculum, Instructional, and Assessment Decisions for Inclusive Classes. Problems of Education in 21st Century, 9, 74-80.

- **Morgan Chitiyo** (EPSE) has been selected by the Board of the Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis (SABA) as one of three recipients of a 2008 SABA International Development Grant Award. He will accept the award at the May 2009 SABA convention in Phoenix, Arizona. The award amount of $1,000 will go to help fund Dr. Chitiyo’s project to disseminate and promote the use of empirically validated behavioral management practices in the education of the most vulnerable children in Zimbabwe.

- **Jennifer Tanner**, a student in our Special Education program, has been selected by the Illinois Elks Children’s Care Corporation as a recipient of their 2008-2009 Special Education Scholarship. This scholarship is worth $2,500. Jennifer is currently a senior who is getting her dual certification in special education and elementary education.

- **Bethany Carriger**, a student in our Health Education program, has been named as a recipient of an Outstanding Health Educator Major of the Year Award by the American Association for Health Education (AAHE). This award is presented to one outstanding undergraduate student majoring in health education/promotion from each degree track of the colleges or universities with professional degree programs. The awards are presented during a two-hour ceremony at the annual AAHE Convention that this year will take place from March 31 to April 4 in Tampa, Florida. Bethany is originally from Decatur, Illinois and will be student teaching in Spring 2009 under the supervision of Kyle Povolish (SIUC Health Education alumnus) at Carbondale Community High School. This past fall she spent four weeks in Jamaica volunteering at a convent, where she assisted in tutoring, after-school care, and helping with an adult reading class.


Please continue to submit “good news” to your Chair/Director, who will send them to Carol Reynolds of the Dean’s Office, crenolds@siu.edu... and look for more “Did you know that?” in the next issue of the COEHS UPDATE.