

# The Leading Edge

WINTER 2007



**CLEMSON**  
UNIVERSITY

College of Health, Education, and Human Development

*The Engaged College with a Personal Touch*

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## The Leading Edge

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*Shaping Education and Change  
in a Global Society*

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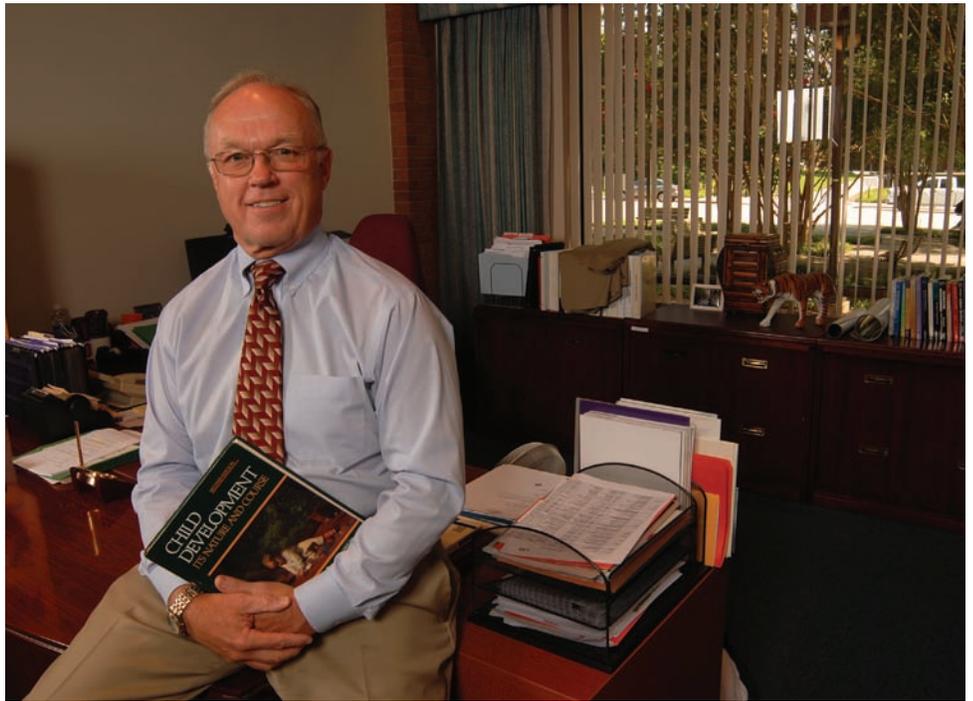
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# From the Dean

Hello Alumni and Friends,

This past summer, I had many wonderful learning experiences and had the opportunity to visit some beautiful places. Additionally, I heard many outstanding individuals and scholars speak on critical issues facing our global society. For example, Jean-Francois Rischard, the former vice president of the World Bank, spoke about 20 global issues that he believes are going to destroy our world if they are not addressed in the next 20 years. He spoke about many issues, including global warming and the massive increase in poverty around the world. Dr. Rischard was speaking at the First International Conference on Service-Learning in Teacher Education that our college held in Brussels, Belgium, July 5-8, 2007. We had participants from six continents. It was truly international!



Also, in late July, I listened to Dr. Reed Tuckson, executive vice president for United Health Group, speak at the National Conference on Health Disparities held in Charleston, S.C. He also discussed a global issue relating to the tremendous problems we have with our health-care system and the growing number of people who are either uninsured or underinsured. Dr. Tuckson went on to say that present efforts are ineffective because they are short-term and narrowly focused. He stressed the need for “comprehensive reform” of our health-care system if we ever are going to truly address this critical area. We need innovative, bold and sustainable strategies in order to solve this serious worldwide problem.

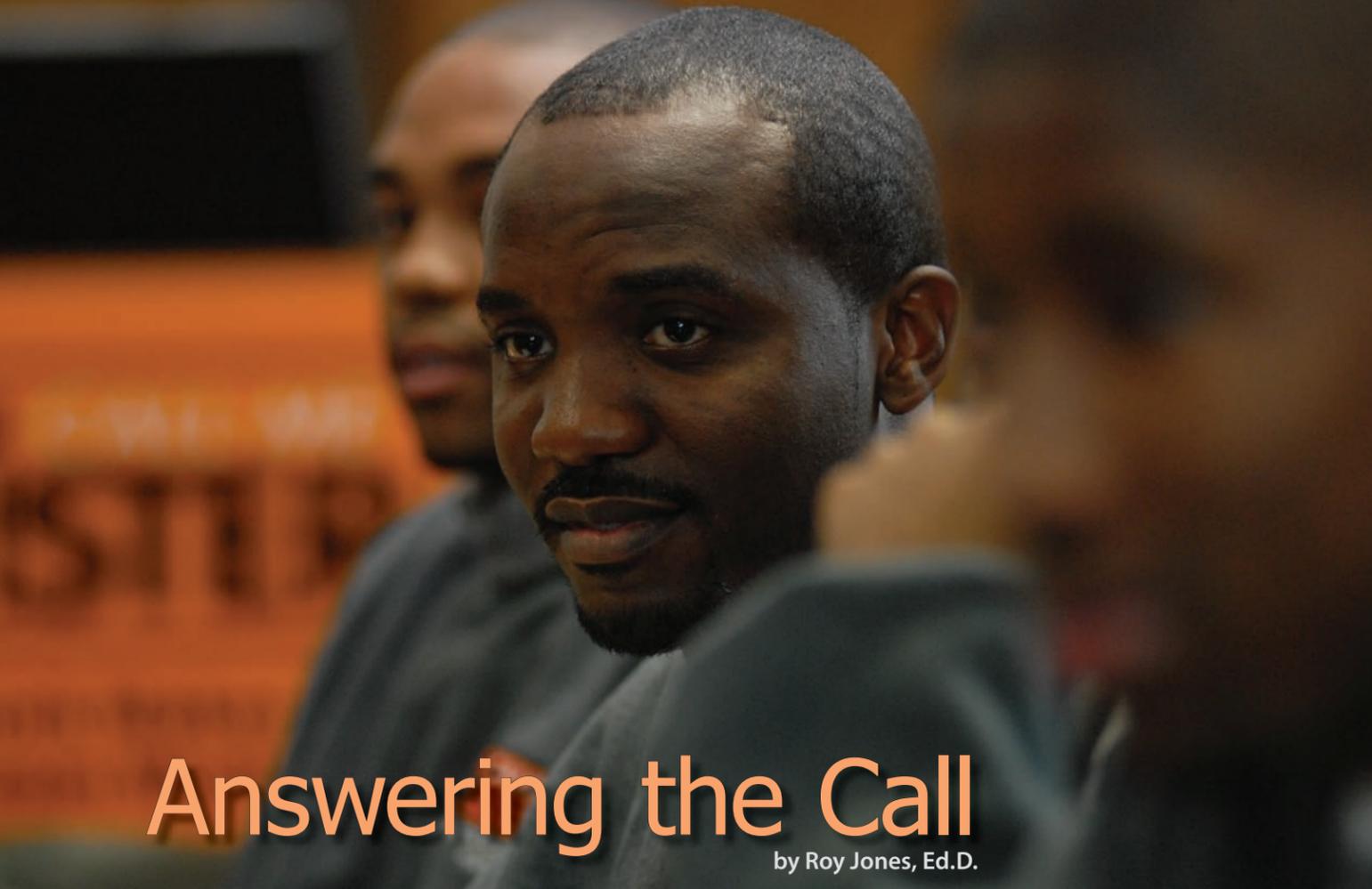
These messages served to re-enforce the importance of the efforts we are undertaking in our college. The continued and extensive dialogue among our faculty, staff, alumni and students ensures that we are providing our graduates with the skills they need to function effectively, both professionally and personally. Regardless of publications or presentations relating to this topic, the ending discussion always revolves around preparing innovative solutions for a new world, a world of constant change, on-demand information and uncertainty. Our world is one with many critical issues, the impact of which will take a different mindset to comprehend. We must provide our graduates with new skill sets to help them think critically, to solve problems with bold solutions and to rely on team structure to succeed and function in a society operating at warp speed.

These areas have been called “21<sup>st</sup> century skills.” Our goal is to educate leaders who possess such attributes so they are prepared to create and administer integrated systems in education, health and human services that can effect change addressing many critical areas worldwide. The purpose of this magazine, *The Leading Edge*, is to annually present you with many forward-thinking initiatives throughout our college. We are preparing our students to address the unique circumstances in South Carolina that preclude our youth from reaching their academic, social, economic and personal potential. We want our graduates to be agents of change. This effort will require a significant cultural shift in the way the college has traditionally functioned, interacted and delivered its educational and human services programs. To succeed, our curricula must constantly evolve in order to keep pace with our global society. So I challenge you with your input.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with your thoughts or ideas on how we may better prepare our students. Enjoy your holiday season.

Sincerely,

Lawrence R. Allen  
Dean  
College of Health, Education, and Human Development



# Answering the Call

by Roy Jones, Ed.D.

[www.callmemister.clemson.edu](http://www.callmemister.clemson.edu)

The nation's classrooms are in dire need of male role models. According to the National Education Association, the number of male teachers in public schools is at its lowest level in 40 years. Less than a quarter of all teachers in U.S. public schools are men. When you look in elementary schools alone, it is even more difficult to find a male in the classroom; just 9 percent of elementary school teachers are men. And if male teachers are uncommon, African American male teachers and males of any racially diverse group are even more rare. Only 2.4 percent of the nation's three million K-12 public school teachers are African American males. The Call Me MISTER® program is working to improve those numbers for the future of South Carolina's children.

HEHD's Call Me MISTER program is an effort to address the critical shortage of African American male teachers. The program seeks to place 200 African American males in S.C. elementary schools. Reaching this goal will more than double the number of African American male teachers currently practicing in the state's 600+ elementary schools.

The program combines the special strengths and resources of a research-oriented public university (Clemson) with the individualized instructional programs offered by four historically black colleges in South Carolina: Benedict College, Claflin University, Morris College and South Carolina State University. The program has established a network of five two-year colleges (Tri-County Technical College, Greenville Technical College, Trident Technical College, Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College and Midlands Technical College) that serve as sites for developing prospective MISTERS who want to transfer to a four-year teacher education program. The College of Charleston enrolled MISTERS for the first time in fall 2007. Negotiations and agreements are under way to expand the network of institutions within the state and to extend the program outside of South Carolina with clusters of two- and four-year colleges and school system partners.



## Quick Facts

- For fall 2007, the Clemson MISTERS represent the largest enrollment of African American males (23) pursuing teacher education in the school's history.
- All MISTER participants in the S.C. Student Loan Program are required to teach in a S.C. public school in exchange for every year of financial support received, or they must repay the funds.
- Twenty MISTERS have graduated since 2004. This represents more than 10 percent of the number of existing African American male elementary teachers in the state.
- MISTERS are currently teaching in Aiken, North Augusta, Anderson, Greenville, Orangeburg, Berkeley, St. George and Lexington.
- Some MISTER graduates are ending their third year of teaching; one MISTER graduate (in his second year of practice) was selected first runner up for Teacher of the Year in the Greenville County school district (the largest district in the state).
- Call Me MISTER frequently receives national recognition in various professional journals and other media, including a recent ABC World News story, "Our World" with Black Enterprise hosted by Ed Gordon, National Public Radio, *Education Week*, *Instructor*, National School Boards Association Web site, *USA Today* and *The Chicago Tribune*.
- Call Me MISTER participated in the Helping America's Youth Conference sponsored by the White House. This event was hosted by Laura Bush and was endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education.
- The S.C. State Legislature approved recurring funding for Call Me MISTER for fiscal year 2008 in the amount of \$1.3 million.

Beginning in 2007, Clemson (the South Carolina Cluster) will conduct a roll-out campaign to enter two new states per year, beginning with Virginia. Longwood University in Farmville, Va., will establish the Virginia Cluster. At a minimum, each new cluster will be comprised of a leading research university, a community college, a historically black college or university (HBCU) and a school district. Using this model, the HBCUs and school districts in each state should be able to enroll 200 MISTERS within five years. For additional information on this program, visit our Web site.

The Call Me MISTER program provides students with partial tuition support, books and training seminars, stipends for the collaborators and academic coaches at participating institutions, mentoring experiences for the MISTERS with "master teachers," cocurriculum programs including travel and other activities that enhance and enrich the students' learning experiences, and diagnostic and corrective interventions for MISTERS who may require special assistance or review for successful PRAXIS I and II testing.

At Clemson, there are several activities that enrich the MISTER experience, including the Call Me MISTER Summer Leadership Institute and Internship, the Call Me MISTER Orientation for new students and mentoring opportunities in which the MISTERS work with Clemson's Emerging Scholars Program and Project Middle Passage, which links the MISTERS with African American middle-school boys to encourage college enrollment.

The 2006 academic year closed with a total enrollment of 139 MISTERS among the partner colleges and universities. Successfully placing 200 MISTERS in public schools will impact more than 4,000 schoolchildren annually or 20,000 over just a five-year period. Statistically, 30 percent or 6,000 of these students will be considered at risk of failure or dropping out, which costs South Carolina millions of dollars in public assistance. It costs the state an average \$15,968 annually to incarcerate an inmate (SCDOC, 2002) and less than \$2,000 to formally educate him in a public school. Most in-state tuition rates are lower than the average annual cost of incarceration. 





# Centered on Care

by Deborah Willoughby, Ph.D.

**W**hen creativity, collaboration and scholarship come together, students win. That's obvious in the success of the School of Nursing Clinical Learning and Research Center (CLRC). Now in its second year of operation, the CLRC reflects HEHD's core values of building leadership skills; working in partnerships with individuals, families and communities; developing problem-solving abilities; and demonstrating caring and ethical decision-making.

The CLRC is the product of a joint effort among nursing faculty and students and the faculty and graduate students in health care architecture. The collaboration led to the design and construction of a state-of-the-art learning environment that incorporates cutting-edge education, health care and communications technologies that allow students to apply classroom knowledge to patient care in an environment that closely simulates a real clinical environment. The CLRC accommodates multiple teaching approaches and learning styles, while students safely and supportively develop and refine clinical practice skills.

Central to the CLRC educational mission is the family of high-fidelity human patient simulators. These simulators are highly sophisticated, technologically advanced mannequins that can be programmed to realistically mimic the symptoms of almost any health problem, including many illnesses, injuries and age-related changes. The CLRC simulators include adults, children, a pregnant woman and an infant.

The simulation experiences give students a chance to learn without fear of harming a real patient. In the actual clinical area, the unit nurse or instructor is there to take over patient care if problems arise, and the student is relegated to the role of observer. In the simulated settings, students provide complete care for the patient, regardless of how complicated it becomes. As the primary nurse, the student must identify changes in the patient's condition; communicate with members of the health-care team, including the physician and the patient's family members; and plan, coordinate and deliver patient care. Students can work through any number of life-threatening, low-frequency and high-risk situations that require rapid identification and intervention to preserve life and function.

Another benefit of the simulators is the immediacy of feedback. Students are able to see the results of their decisions and actions. If they make a mistake, the situation will follow its natural course and conclusion. During a debriefing after the simulation, the faculty and students review and critique student performance and how this influenced the patient's outcome. Students can repeat the simulation to correct any errors or omissions that initially occurred.

The School of Nursing is working closely with its clinical and educational partners in the Health Sciences South Carolina Consortium and with the endowed chair of the Center for Clinical Effectiveness and Patient Safety to research the effectiveness of simulation in health-care education. This group also aims to standardize the state's approach to the use of simulation in health-care education and to develop a mechanism to share scenarios and other resources among the partners. The research and educational opportunities afforded by the CLRC and the human patient simulators are limited only by imagination.

The CLRC has become a showcase for the School of Nursing and provides an effective educational tool that has been praised by members of the health-care industry, students and alumni. The school welcomes those who want to tour the CLRC or learn more about simulation in nursing education. For more information, contact the school at (864) 656-7622. Visit the Web site below. 

[www.hehd.clemson.edu/nursing](http://www.hehd.clemson.edu/nursing)



# CLOSING THE G A P

by Veronica G. Parker, Ph.D. and Barbara N. Logan, Ph.D., RN, FAAN

Health disparity issues plague many segments of society. Even as new advances in medicine extend life expectancies and quality of life, many populations are still left behind. HEHD's Center for Research on Health Disparities (CRHD) was established in 2005 to focus on reversing this trend. CRHD provides leadership for the development and advancement of comprehensive, culturally sensitive, community-based participatory research that improves health outcomes and enhances quality of life.

CRHD grew out of the Clemson-Voorhees EXPORT Project, a collaborative partnership funded by the National Institutes of Health, Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities. CRHD serves as the administrative unit for the EXPORT Project and for the ACUMEN project. EXPORT concentrates on reducing and ultimately eliminating health disparities, particularly in rural communities of South Carolina. ACUMEN is funded by the Bureau of Health Professions, Division of Nursing, and focuses on diversifying the nursing work force through recruitment, retention and graduation of underrepresented minorities in the nursing program. CRHD provides an infrastructure for health disparities research and opportunities for lifelong learning and continual professional development.

CRHD's goals are to maximize collaborative expertise and interests in health disparities research and to achieve ongoing and sustainable scientific research designed to ameliorate health disparities and improve health and health outcomes with special focus on rural, racial and ethnic minority populations. CRHD falls under the umbrella of the University's family and community living emphasis area and directly addresses HEHD goals for innovative collaboration, community outreach and research.

CRHD endorses a transdisciplinary, community-based approach, and seeks to engage policy-makers, health-care providers, business constituents, community residents and the University in research initiatives. CRHD assists Clemson faculty and students in becoming skilled health-disparities researchers, professionals and creative leaders. Research teams comprise students, faculty and researchers from diverse backgrounds and disciplines. While the primary research focus is obesity, a major risk factor for chronic health conditions, diseases such as diabetes and depression are also of concern. CRHD research leads to national models of best practices and advances knowledge about diverse systems and organizations from a national and global perspective.

CRHD has launched several innovative programs. Campus collaborators include the School of Nursing; counselor education, teacher education and educational leadership in the Eugene T. Moore School of Education; the Charles H. Houston Center; Pan-African Studies Program; Institute on Family and Neighborhood Life; and departments of Public Health Sciences, Sociology, Applied Economics and Statistics, and Food Science and Human Nutrition.

CRHD has provided faculty research training, faculty research mini-grants and student research training. For example, in summer 2007, CRHD offered an intensive, weeklong faculty research training workshop to assist Clemson and Voorhees College faculty in developing goals and plans for research careers in health-disparities research. Topics included external funding opportunities, proposal development, research design, research intervention, quantitative and qualitative research approaches with hands-on activities, secondary data analysis, conduct of research and community-based participatory research approaches. Yearlong mentoring will also be provided.

Through CRHD's Summer Research Initiative, faculty associates could apply for up to \$3,000 for salary or other expenses related to developing research proposals to be submitted through CRHD. In addition, CRHD offered an intensive weeklong student research training workshop to assist undergraduate students in developing research skills and obtaining research assistantships in graduate programs related to health and health disparities. Students were exposed to fundamental research concepts and skills that enhanced their data collection and management skills. The workshop targeted racial and ethnic minority students at Clemson and Voorhees and was followed by a two-week research experience.

Challenges and opportunities facing CRHD include continued development and strengthening of a solid infrastructure equipped with resources and programs to support health-disparities research. The program continues to grow with a focus on activities that will help to close the health-disparities gap. 🍌

# Confronting Toxic Messages

by Pamela A. Havice, Ph.D.



Recently, while traveling with my daughter, I was shocked to hear the misogynistic, violent, promiscuous and unhealthy behavior glamorized in song lyrics over the air waves. Determined to stem the wholesale acceptance of such negative messages, I returned to Clemson with an idea for a Creative Inquiry project.

At Clemson, Creative Inquiry is the University-wide effort to engage undergraduate students in research experiences. It includes all intensive, discovery-oriented approaches to learning. Emphasis is placed on providing an experience that is meaningful to the students and promotes reasoning and critical thinking skills, ethical judgment and communication skills, as well as a deep understanding of the methods of scientific or humanities research.

The objective for this Creative Inquiry project is to have students explore the messages being sent through different media to college-aged women. Eventually, the students will create an alternative, dynamic type of media message to be used in schools, college orientation sessions, classes and campus radio/TV stations.

I put together a team of faculty from various disciplines to implement the project. The faculty members are Dr. Karen Kemper (public health sciences), Dr. Nancy Meehan (nursing) and Julia Wright (teacher education). The goal is to incorporate several HEHD guiding principles, including having the students work collaboratively with a wide range of people. This will be accomplished by having them work with other undergraduates,

graduate students and faculty from several undergraduate and graduate-level disciplines all addressing an issue in society. These are the goals for this Creative Inquiry project:

- Recognize the challenges of mixed messages in the media;
- Explore the impact of health messages on young, college-aged women;  
(What are considered the “norms” for college-aged women? To what extent are students internalizing messages from the media? How are these messages impacting their decisions and behaviors? What is the impact on self-image and self-esteem?)
- Create dynamic, multimedia products for countering toxic messages;
- Promote positive educational messages directed toward young women; and
- Gain a basic understanding and appreciation of the research process.

The first semester of the project was conducted during spring 2007. The graduate students assisted the faculty in developing team-building activities, creating learning units on the research process for podcasting at a later date, assisting the undergraduates with an examination of the literature and preparing a research poster outlining what they learned. The poster was presented at the College of HEHD Research Forum in April 2007. The team looks forward to continuing with this research during the next academic year. ☺

[www.clemson.edu/ugs/creative\\_inquiry](http://www.clemson.edu/ugs/creative_inquiry)

# Enhancing the Golden Years

by Cheryl Dye, Ph.D.

As citizens in this country enjoy a longer life span, more attention is needed on making those later years happier, healthier and more meaningful. The HEHD Institute for Engaged Aging (IEA) provides a major step in reaching those goals.

IEA uses research, education and service to discover, develop and disseminate best practices for engaged aging so that older adults can fully participate in family and community living, regardless of their health, economic, social or employment status. The center works to the following:

- Increase research activities to develop best practices for engaging older adults in family and community living;
- Develop graduate curricula, course work, and certificate and training programs in gerontology;
- Develop and maintain external partnerships in research, teaching and service;
- Develop and disseminate policy proposals on how to engage older adults in family and community living;
- Explore entrepreneurial opportunities with business partners; and
- Develop and test innovative infrastructure mechanisms for universitywide center operations.

IEA was formally established in 2006. However, the seeds for forming the institute were sown in 2001 when HEHD faculty began developing an idea for a gerontology research center. From that came a campuswide team that included HEHD gerontology researchers and other campus researchers working in the University’s community living niche area.



HEHD has provided the infrastructure and continues to support IEA.

IEA is a member of the S.C. Aging Research Network, which includes all Health Sciences South Carolina members. IEA also has several internal and external partners. The Greenville Hospital System is working to establish an Endowed Chair in Senior Driving, Mobility and Physical Functioning. This chair is part of the proposal submitted by Clemson, GHS, University of South Carolina and Palmetto Health to establish a center for economic

excellence called the S.C. Center for Older Adult Independence. To facilitate the work of IEA faculty and students, as well as the new endowed chair, a home simulation lab has been established, and a driving simulation lab will be added to the new GHS Center for Success in Aging. These new labs complement the home and driving simulation labs at Clemson and will support increased research in the areas of mobility, physical functioning and driving. ☺

[www.clemson.edu/aging](http://www.clemson.edu/aging)

# Engaging Online Students

by Barbara J. Hoskins, Ed.D.

Imagine attending a class in “Human Performance Improvement” or “Creative and Ethical Leadership in a Changing Society” when your teacher and fellow students are not in the same room with you. In fact, they are not even in the same time zone. This is the challenge for teachers and students in an online degree program: How to actively engage in interaction and communication at a distance.

The coordinators of the two HEHD online graduate degrees — the Master of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and the Master of Science in youth development leadership (MSYDL) — have incorporated a variety of strategies, activities and tools into the curriculum to build a cohesive and actively engaged learning community. Both programs are offered online.

Students are admitted to the programs as a cohort and begin to build a learning community with the first course. The MSYDL students attend a three-day, on-campus orientation program as part of the first course. During their Clemson visit, they meet each other and the program faculty members while they learn how to navigate the course management system software and how to interact through the Web conferencing tool. They have the opportunity to get to know each other academically and socially. The MHRD cohorts include several international students as well as those from the United States. This geographic factor necessitates a more electronic form of orientation program. The goal of the orientation programs is to teach and to connect.

Both online programs are designed for the working professional. The enrolled students usually have several years of experience in their chosen field, as well as family and community obligations. They enroll in two courses each term as a part-time student and complete the master's degree in two years.

The MSYDL program offers the courses in an accelerated format. Each term, the students participate in one seven-week course followed by a second seven-week course. This is an intense schedule (averaging 15 hours of study time each week), but many students prefer the option of concentrating on one subject at a time. The MHRD program students enroll in two 15-week courses simultaneously. This more traditional approach requires the same amount of study time each week, but students are concentrating on two subjects during the entire semester.

The success and demonstrated quality of these programs can be attributed to the variety of opportunities for interaction and communication. Teachers interact with every student every week. Students interact with every other student in the class every week. This is accomplished in several ways.

**Assignments:** The assignments are posted on the Web. Students read the assigned materials, continue exploration of the weekly topic through Internet and library searches, and share their findings in a discussion forum and through written reports.

**Discussion forum:** The discussion forum is a topic, issue or related question. Students respond to the forum and post their thoughts with external resources to support their thoughts. Then the students respond to the postings of their classmates with supporting materials. Quality trumps quantity. Students are assessed on their use of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, critical thinking, creative contribution and utilization of resources.

**Group projects:** Students are frequently assigned to virtual teams to research and analyze an assigned topic. They present their findings during a synchronous class meeting and submit a written report for evaluation. The roster of each group is changed in each course, providing the students with the opportunity to work with everyone in the cohort before the program is completed.

**Synchronous meetings:** Teachers and students meet at the same time, either weekly or several times during the term. This connection may be in a virtual classroom in the course management system, during a telephone conference call or in a Web conference. The Web conference has the added option of visual and audio interaction for teams with slide presentations.

**Prompt feedback:** Teachers respond to all email messages from their students within 48 hours (except on weekends) and promptly share assessments of assignments.

**Electronic communications:** The immediacy of electronic communication expands the opportunity for interaction to a 24-hour/7-day-a-week timetable. Students and teachers share information as needed instead of during a prescribed time period. It also

enables students to more fully formulate their thoughts before engaging in the interaction. The teacher-to-student and student-to-student communications tend to be richer and more thoughtful.

**Campus visits:** The MSYDL program utilizes campus visits to further the cohesiveness of the cohort. The three-day orientation program introduces all of the participants to each other. This program also incorporates a campus visit during the second year of the program. The students return to Clemson for two days to participate in the poster sessions during the annual Research Forum. This has helped build the connection with the college and the University.

**Peer evaluations:** Both of these programs emphasize the development of management and leadership skills, and students learn to evaluate each other during the programs.



The virtual teams evaluate the performance and contribution of their team members, and all the students evaluate each other in the discussion forum interactions.

The model of engagement in these online graduate degree programs helps to prepare the students to be leaders in their profession with a depth of understanding of academic content and human interaction. The diversity of student experiences, geographic locations and learning styles broadens the perspective of all of the participants. These programs merge technology with what one student has termed “humanology.”

[www.hehd.clemson.edu/ode](http://www.hehd.clemson.edu/ode)



# Inquiry in Motion Pushes Boundaries

by Jeff C. Marshall, Ph.D. and  
Robert M. Horton, Ph.D.

As teachers, school districts and students scramble to keep up with the growing need for proficiency in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), HEHD has developed a program that provides an innovative solution to that challenge. The Inquiry in Motion Institute (IMI), led by HEHD's Bob Horton (mathematics education) and Jeff Marshall (science education), focuses on improving the motivation, academic performance and capacity of students and teachers through sustained engagement in STEM. IMI includes HEHD and College of Engineering and Science professionals, the Greenville County School District, Clemson's International Center for Automotive Research (CU-ICAR), and business and industry.

IMI centers on two fundamental goals: improving teacher performance in science and mathematics classrooms and improving the academic success of all students. Attaining academic success for all children requires closing the achievement gap for struggling students as well as providing challenge for the brightest students.

[itcenter.clemson.edu/iim](http://itcenter.clemson.edu/iim)

Four unifying principles guide IMI. The first is **integration**, through which exciting engineering and technological content areas are tied into existing science and mathematics courses. In this area, CU-ICAR and local industry provide many contextual learning opportunities that are applicable for K-12 classrooms. The second principle is **content**. Through meaningful problem solving, IMI works to deepen the knowledge of students and teachers. To achieve this, IMI focuses on the third principle, the **process** of learning through inquiry. For the fourth principle, IMI works to strengthen participants' **career** awareness in the STEM disciplines.

One example of an IMI project is the summer program offered at Carolina High School in Greenville. Two summer courses provided teachers with a two-week intensive experience to be followed by four half-day sessions during the academic year. Additionally, technological support will be provided to encourage them to implement best-practice lessons that are grounded in research. Greenville County students were included in the second week of the course to encourage the students and to offer additional assistance to those who struggle in math or science. One of the exciting innovations implemented was to pair each student with a mentor-teacher who will work with the student throughout the academic year and help guide him or her toward academic success.

Additional research is planned to assess the effect that IMI has on teaching and learning related to STEM education. Analysis of a district-wide survey completed by 1,222 Greenville County science and mathematics teachers will help determine current areas of success and challenge related to mathematics and science education. In addition, IMI is studying

the effects of a proposed instructional model that can aid teachers in providing more effective learning experiences that embed key conceptual ideas within inquiry-based learning. This 4E x 2 Instructional Model was piloted during the spring semester with both preservice and in-service teachers. The results were very encouraging. Finally, strategies that will optimize the benefits the mentoring experience has upon student achievement will be studied during the upcoming academic year as an attempt to close the achievement gap.

IMI has four key initiatives operating or under development. Pedagogical and Curricular Innovations provides teachers with professional development opportunities, curriculum and support structures (both technological and personally interactive) to strengthen their classroom performance. Second, there are plans for IMI to provide a physical structure for organizing the teachers' and students' programmatic opportunities. When fully operational, IMI offerings will include 15 summer courses, regional competitions, half-day mini-courses that are thematically focused and innovative edu-gaming opportunities developed by Clemson students and professors.

The Teacher Preparation initiative will include an MAT master's degree program designed for career changers who would like to teach science or mathematics. This initiative will also provide graduate opportunities for in-service teachers and a creative junior-level field experience for HEHD undergraduate secondary science and mathematics students. The fourth initiative — development of a K-8 community school — will be led by the Greenville County School District to provide a setting for educational research and for elementary and middle-school preservice teachers to become engaged in a pioneering school with special emphasis on science and mathematics.

Efforts are focused on building IMI into a sustainable program that will first serve Greenville County schools, then the surrounding districts and then the entire state. IMI will serve as a national model on how collaborative partnerships in STEM education can lead to systemic reform in schools. The concept of IMI demonstrates how HEHD is at the forefront of exciting innovations that can impact the lives of students, teachers and educational professionals in South Carolina. 🏡



# Making Connections

by Brett A. Wright, Ph.D.

[www.hehd.clemson.edu/prtm/research.php](http://www.hehd.clemson.edu/prtm/research.php)

Frequently, we hear the University's leaders ask some very important questions — What does it mean to have a Clemson University education? What makes it unique? So, what does it mean to have a Clemson parks, recreation and tourism management (PRTM) education? There are many qualities and positive attributes to the education our students receive, but one of the most important is that our students have the opportunity to make connections.

At the core of our professional ethos is the basic understanding that parks, recreation and tourism programs and facilities help people make connections — with others, with the environment and their heritage, and even with oneself. Moreover, through their in-class and out-of-class experiences, our students' connections enhance the quality of their education and enrich the Clemson experience. Here are a few examples.

## Connections to Self

PRTM students have numerous opportunities for self-connections. They can participate in the Finding Your Voice Program, which allows them to work with under-performing girls in a residential camp to improve the girls' identity, confidence and self-image. They interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds and with differing levels of abilities in academic, clinical and recreational settings. They attend state and national conferences focusing on the connections between recreation, parks and healthy lifestyles, and they understand the connections

between society's increasingly sedentary lifestyles and the obesity epidemic. They have opportunities for introspection and reflection on who they are and who they want to be.

## Connections with Fellow Citizens

Students learn that recreation programs and park open spaces bring together people who may not otherwise associate. They help people develop a sense of community. PRTM students have frequent opportunities to plan and manage

community events. PRTM alumni have managed events from the local Fall for Greenville festival to those of national significance like the Tournament of Roses Parade. They conduct sports camps for children on the Island of Dominica and observe how sports can be used to build connections between different cultures.

## Connections with Past and Future Generations

Whether they choose to work with the Osher Lifelong Learning Program, the



Outdoor Lab's Camp Again, the S.C. Heritage Corridor or Pendleton's Spring Jubilee, students have a chance to connect with other generations. Our parks hold our antiquities — our treasures of the past. Our festivals celebrate both our common history and our different heritages.

## Connections with the Natural World

Class field trips to the Clemson Experimental Forest, to Congaree National

Park or to the Chattooga River basin help all PRTM students understand their relationship with the natural world. Leisure pursuits, outdoor recreation, ecotourism and parks serve to maintain this connection and remind us all where we fit in the natural order. PRTM students know the meaning of the word stewardship and how it is the responsibility of the current generation to preserve our national heritage for future generations.

## Connections Between What They Learn and Real-World Problems

Students are required to complete two pre-internship experiences in which they are encouraged to explore the breadth and depth of the field. They also participate in an internship of 400-plus hours, which allows them to apply classroom theory and principles in real-world settings. Furthermore, faculty frequently engage our professional partners by inviting them to interact with students in guest lectures, field trips, seminars and career fairs.

## Connections with Other Disciplines

PRTM students are immersed in an ethic of collaboration and the need to develop working partnerships with other agencies and people from other professional backgrounds. The complexity of the societal problems we now face cannot be solved by a single agency or a single discipline. For example, a recent graduate working for a local community recreation agency told a PRTM class that he was working collaboratively with a local hospital, the state department of health and the local school system on programs to reduce childhood obesity.

For the past 42 years, the faculty and students of PRTM have embraced relationships with personnel in agencies and industry, many of whom are our alumni. We have consciously tried to inculcate a culture of collaboration into our academic programs and actively nurture an international network of professional colleagues. We teach it, we study it, and we practice it, all in an attempt to instill it in our students. Regardless of whether it is in the classroom or in professional practice, the ability to make connections is a critical part of being a modern professional. And, it is the ability to make these connections that gives a PRTM graduate a distinct advantage. This is what makes a Clemson PRTM education unique! 🍁



# Where Theory and Practice Meet

by Chris Peters, Ed.D.



While new digital technologies seem to emerge and change the way we live on a regular basis, many people are wondering why our American schools haven't been transformed as well. Despite billions of dollars spent and a quarter century of using computers in classrooms across the country, we haven't seen the kind of impact that technology enthusiasts have predicted. The S.C. Center of Excellence for Instructional Technology Training is out to change all that. With innovative research-based initiatives that combine theory and practice, the center will help teachers to change children's lives.



The Digital Express is an example of a successful center project. Funded by the S.C. Commission on Higher Education, this project uses technology to energize student writing assignments by joining digital images and online publishing in an exciting program for third through fifth grades. Center staff train classroom teachers to use digital images within writing prompts in classroom assignments. Students then compose and enter their work in the Digital Express online publishing system where it can be read by their teachers, their classmates and the outside world.

Using images helps support student writing by stimulating recall with a level of detail that can break the inspiration logjam and get the creative juices flowing. Online publishing capitalizes on a long-established fact — Students invest more in their schoolwork when they know that the audience for that work extends beyond the walls of the classroom. A feedback mechanism within the system lets online “buddies” and other interested readers make written comments of praise, support and even constructive criticism that the student author can read.

The system is just beginning its second year of implementation and development. It's still a work in progress, but there have been overwhelmingly positive responses from teachers and students. Center staff are planning new features that will extend the Digital Express into science and math classes for third- to eighth-grade students.

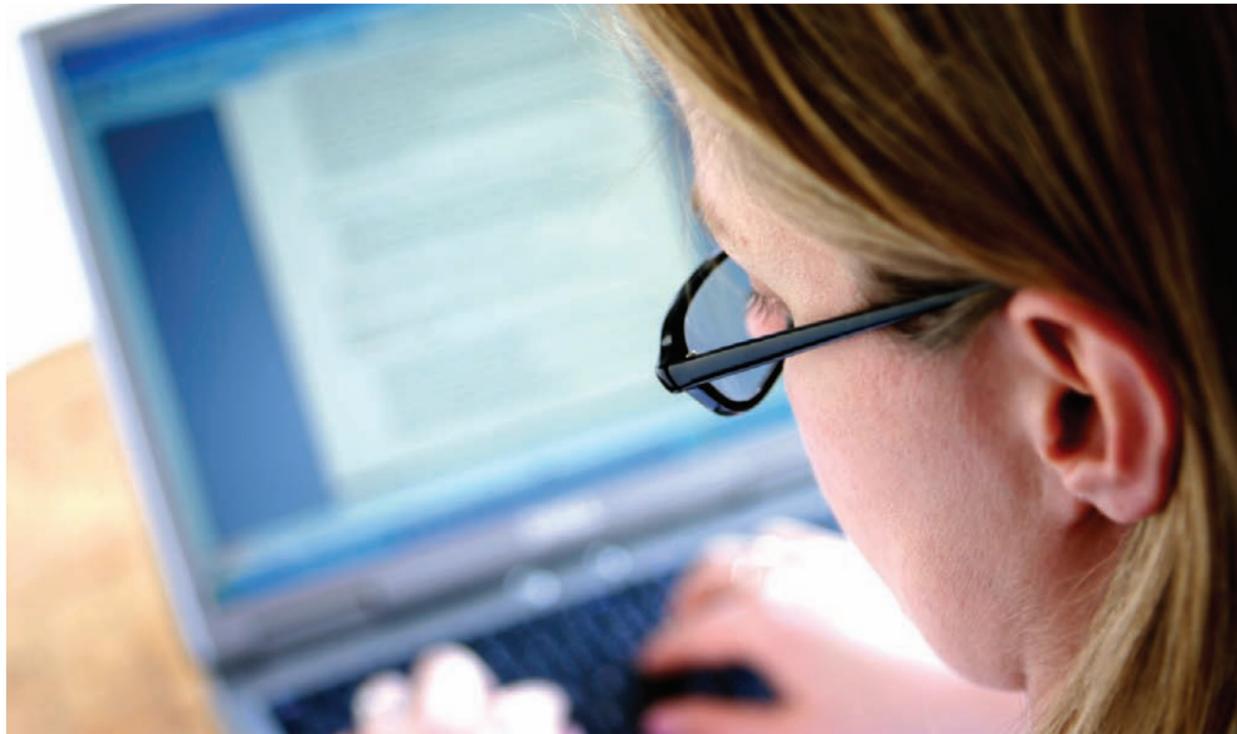
Another center-sponsored project, Club 2:45, was just awarded funding under a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grant from the S.C. Department of Education. Club 2:45 will establish a technology-themed after-school program at Code Elementary School in Oconee County. In addition to homework assistance, students who participate in Club 2:45 can choose to participate in a variety of after-school activities. Every activity will have some kind of tie-in to technology.

Activities in the Media Production strand will focus on developing student-directed digital media projects such as a video news magazine for the school's video network. The Cool Culture strand will give children the chance to take weekly piano lessons in a music lab equipped with computer-controlled keyboards. Activities in the Life Skills strand will include exercise programs in which students track their progress in a special database. The Academic strand will provide hands-on activities in which students learn engineering principles while designing and building useable furniture from cardboard and rocketry principles while building water-propelled rockets. Club 2:45 also includes evening programs in which parents can learn technology skills that can help improve their employment opportunities.

Club 2:45 will establish a new standard for after-school programs by capitalizing on technology to engage young minds and stimulate the development of skills that will open a new world of opportunities. The Digital Express is also a groundbreaking program that uses technology to maximize the impact of classroom instruction and increase student achievement. These programs are just two examples of the center's ability to use innovation and a strong research base to provide a remarkable level of service in the state.



Using images helps support student writing by stimulating recall with a level of detail that can break the inspiration logjam ...



# A Winning Combination

by Kathleen Meyer, M.S.

Contemporary wisdom would have you believe that a student’s grade point average directly reflects proof of a proficient education. This is only partially true. Within HEHD, the Department of Public Health Sciences requires that students exhibit much more than a passing GPA. Students must show proof of knowledge, skill and disposition in their chosen field of study not solely based on test scores, but through an internship and subsequent preparation of an electronic portfolio (eportfolio) collected throughout the internship and over the course of their years of study.

The eportfolio shows individual accomplishments that support larger educational goals while helping students track their progress and showcase their work. These eportfolios contain files of various documents such as writing samples, creative projects and other professional development accomplishments. Components of self-reflection and self-assessment are also required. Specific criteria include documenting these areas:

- Skill competencies in writing and oral communication;
- Reasoning, critical thinking and problem solving;
- Technological literacy;
- Social and cross-cultural awareness; and
- Leadership and research.

In my role as internship coordinator and instructor for the department, I have expanded and enhanced the role of the internship experience and the subsequent eportfolio development. I have challenged students to use their eportfolio as a means of positioning themselves for the direction they want to take after graduation.

The majority of our undergraduates are very interested in pursuing a graduate degree immediately following graduation. I would say that this is the intent of at least 80 percent of our student population. The others wish to secure a job. My experience has given me insight into what graduate programs or employers wants to see, and I am able to help guide the students to the path that will help meet their goals. I am very actively involved in securing internships. Right from the start, I discuss options with the student. A great deal of time has gone into finding good internship sites. Numerous research, clinical, nonprofit and community-based programs are internship sites for health science students.

While many internship sites are located in the Upstate, several are in other states or other countries. I teach a pre-internship seminar that helps position students for competitive national internships. Students begin the eportfolio process in that pre-internship seminar, which gives them an advantage in applying for those programs.

Health sciences was one of the first majors on campus to require the eportfolio. Meyer began working with the electronic format four years ago. Her portfolio requirement has drawn interest at the University and national levels. Two of her students were asked to prepare poster presentations on the portfolio at a national conference.

I have received many positive comments from graduates who benefited from having an eportfolio for graduate applications or job searches. In thinking about comments on the eportfolios, the first person who comes to mind contacted me two weeks after graduation. He wanted me to know he had received an offer of a full academic scholarship based on his link to his recently completed eportfolio. I am profoundly gratified when students take time to thank me for giving them this “leg up” on the competition. 🙏

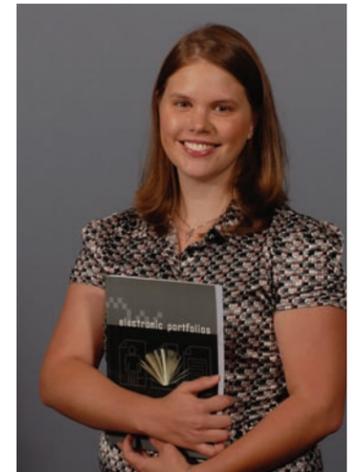
Here are comments from Todd Miller-Jones, Lindsey Jones and Bonnie Jones. These students share a common last name, but they are not related.



“In applying for graduate school at the George Washington University, I mentioned my eportfolio to an alumnus during the interview. Within a week, I had a scholarship letter in my hands. The chairman of the department had reviewed my eportfolio, and because of my experience through the internship and the display of my work, my first semester’s tuition was waived. I have a hard time putting into words the importance of my internship and eportfolio as significantly contributing to my degree.”

Todd Miller-Jones  
Health services administration

[www.clemson.edu/ugs/ug\\_eportfolio](http://www.clemson.edu/ugs/ug_eportfolio)



“A tool that truly helped to sell myself and show what I had to offer to the company when applying for this position was my eportfolio that I created while pursuing an internship with the company during my undergraduate degree. The eportfolio gave me the opportunity to prove the relationships I had built with the people and the skills that I had gained from the internship experience.”

Lindsey Jones  
Health promotion and education

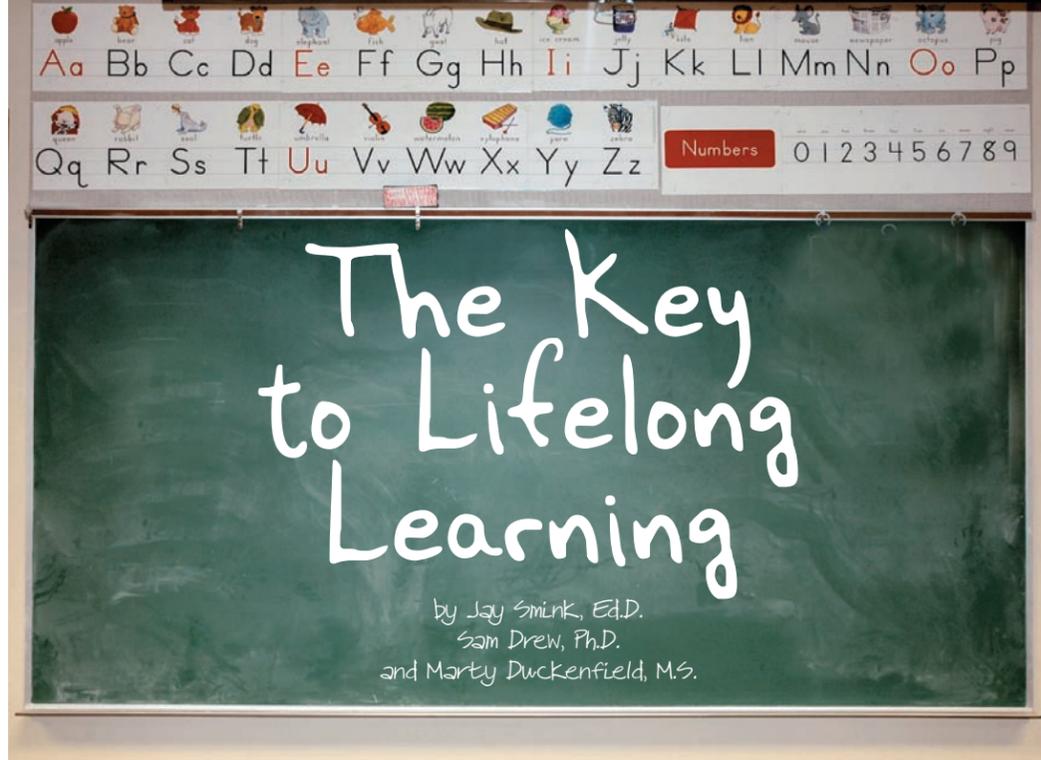
“Since graduating from Clemson, I have continued studying at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and I have become the youngest person to ever enter the double



master’s in social work and master’s in public health. I was accepted because I was able to articulate my professional experiences with more clarity, and my professional

experiences were my internships at Clemson. If I had not had so many experiences and a medium to display my skills — the eportfolio — who knows where I would be now.”

Bonnie Jones  
Preprofessional health studies



**H**oused at Clemson University in HEHD, the National Dropout Prevention Center (NDPC) has been making an impact on schools and communities in South Carolina and nationwide for the past 20 years. Through outreach work in professional development at national and regional conferences, through institutes at Clemson University, through research and evaluation, and through its role as a disseminator of dropout prevention information, the NDPC has established itself as a national leader in improving the high school graduation rate.

Through the efforts of this center and based on its years of research, policies have been implemented in South Carolina and elsewhere that will have a significant impact on the education of our young people, the economic development of our communities and the future of our country.

The Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA) is an excellent example of how statewide policies, with major input from NDPC staff, will actually affect thousands of lives. In this legislation, the NDPC's work in dropout prevention and its #15 effective strategies have provided additional structure to the dropout prevention components of the act that will improve the chances that S.C. students will have a more meaningful and successful educational experience.

Additionally, NDPC worked hand in hand with the EEDA's At-Risk Student Committee to develop the *At Risk Student Strategies Implementation Manual* that has been distributed to all S.C. schools. This manual describes factors that put children at risk of failure and contains evidence-based dropout-prevention programs that schools can select to help more students graduate.

This legislation is oriented toward preparing young people for the 21<sup>st</sup> century work force, one that will change continuously during their lifetime. How can educators and community members ensure that our students will be prepared for the unknown?

The answer, of course, is lifelong learning. And the NDPC already incorporates this philosophy as their way of doing business.

Since its inception, the NDPC has provided high-quality professional development for groups and individuals, including HEHD alumni whose professional lives center on youth from at-risk situations.

An example of this is the annual Summer Institute. Over the years, these institutes have focused on issues related to dropout prevention, based on the most recent research, and provided expertise in best practices. In recent years, the NDPC Summer Institutes have focused on service-learning, one of the 15 most effective strategies identified by the center. This institute, incorporating the center's research into identification of risk factors and the connection to the long-term disengagement from school that dropouts have experienced, showcases a strategy — service-learning — that is uniquely able to meet the many needs of those struggling students who have multiple risk factors.

Professional development in the areas of leadership, with particular focus on principals, has taken NDPC teams to Columbia, S.C., and as far away as Fairbanks, Alaska. Without strong leadership at the school level, dropout prevention efforts will fall flat. Strengthening their understanding of the children in their schools and the many factors that relate to dropout are the first steps toward fostering leadership development. Specific skill-building sessions have impacted the performance of these principals, and action-planning has enhanced the follow-up activities of those involved.

Every year, thousands of educators are provided professional development opportunities through the NDPC's annual conferences, seminars, institutes and workshops. Chief among these are the National Dropout Prevention Conference, held throughout the country every fall, and the At-Risk Youth National FORUM, held every February in Myrtle Beach. Collectively, NDPC's outreach activities serve more than 3,000 participants each year, providing learning opportunities so professionals can continue to serve these young people.

Lifelong learning will be essential for future generations as well as today's professionals. The workplace will be in a continuous state of change, with technology and globalization having the greatest impact, and students need to be prepared. The NDPC's 15 effective strategies are designed to achieve this desired result, especially as they promote the necessary engagement in education that must happen if students are to benefit from the changes that will occur in our schools and communities. 📖

[www.dropoutprevention.org](http://www.dropoutprevention.org)



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