

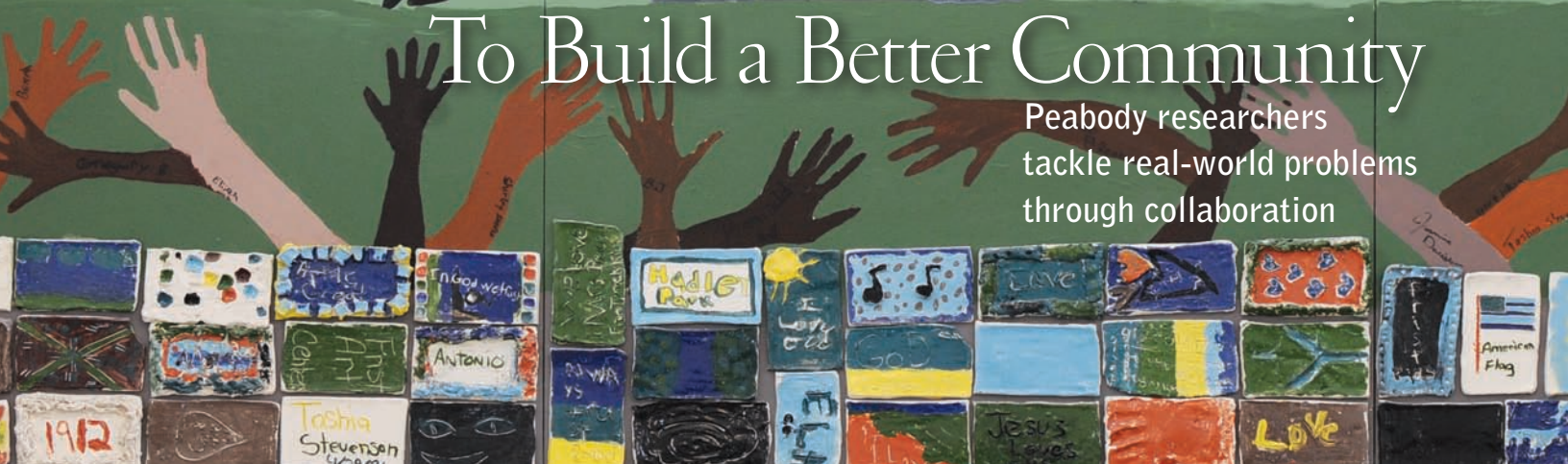
PEABODY

# reflector



## To Build a Better Community

Peabody researchers  
tackle real-world problems  
through collaboration





# The Peabody Journal of Education



*The Peabody Journal of Education (PJE)*, America's second-longest running publication devoted exclusively to educational research, practice and policy, is committed to providing information and reasoned opinion that will enhance understanding and practice among institutions and individuals concerned with human learning and development.

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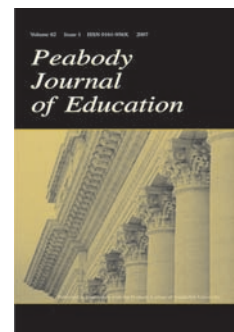
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*“For over 100 years, the Peabody Journal of Education has served the public by supplying cutting-edge research and policy analysis on all issues of education.”*

JAMES GUTHRIE



## FEATURES

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On the cover: A mural painted in 2003 by youth  
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Club at the McKissack Family Resource Center  
in Nashville, Tenn. Photo by John Russell. For  
more about the mural, see p. 18.

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PEABODY  
*reflector*



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WOLF HOFFMANN

As a world-class college of education and human development, Vanderbilt's Peabody College has many facets. In classroom teaching, for example, we seek to prepare tomorrow's leaders. In other settings, we strive to help those who are already hard at work develop their professional knowledge and skills. Central to both of these activities is the discovery and sharing of new knowledge by expert faculty conducting groundbreaking research.

In fact, Peabody serves the nation as a research leader—in education, in policy, in human development and in organizations and communities. Our research expenditures for the last fiscal year exceeded \$32 million. Only a handful of institutions in the country have that kind of impact, and impact is what we are looking for. This issue of the *PEABODY REFLECTOR* showcases a number of instances where Peabody researchers are building bridges between a growing base of theoretical knowledge and its practical application in settings from classrooms to communities.

On campus, the ideal of community has been elevated to a new level with the opening this year of The Commons, bringing together all first-year students in 10 residence halls on the Peabody campus. The Commons is the result of a decade of planning, construction and program development intended to acclimate first-year students to university life, to ensure their well-being and to instill a love of learning and service. Professor Sharon Shields has been living in The Commons as a faculty head of house, and she shares her insights about the experience.

To be sure, these are challenging times, but they are laden with opportunity. The practice-orientation and hands-on experiences that have long characterized Peabody's academic programs will benefit our students in the years to come. Regardless of the short-term difficulties which must be surmounted, we are confident, as ever, that education provides the best long-term solution. Members of the Peabody community—including alumni and parents—share this vision. We have surpassed our campaign goal of \$60 million, and we have a new goal of \$75 million. Reaching the initial campaign goal is an amazing feat, one that we could not have accomplished without the entire Peabody community.

CAMILLA P. BENBOW

*Patricia and Rodes Hart Dean of Education and Human Development*



## Passion and VISAGE

### I HAVE KNOWN BROOKE

Vaughan since the summer before her freshman year at Vanderbilt when she visited Nashville and met my daughter, another rising freshman. They decided to room together and have been fast friends ever since. Brooke is an amazing young woman with great passion for life. I wish I could write her a check for the balance of her goal because she is so dedicated to it. Vanderbilt is lucky to count her as an alumna.

NANCY QUILLMAN, B.S.'71  
FRANKLIN, TENN.

## Issue accolades

### WHILE I RECEIVE MORE

literature than I can possibly read, I do consider publications from Vanderbilt Peabody College to be "must reads." Thank you for including me on your mailing list.

JOSEPH B. MORTON  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT  
ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

### I HAVE JUST GOTTEN AROUND

to reading the spring '08 issue of the PEABODY REFLECTOR, and I want to tell you that I am proud of the publication and appreciate the news that it includes.

This issue included a note about Hal Ramer, who I knew when I was there. His father was in an administrative position at Peabody and a good friend. I taught at Vanderbilt in winter semesters (they had no summer sessions then) and assisted and

studied at Peabody in summers. After World War II, I completed my Ed.D., came to the University of Alabama in 1949, and retired in 1978. My wife (Dr. Elizabeth C. Cleino, B.S.N.'44) and I were in Nashville in October, when she received the President's Award of Distinction from the School of Nursing. I looked forward to visiting the lovely Peabody campus again. I have many wonderful memories of Nashville, and I am most appreciative of the many opportunities which I had at Peabody!

ED CLEINO, M.A.'40, ED.D.'58  
TUSCALOOSA, ALA.

## Remembering Professor Cooper

### I AM AN "OLD" GRADUATE

(in both senses of the word) of Peabody, 1957. My years at Peabody were fruitful and enjoyable. Kenneth Cooper's course in social and intellectual history has served me well over the years (we read original sources from Plato to Orwell's 1984). I trust Dr. Cooper is still with us. One of my life regrets is that I was always too "busy" to tell him what a great course this was (even though its worth unfolded over the years as I became "smarter").

DICK GIBBONEY, ED.D.'57  
PROFESSOR EMERITUS  
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
BIRCHRUNVILLE, PENN.

*Editor's Note: Professor Kenneth Cooper died in Nashville in September 2008. I, too, was lucky enough to have him as my profes-*

*sor for a course in history of ideas. His intelligence, compassion and integrity made that class one of my favorites.*

## Better wording

### IT IS ALWAYS A THRILL TO

receive my copy of the PEABODY REFLECTOR. Even though the time since my graduation has increased tremendously, I still remember with such fondness my days spent on that lovely campus.

Congratulations on the fine articles that are included in the Fall 2008 issue. They are timely, informative and well-written. As I began to read the magazine this morning, one sentence did catch my attention, and I am compelled to mention it to you. It is located on page 6 in the first paragraph of the section entitled "Calculator + math skills = A-OK."

"Calculators are useful tools in elementary mathematics classes, if students already have some basic skills, new research has found." That sentence reminds me of those presented in English books as exercises designed to encourage students to rewrite them in a better structure.

Out of all the words and sentences in the magazine, though, this is a small element. I guess the article was especially noteworthy to me because most of my teaching career was in the field of mathematics.

ANNE HORNER, B.S.'60  
HARRIMAN, TENN.

# Expanded financial aid program offers access, opportunity



In a historic move that strengthens its dedication to accessibility and affordability, Vanderbilt announced last fall that it will eliminate need-based loans from financial aid packages offered to eligible undergraduates. Starting this fall, the amount of need-based loans normally included in undergraduate financial aid awards for new and returning students will be replaced with Vanderbilt grants and scholarships.

“This underscores Vanderbilt’s commitment to the belief that ability, achievement and hard work—not a family’s financial status—should determine access to a great education,” said Chancellor Nicholas S. Zeppos of the historic move. “When financial barriers to a Vanderbilt education are reduced or eliminated, Vanderbilt becomes a more dynamic environment for everyone. Every student benefits from the enriched community composed of highly talented and qualified students of all economic, cultural and geographic backgrounds.”

Provost Richard McCarty noted that Vanderbilt will continue to be one of only a handful of U.S.

universities that employs a “need-blind” admissions approach and additionally guarantees to meet each student’s demonstrated financial need. “We will continue to make admission decisions based on such factors as character, academic strength and leadership skills, but not on a family’s income level or ability to pay,” McCarty said.

## *No income cap for families*

Unlike some other leading universities which have either reduced or eliminated need-based loans solely for low- and/or middle-income families, Vanderbilt will eliminate them for all students who qualify for need-based financial assistance, based on a holistic review of individual family circumstances. In determining a student’s demonstrated financial need, Vanderbilt takes into account each student’s individual family circumstances and all educational costs such as tuition, fees, housing, meals, books and course materials, plus allowances for personal and travel expenses.

The fall 2009 program will apply to all need-based loans for new and returning undergraduate students.

## *Debt reduction a priority*

The university started an initiative to reduce students’ education-related debt approximately seven years ago. That initiative has already resulted in the reduction of average overall indebtedness of graduating seniors by 17 percent. The additional funds needed to fully replace need-based loans will come from institutional reallocations and from

philanthropy. This endeavor, called Opportunity Vanderbilt, targets a goal of \$100 million in new gifts and pledges for need-based undergraduate scholarship endowment.

In addition to encouraging students to consider Vanderbilt who might not have otherwise, the expanded financial aid initiative will also allow students to pursue further education or career options that they might not have considered if they had need-based student loan debt.

Reaction on campus and at Peabody was swift and positive. “Peabody students are some of the most committed and caring in the country,” Dean Benbow said. “Especially for those who want to have an impact on others through education, the prospect of incurring significant debt to prepare for a career with relatively low starting compensation has been an impediment. This new program will reduce or eliminate that concern and make it possible for potentially great educators to receive a great education.”

For more information, visit [www.vanderbilt.edu/expandedaid-program](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/expandedaid-program). To learn more about Opportunity Vanderbilt, contact Kerry McCartney, associate dean for development and alumni relations at, [kerry.mccartney@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:kerry.mccartney@vanderbilt.edu) or 615/322-8500.



JOHN RUSSELL

## Peabody alum new dean of Vanderbilt libraries

Connie Vinita Dowell, M.L.S.'79, with three decades of experience working in academic libraries, began her new position as the university's first dean of libraries in March. Dowell previously served as dean of the library and information access at San Diego State University.

Under Dowell's leadership, Vanderbilt will initiate a comprehensive study of its libraries, with a view toward launching a major library-enhancement effort. The Heard Library system has a collection of more than three million volumes and an annual budget exceeding \$20 million.

"Being asked to return to Vanderbilt in this capacity is truly a dream come true," Dowell said. "Vanderbilt's generosity to me as a student paved the way for my entire career."

At San Diego State University Dowell was responsible for the overall guidance and leadership of the library, which has a collection of almost two million volumes.

Prior to going to San Diego, Dowell was employed at Connecticut College for six years, starting as college librarian in 1993 and then dean. In 1998 she became vice president/CIO and oversaw the merger of libraries and computing. Connecticut's faculty elected her to chair their academic strategic plan for the college.

Dowell earned her master's in library science from Peabody College in 1979, the same year that Peabody merged with Vanderbilt. She had received her bachelor's degree in 1977 from Middle Tennessee State University, where she double majored in mass communications and social work.

Dowell is a three-time recipient of the John Cotton Dana Public Relations Award from the American Library Association's Library Administration and Management

*Connie Vinita Dowell, MLS'79, is Vanderbilt's first dean of libraries.*

### New Faculty

Two new faculty members, both in the Department of Psychology and Human Development, joined Peabody College in January. **Professor Amy Needham**, whose research emphasizes cognitive, motor and perceptual development in infants, came from Duke University.

**Professor Bruce McCandliss** conducts studies using fMRI and other technologies that place him on the leading edge of developmental cognitive neuroscience. He moves to Vanderbilt from the Sackler Institute of Weill Medical College at Cornell. McCandliss holds a Patricia and Rodes Hart endowed chair in the department.



Association, and has participated in numerous panels. In 2006, she gave the Library Science Alumni Lecture at Peabody on "Libraries: Rapid Change, Enduring Values."

### Peabody earns No. 1 ranking

Peabody College of education and human development is the best graduate school of its kind in the nation, according to rankings released by *U.S. News & World Report*.

"We are very pleased by this ranking, which speaks to the high quality of the college and especially our faculty, our students and our staff," said Dean Camilla Benbow. "Along with our alumni, who do great work in the world, they are the ones to be congratulated."

Peabody moved up one spot from its No. 2 ranking last year, and now sits atop a list boasting Stanford, Columbia, Harvard and Johns Hopkins in the top 10. In addition to the overall ranking, Peabody's programs in special education and administration/supervision were each ranked No. 1. Peabody's educational policy and elementary education programs each ranked No. 5, its educational psychology program was No. 7 and higher education administration No. 8.



"We measure our own success by the knowledge we discover; our support for practitioners; the leaders we prepare for classrooms, universities and other organizations; and our engagement with the world around us," Benbow said. "Our goal is to change lives through education and human development, and we do that very effectively."

### Vanderbilt named among Fortune 100 Best Companies

For the first time Vanderbilt has been named one of the top 100 best places to work in the United States in *Fortune* magazine's annual survey. It is the first educational institution to be named to the list.

The No. 98 ranking released in the February 2 issue encompasses approximately 21,000 employees at Vanderbilt University and Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

"I am proud and humbled that my colleagues are content and happy to be here. It is a great compliment to the employees at both the university and medical center to be the first educational institution to be ranked on the *Fortune* 100 Best Companies to Work For list," Chancellor Nicholas S. Zeppos said.

The rankings are determined through an extensive survey process. More than 81,000 employees from 353 companies responded to the survey nationwide, and a wealth of further information was

submitted by management. The survey was conducted by *Fortune* in conjunction with the Great Place to Work Institute, based in San Francisco.

To learn more: [www.greatplacetowork.com](http://www.greatplacetowork.com).

### Susan Gray School honored with national accreditation

The Susan Gray School has achieved national reaccreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Susan Gray School is one of the first programs in the nation to achieve reaccreditation under new, more extensive and more stringent NAEYC standards, which were released in the fall of 2006.

Trying to find the highest-quality program for their child can overwhelm parents choosing an early childhood education program. NAEYC accreditation is a mark of quality that families can look for when making this decision.

To achieve NAEYC accreditation, early childhood education programs volunteer to be measured against stringent national standards for education, health and safety. More than 8,000 early childhood education programs around the U.S. were accredited under the old system, and each must reapply for accreditation to meet the new standards.

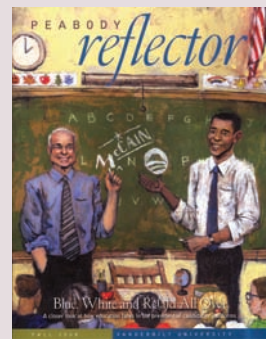
The Susan Gray School was granted the new NAEYC accreditation in November. The accreditation is valid through November 2013.

To learn more: <http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/sgs>.



### Peabody Reflector wins CASE award

For the second year in a row, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) recognized the **PEABODY REFLECTOR** in January during its annual District III competition. The magazine won a Special Merit Award in the Alumni Magazines I division.



### Faculty News

**Dean Camilla Benbow** and **Claire Smrekar**, associate professor of public policy and education, participated on the panel "To Ph.D. or Ed.D.? That is the Question" at the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education's annual meeting.

**Janet Eyler**, professor of the practice of education and director of undergraduate studies for the Department of Leadership, Policy and Organizations, is the co-recipient of the 2008 National Society for Experiential Education Researcher of the Year Award. This award was made in recognition of Eyler's research and publications in experiential education, and in particular, research she has conducted with Dwight Giles at the University of Massachusetts-Boston.

The award was presented at the group's conference in Orlando, Fla.

**Donna Ford**, professor of special education, has been selected as the 2008 National Association for Gifted Children Distinguished Scholar.

The association annually presents the Distinguished Scholar Award to an individual who has made significant contributions to the study of the education of gifted and talented individuals. Ford was judged by the association to have "a continued

record of distinguished scholarship and contributions to the field of gifted education for more than 10 years."

The award was presented in October at the group's 55th annual convention.

**Ellen Goldring**, holder of the Patricia and Rodes Hart Chair in the Department of Leadership, Policy and Organizations will begin her five-year term as chair of the department on July 1. She takes over for **James Guthrie**, who led the department for the past decade.

A team led by **Melanie Hundley**, senior lecturer in the Department of Teaching and Learning, was recently named editor of the *ALAN Review*, the journal of the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents.

**Richard Lehrer**, professor of science education in the Department of Teaching and Learning, will receive the Award for Distinguished Contributions on Applications of Psychology to Education and Training by the American Psychological Association's board of educational affairs.



Ford



Goldring

The award is given in recognition of the efforts of psychologists who have made distinguished contributions to education and training, produced imaginative innovations, or have been involved in the developmental phases of programs in education and training in psychology.

**Velma McBride Murry**, Betts Professor of Education and Human Development, was appointed action editor of the *Journal of Family Psychology* beginning in January and joined the editorial board of the *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology* in December. Murry gave an invited lecture at the National Institute of Mental Health in January on "Prevention Programs for Rural African American Families: Coping with Chronic Illness and Mental Health Issues."

**Vicki Risko** was awarded the College Reading Association's Laureate Award for her research and work with students in Peabody's reading specialist program. She recently was elected vice-president of the International Reading Association.



Lehrer

### Students win national awards

Tracy Cummings, a graduate student in the Experimental Education Research and Training program, received the NASA Science Engineering Mathematics Aerospace Academy Award in Washington, D.C., last September. The Science Engineering Mathematics Aerospace Academy (SEMMA) is a national program with 22 sites in 17 states. Cummings worked with a team that was awarded a grant

to build the 23rd site at Tennessee State University, the only SEMMA site in Tennessee. The TSU SEMMA Program is receiving the 2008 Innovations in American Government Award from the Congressional Black Caucus, sponsored by the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government's Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation.

In addition, Cummings is being awarded the NASA SEMMA Leadership Award in recognition of her exemplary work supporting

the project's efforts. The program has provided 6,000 K-12 students with free programs designed to increase interest and participation in science, technology, engineering and math.

Erin Rodriguez won a National Research Service Award fellowship for her project "Communication, Coping and Executive Function in Children with Cancer," which also was selected for funding by the National Cancer Institute. Professor Bruce Compas is her mentor on this grant.



Erin Rodriguez won a National Research Service Award Fellowship.





WOLF HOFFMANN

Doug and Lynn Fuchs are responsible for three of the five most cited research articles.

### Well-Cited

Peabody College's faculty's articles are prominently listed in the American Educational Research Association's ranking of the Top 50 Most Frequently Cited Articles as of January. The *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis Journal*, *Review of Educational Research Journal* and the *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics* rankings all include Peabody College faculty in the top 50. In the *American Educational Research Journal*, the faculty's publications are all ranked within the top 35, including three of the top five most frequently cited articles.

"These rankings demonstrate the important work done at Peabody College as well as the extent of expertise among its faculty," Dean Camilla Benbow said.

The article, "The Effects of Frequent Curriculum-based Measurement and Evaluation on Pedagogy, Student Achievement, and Student Awareness of Learning," by Lynn Fuchs, professor of special education, Nicholas Hobbs Professor of Special Education and Human Development and co-director of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Reading Clinic, tops the *American Educational Research Journal* list at No. 1.

Two articles by Lynn Fuchs and Douglas Fuchs, professor of special education, Nicholas Hobbs Professor of Special Education and Human Development and co-director of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Reading Clinic, "Effects of Curriculum-Based Measurement and Consultation on Teacher Planning and Student Achievement in Mathematics

Operations" and "Peer-assisted Learning Strategies: Making Classrooms More Responsive to Diversity" are ranked No. 3 and 4, respectively.

Benbow's article, "Consequences in High School and College of Sex Differences in Mathematical Reasoning Ability: A Longitudinal Perspective," is listed as the 26th most frequently cited article, and the Fuchs were acknowledged again at No. 33 for their work, "A Conservative Approach to Special Education Reform: Mainstreaming Through Transenvironmental Programming and Curriculum-based Measurement."

Three additional Peabody faculty, James W. Guthrie, professor of public policy and education, director of the Peabody Center for Education Policy and chair of the

department of Leadership, Policy and Organizations; Kathleen V. Hoover-Dempsey, associate professor of developmental science; and Howard M. Sandler, professor of developmental science, are all listed in the top 50 most cited lists for the *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis* and *Review of Educational Research* journals respectively. In the *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics*, Dale Ballou, associate professor of public policy and education, is ranked among the top 10.

To learn more: <http://aer.sagepub.com/reports/mfci.dtl>

### Murphy promotes advanced certification

Joseph Murphy, professor of education at Peabody, is serving as chairman of a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards' steering committee overseeing a national effort to develop an advanced certification for educational leaders. This initiative will include an advanced certification for both principals and teacher leaders.

The National Board, the organization that provides advanced standards and certification for classroom-based teachers and other educators, is creating national core propositions and

standards for what educational leaders should know and national evidence-based assessments to measure educational leaders against those standards.

"Effective leadership is a critical factor in school success," Murphy said. "Advanced certification for principals and teacher leaders will support excellence within the profession and, most importantly, promote student success."

The certification effort is supported by policymakers, administrators, principals and teachers and is expected to launch in 2011.

"The National Board has built strong standards and assessments for advanced teacher certification, which places our organization in a unique position to carry out the same for educational leaders," said Joseph A. Aguerreberre, National Board president and CEO. "You can have accomplished teachers in a school building, but creating a collaborative culture of learning and achievement requires the support and leadership of an equally accomplished principal and other teacher leaders."

In a recent National Board survey, 83 percent of school leader respondents and 69 percent of district leader respondents expressed interest in advanced principal certification. Both school- and district-level leaders were most interested in a certification that would better prepare principals to lead systemic instructional improvement.

National Board certification for K-12 teachers is part of a growing education reform movement that is reshaping the country's public schools. In a congressionally mandated report, the National Research Council of the National Academies confirmed that National Board certified teachers advance student achievement and learning, stay in the classroom longer, support new and struggling teachers and assume other school-based leadership roles. The research council acknowledged that students taught by National Board certified teachers make higher gains on achievement tests than students taught by non-board certified teachers.

### Peabody hosts national conference on teacher retirement benefit systems

More than 80 experts convened to discuss and debate the controversial field of teacher retirement benefit systems at a conference in February at Peabody. The conference, co-hosted by the National Center on Performance Incentives at Vanderbilt, drew scholars from universities and research institutions across the country to discuss the design and implications of teacher retirement systems used in the American K-12 public education system.

"The subject of teacher pensions is a critical and understudied area for education reform, both because of the effects on the



Murphy



teacher workforce and on school finance. Districts are looking for new ways to recruit and retain high quality teachers in their on-going efforts to raise student achievement and narrow achievement gaps, and the structure of retirement benefits is a potentially important factor,” said Matthew Springer, NCPI director and research assistant professor of public policy and education at Peabody. “Many states and districts also face increasing costs for their current retirement benefit systems—possibly exacerbated by recent developments in the value of pension funds.”

The conference, “Rethinking Teacher Retirement Benefit Systems Benefits,” was hosted jointly by NCPI, the Department of Education Reform at the University of Arkansas and the University of Missouri-Columbia.

The papers commissioned for the conference, as well as more information about the issue and speakers, are available on the NCPI Web site: [www.performanceincentives.org/conference/conference2009.asp](http://www.performanceincentives.org/conference/conference2009.asp).

### Peabody partners with new education initiative

Vanderbilt will serve as a research partner to the State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE), a nonpartisan initiative established by former U.S. Sen. Bill Frist that seeks education reform in Tennessee.

Frist was joined at the announcement by Gov. Phil Bredesen, Tennessee Commissioner of Education Tim Webb, Nashville Mayor Karl Dean and other education, community, political and business leaders, including Vanderbilt representatives.

“Vanderbilt has been asked to serve as the research partner for this innovative effort. In this role, Peabody faculty will have the opportunity to present research on current education challenges and initiatives and to provide input on action plans that may arise out of the commission’s work,” Dean Camilla Benbow said in a message to Peabody College faculty.

Benbow noted that James Guthrie, professor of public policy and education and chair of the Department of Leadership, Policy, and Organizations, will serve as Vanderbilt’s primary liaison to the collaborative and that steering committee meetings will often be held on the Vanderbilt campus.

SCORE will have several components. A steering committee of education, community, political and business leaders from across the state will hold 10 public meetings lasting through October to learn about best practices from across the country and within Tennessee. The information gathered will be used to produce a strategic plan for state education reform.

Project teams will initiate statewide and local education projects dealing with such topics as teacher quality, school leadership, technology and community engagement. Project implementation will begin by the end of this year.

In addition to Vanderbilt, SCORE partners include the Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee Chamber of Commerce, Tennessee Education Association, Cornerstone Foundation, Hyde Foundation, Ingram Industries, Stand for Children, Niswonger Foundation, Tennessee Farm Bureau, Tennessee Business Roundtable, Tennessee



Former U.S. Sen. Bill Frist with Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen announce the creation of SCORE, a new statewide education initiative for which Peabody will serve as research partner.

see Board of Regents, Tennessee School Board Association and United Ways of Tennessee.

### Performance pay progress report released

Paying teachers for their performance was supported by both presidential candidates in the 2008 election and is being tried in school districts across the nation. But the question remains—does it work?

A second-year evaluation of Texas’ statewide performance pay program, the largest in the nation, reveals insights into whether these programs are beneficial and attractive to teachers.

“We found that most eligible schools—90 percent—participated in the voluntary Texas Educator Excellence Grant program, indicating teachers and schools are very interested in this concept,” said Matthew Springer, lead author of the report and director of the National Center on Performance Incentives at Peabody. “We also found that continuity is important. Turnover in the schools eligible to partici-

pate in the program is high from one program cycle to the next, which caused some teachers to feel uncertain about its benefits. We found that the program has been received most favorably in schools where the program was implemented for two consecutive years.”

Not surprisingly, the size of the award was also important, as revealed by teacher turnover rates. “The probability of turnover increased sharply among teachers receiving no bonus award or a relatively small award, while it greatly decreased among teachers receiving large bonus awards,” Springer said.

In addition to data about the Texas grant program, the report includes background information about the new District Awards for Teacher Excellence (D.A.T.E.) program. Both programs are state-funded and provide grants to schools and

districts to design and implement performance pay plans. The Texas grant program distributes almost \$100 million annually in one-year grants to about 1,000 schools. The D.A.T.E. program provides \$147.5 million annually; about 200 districts are participating in D.A.T.E. These districts comprise about 50 percent of public K-12 students enrolled in Texas.

Springer and his colleagues studied how differences in program design impacted teachers’ attitudes toward performance pay policies, their reported satisfaction with the Texas grant program and their professional practice.

Springer cautions about placing too much weight on year two results. “We need to remain patient, remembering what looks promising in the short run may not be the case in later years. More time is needed to determine the full potential of bonus programs like these.

“Future evaluation initiatives will continue to explore how the unique characteristics of these state-funded programs—and the plans designed by their participants—influence the quality of teaching and student learning within Texas public schools,” Springer said.

To learn more: [www.tea.state.tx.us/opge/progeval/TeacherIncentive/index.html](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/opge/progeval/TeacherIncentive/index.html).



### Susan Gray School cuts ribbon on new fully accessible playground

The Susan Gray School for Children dedicated the new Finan Family Playground as part of Peabody homecoming weekend activities last October. Above, Kelly Finan, BS’09, with assistance from David Williams, vice chancellor for university affairs and athletics, cuts the ribbon. The playground was made possible by Tom and Mary K. Finan, parents of Kelly, Vanderbilt Athletics and other donors. It is the school’s first barrier-free, fully accessible playground for preschoolers ages 3-5. It includes wheelchair-accessible swings, a fort, two motor-skill learning centers, rockers, garden boxes, a play station and an outdoor classroom.



Springer



## New Pre-Doctoral Fellows Program established

Peabody College has announced a competitive new Pre-Doctoral Fellows Program to assist Peabody doctoral candidates who are facing a growing void in the university job market due to the current economic climate.

“We are offering a competitive program for Ph.D. students who have defended their dissertations and anticipate or may not be having success in the current job environment,” said Craig Anne Heflinger, associate dean for graduate education and associate professor of human and organizational development. “This would involve their staying on as

Ph.D. students at Peabody while working on further professional development.”

The program will allow Ph.D. candidates up to two years of additional study and involves full-time effort in four areas: scholarship of teaching, research apprenticeship, systematic advanced methods training, and writing for publication. In addition to the more advanced training, the fellows will receive a monthly stipend, health insurance and activity fees.

All Peabody Ph.D. students seeking faculty positions at research universities nationally are eligible to apply for the fellows program. Students must have successfully defended dissertations

but not yet been awarded degrees to start the fellowship. The fellowship positions are competitive and require an application, nominations by a faculty member and the director of graduate studies of the department as well as approval by Heflinger or James Hogge, associate dean for faculty and programs and professor of psychology.

“The goal of the program is to have Ph.D. students who are more competitive when they enter the job market and better situated for more prestigious offers,” Heflinger said.

For more information: <http://snipurl.com/vupredoc>

## Read About It

### Students helping students

Students helping other students learn has been proven to boost academic achievement and social skills in students with and without disabilities. A new book by Vanderbilt University researchers, *Peer Support Strategies for Improving All Students' Social Lives and Learning*, based on more than 20 years of research in the field, offers teachers practical guidelines for implementing these peer support strategies in the classroom.

“We have found that the best programs emphasize similarities, not differences, between students with disabilities and those without,” said Craig Kennedy, professor of special education at Peabody

and a co-author of the new book. “For the kids with disabilities, their non-disabled peer is a role model, academically, behaviorally and socially. And for the peer helper, they learn to see these students as individuals and friends, not just as ‘that disabled kid.’”

The purpose of the new book is to translate research that Kennedy and his co-authors, Erik W. Carter and Lisa S. Cushing, have undertaken over the last 20 years in classrooms across the country into a step-by-step guide that teachers can use to structure and implement peer support programs.

The book provides detailed guidelines for identifying students most likely to benefit from having or being a peer support;

recruiting participants; developing plans that promote access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities; aligning peer support goals and programs with state and federal standards; providing training for students, teachers and staff; extending peer support outside of the classroom to social and extracurricular events; and evaluating the effectiveness of the programs within a school.

Kennedy is chair of the Peabody Department of Special Education and an investigator at the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development.

—Melanie Moran



See video of co-author Craig Kennedy on VUCast, <http://tinyurl.com/c8yg6y>.

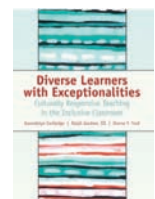
### Recent books by faculty



**Leonard Bickman (editor).** (2008). *The SAGE Handbook of Social Research Methods*. Sage.

**Leonard Bickman** & D. J. Rog. (2009). *The SAGE Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods*. Sage.

**John M. Braxton.** (2008). *The Role of the Classroom in College Student Persistence*. Jossey-Bass.



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*Responsive Teaching in the Inclusive Classroom*. Merrill Education.

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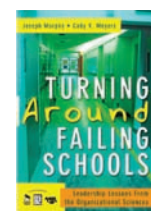
**James W. Guthrie, Patrick J. Schuermann & Matthew G. Springer.** (2009). *Strategic Leadership for 21st Century Schools*. The Peabody College education leadership series. Allyn and Bacon.

**Karen R. Harris, Steve Graham,** L. Mason & B. Friedlander. (2008). *Powerful Writing Strategies for All Students*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.



**Carolyn Hughes** & E. W. Carter. (2008). *Peer Buddy Programs for Successful Secondary School Inclusion*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

**Kathleen L. Lane,** J. Robertson Kalberg & H. M. Menzies. (2009). *Developing Schoolwide Programs to Prevent and Manage Problem Behaviors A Step-by-step Approach*. The Guilford Press.



**Joseph Murphy** & C. V. Meyers. (2008). *Turning Around Failing Schools: Leadership Lessons from the Organizational Sciences*. Corwin Press.

**John. J. Rieser.** (2008). *Blindness and Brain Plasticity in Navigation and Object Perception*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates/Taylor Francis Group.

J. A. F. Bass, **Victoria A. Risko,** L. Elish-Piper, S. Dasinger & M.S. Matthews. (2008). *A Declaration of Readers' Rights: Renewing Our Commitment to Students*. Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.

J. DeFilippis & **Susan Saegert.** (2008). *The Community Development Reader*. Routledge.

**Marybeth Shinn** & H. Yoshikawa. (2008). *Toward Positive Youth Development: Transforming Schools and Community Programs*. Oxford University Press.

**Matthew G. Springer.** (2008). *Performance Incentives: Their Growing Impact on American K-12 Education*. Brookings Institute Press.

Mark Berends, **Matthew G. Springer** & H. J. Walberg. (2008). *Charter School Outcomes*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

### Recent books by alumni

**Shellie Braeuner,** M.Ed.'90, (2009). *The Great Dog Wash*. Simon and Schuster.

R.A. McWilliam and **Amy Casey,** B.S.'02, M.Ed.'05, Ph.D.'08. (2008). *Engagement of Every Child in the Preschool Classroom*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

**Mary Kaye Milmo Chryssicas,** B.S.'87. (2008). *Yoga for Teens*. DK Publishing.

**Jan Irons Harris,** Ed.D.'95. (2008). *The Principal's Office, A Primer for Balanced Leadership*. Rowman and Littlefield Education.

**William L. Hooper,** Ph.D.'66. (2008). *Worship Leadership for Worship Leaders*. Alexander Publishing.



# To Build a Better Community

Peabody researchers tackle real-world problems through collaboration



BY Jennifer Johnston



**A**ffordable housing. Sexually transmitted disease. School violence and bullying.

It sounds like a laundry list of some of the toughest problems communities encounter today, issues made even more challenging by an economy in turmoil. All are under assault by Peabody faculty actively engaged in research with direct applications to real-world problems.



While there are many examples, three recent projects can be singled out for their focus on empowering community partners with information and technology to jump-start ground-breaking programs:

**Susan Saegert**, director of the Center for Community Studies, brings her extensive research background in shared-equity home ownership options to a steering committee of community housing leaders working to find new approaches to affordable housing in Nashville.



JENNY MANDVILLE

**Velma McBride Murry**, who holds the Betts Chair of education and human development, is implementing the first family-oriented, technology-based, culturally sensitive preventive intervention program designed to deter high-risk behavior among youths in six rural West Tennessee counties.



JOHN RUSSELL

**Maury Nation**, whose work focuses on violence prevention in schools, is engaged in research to help identify strengths and points of development for at-risk middle schools in Metro Nashville. One of his tasks is developing a strategic plan for each school that empowers educators, administrators, parents, community leaders, businesses and nonprofits to work together to find resources to help those schools become successful.



WOLE HOFFMANN

What stands out is the collaborative nature of these projects, community leaders say. “The great thing about what they’ve done is they’ve said, ‘We’re going to recognize what our strengths are, which is research and analysis, and then turn it over to the people who have experience in implementation,’” says Ted R. Fellman, executive director of the Tennessee Housing Development Agency, part of the steering committee working with Saegert on moderate- to low-income housing options in Nashville.

“That’s what collaboration is all about, and that approach is very well-received,” Fellman says.

## Home ownership builds empowerment

**W**hen Saegert came to Vanderbilt last year from City University of New York, she found that her colleagues already had laid the groundwork for positive interactions with community partners.

“We have this capacity to work in partnership with different sectors of the community to develop projects, to bring information, and to help them understand national best practices. We can organize information to help them decide how they want to go forward,” Saegert says.

In this case, Saegert was able to apply her extensive research and knowledge of shared-equity housing options to the increasing shortage of affordable housing in Nashville. She and students from her Action Research class studied various shared equity models from around the country and presented several that had the potential for success in Nashville to an informal group looking at affordable housing opportunities in Nashville. The Vanderbilt Legal Clinic provided legal documentation.

The informal group became a steering committee and, through Saegert, connected with the Ford Foundation. Nashville was chosen as one of three pilot cities for a shared equity housing project, still in the early stages of planning.



Paul Johnson of The Housing Fund says Saegert “took it up a notch” in terms of the collaborative nature of the project. Her involvement came at a critical time and accelerated the group’s efforts. She also organized a two-day conference at Vanderbilt to bring stakeholders together.

“There’s lots of traction now about trying to find different housing models that protect consumers

**“There’s lots of traction now about trying to find different housing models that protect consumers better and that give you more accountability when you’re using public funds as a subsidy.”**

—Paul Johnson,, *director of regional services, The Housing Fund*

better and that give you more accountability when you’re using public funds as a subsidy,” says Johnson, director of regional services.

Through shared-equity, a state or local government agency combines with financial institutions, the housing sector and nonprofits to help provide funding for purchasing a home or unit in a larger complex. The nonprofit agency or a cooperative formed by the agency shares in any value appreciation and provides “more stable stewardship” for monitoring and supporting the homeowners. That share may either be returned to the agency to be used for another family, or it can stay in the dwelling, reducing the cost to the next family.

“All of a sudden the notion of equity sharing seems a little better than just giving people money,” Saegert says, referring to the challenges of the current economy. “It’s no longer such an exotic thought.”

While home ownership has long been viewed as an investment vehicle, low-to moderate-income people are more concerned with security, control and quality than making a profit, Saegert has found. Shared equity allows them to get into a more stable home and improves the possibilities for the next stage of ownership.

Saegert began her academic career in New York City soon after the 1970s disinvestment crisis that left many neighborhoods deeply troubled.

“I was able to be part of a lot of very creative, grass-roots efforts to preserve housing that was inhabited and then abandoned by capital, but not abandoned by residents,” she says. Resident ownership programs that sold buildings to tenants were successful because residents had “more skin in the game.”

“What was really interesting was how the physical environment supported human and social community empowerment,” she says. Saegert clearly revels in engagement in that kind of work—research that is theoretically creative with the practical potential to powerfully and positively impact a community.

### Creating positive parenting models

Velma McBride Murry knows firsthand how a tight-knit community can improve a child’s chance of success as an adult. Murry grew up in rural West Tennessee where almost everyone in her small community was related to her, encouraged her, basked in her achievements and stood ready to correct any backsliding. The question driving Murry’s research today is how that sense of responsibility and cohesion can be harnessed to bolster the lives of rural youths, particularly African Americans.

Murry, director of Peabody’s Center for Research on Rural Families and Communities, is the recipient of a five-year, \$3.5 million National Institute of Mental Health grant to develop positive parenting models with the ultimate goal to help stem the spread of HIV/AIDS in the rural African American family.

“There’s a nostalgic view that rural families are doing well because of all the fresh air and farmland,” says Murry, professor of human and organizational development. “But rural areas have high poverty rates and families are experiencing a lot of economic challenges.”

In addition, rural youths are engaging in substance and drug use and high-risk sexual behaviors at rates equal to or exceeding those in densely populated inner cities, she says.

“Growing up in environments in which youth are less hopeful of attaining their dreams and life goals may cause youth to cope by using substances and engaging in high-risk sexual behavior as a way of dealing with deprivation,” Murry says. Those challenges are sure to be exacerbated by the current economic downturn, she says.

At the University of Georgia, Murry was part of a research team that for more than a decade conducted basic research to identify families whose children were not at the same level of risk as others. They sought to determine factors that were protective and positive methods of intervention that parents used when destructive behavior occurred. The key, Murry says, was to focus on what worked instead of what didn’t work.

A curriculum was developed focused on promoting, among other things, competent parenting. Eight years after implementation, the UGA researchers found that children exposed to the group program were more likely to delay the onset of sexual activity, less likely to drink or use drugs, and had fewer behavioral or emotional problems in school, Murry says. Not insignificantly, families under the greatest stress benefited the most from the program.

The desire to deliver the program to more people and to those at greatest risk led Murry to return to Tennessee to begin implementation of Pathways for African American Success, which will ultimately involve 525 families in West Tennessee. While the research design is similar to the work in Georgia, the focus is now on removing barriers to access by transferring the psychoeducational program into an interactive DVD program. Initially, the program would be delivered on laptops and then through the Web. The DVD interactive mode will be compared with mailing materials and a group-based program.

The additional layer of technology requires social scientists to interact with software developers—two languages and two schools of thought must be meshed for the program to work, Murry says. Her involvement from the ground up allows deep thought about critical issues, such as making sure nonactors who look and sound like rural African Americans perform the role-playing scenarios in the DVDs.

“We’re excited about doing something that has the potential to make a difference in people’s lives,” she says. The question is whether the technology-driven model, which may have the ability to reach more people, will work as effectively as the group method and become more sustainable.



“This is a new way of delivering a family-based intervention, and we are trying to determine what works best, and which is most cost-effective,” Murry says. “True evidence of a successful community-based program is the extent to which it is sustainable in the community.”

### Empowering schools

As with his colleagues, engaging community partners is critical to Maury Nation’s recent work in Nashville middle schools through Alignment Nashville. Part of the mayor’s office, Alignment Nashville brings community organizations and resources into alignment to improve school success. Nation’s particular focus is on preventing violence in schools, especially bullying.

Research has shown that bullying leads to long-term problems with aggression for the bullies and other mental health problems for the victims. Creating a positive school environment through violence prevention and positive youth development helps ensure that those children stay in school and have a chance at a quality education, says Nation, assistant professor of human and organizational development.

“Certainly behavior is a component of school success, but we want to see kids do well academically and have productive relationships. That means focusing beyond behavior and looking at the context of the behavior,” he says.

In his CDC-funded research, Nation studies ways to improve the interface between middle schools and community agencies that provide support to students with needs beyond the scope of the school. Through the study, Alignment Nashville coordinators are placed in middle schools and charged with identifying the strengths and points of development for each of the schools. A strategic plan for each school is then



## McKissack Family Resources Center Mural

During the summer of 2003, in collaboration with the Frist Center for the Visual Arts Community Voices project, children from the Preston Taylor YMCA Boys and Girls Club worked with teaching artist Becca Ganick to create a visual history of their northwest Nashville neighborhood. Working in acrylics, the children painted three panels depicting historic landmarks in their community. Those pictured include Hadley Park, the first publicly owned African American park in the United States; Moses McKissack School, built by Moses and Calvin McKissack, brothers who established the first African American-owned construction firm in Nashville; and the Tennessee State University administration building, built during Reconstruction. Ceramic tiles line the bottom of the mural panels and stand for the bricks of love and friendship upon which the neighborhood is built.

After being exhibited at the Frist Center for Visual Arts in 2005 along with 12 other Nashville community murals, the piece found its permanent home at Moses McKissack Middle School, home to the McKissack Family Resource Center, which provides outreach to at-risk families and children as a United Way agency. In August, the McKissack FRC will cease to exist; the building will be used to house Pearl-Cohn High School's new Ninth Grade Academy. The mural, however, will remain.

Participants: Antonio Alexander, Ryan Bailey, Marquez Braden, Gregory L. Bell, Courtney Davidson, Jasmine Davidson, Sidney Davidson, Sherria Gaddes, Mycheala Garrett, Briana Gillespie, Elijah Hall, Reginald Hall, Jarvis Hall, Tynekkia Octrlill, Renekque Reese and Tashia Stevenson. Many thanks to Shirley Nix-Davis, McKissack FRC director, who provided background information on the mural and arranged for the REFLECTOR to photograph it. The McKissack Family Resource Center focuses on engaging the community through the McKissack Advisory Council and is supported by Vanderbilt University-Imagine College.

developed with input from teachers and administrators with the goal of engaging nonprofit agencies as well as businesses near the schools in working together on improvements.

David Martin, principal at Jere Baxter Middle School, says there's no shortage of agencies interested in helping schools. The issue is coordinating that help in a way that meets the long-term goals of the school.

Through the Alignment Nashville coordinator at Jere Baxter, "we determine which of those agencies meet our needs as opposed to them coming to us with their agenda," Martin says.

One of Nation's roles, in addition to collaborating with the various agencies involved, has been to develop evaluations and program assessments to determine the program's impact and ultimately create models that can be individualized.

"The needs of each school are pretty distinct depending on where they're located," Nation says. Each school has problems as well as points of pride, he says. "We get to recognize and validate those and encourage them to continue to excel."

One technique that has worked well has been the introduction of an incentive system for children exhibiting positive behaviors (for more information on another positive behavior program, see p. 19). This is especially important for middle school children, Nation says.

Martin says teasing and bullying is common in middle school. It's a difficult age to reach, yet of critical importance.

Creating a culture of kindness through the work with Nation and Alignment Nashville at Jere Baxter dramatically decreased the number of suspensions and hallway altercations during this academic year, Martin says.

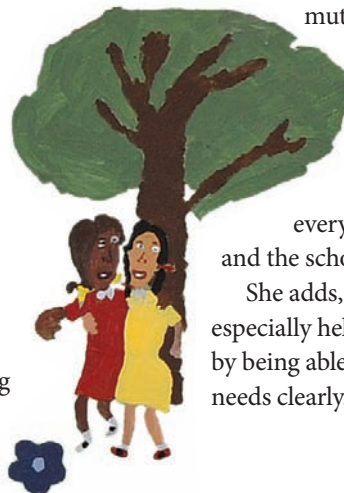
"We used to have fights nonstop," Martin says. "Now the hallways are quiet and clear, and teaching is going on in the classrooms."

Nation says he enjoys bringing together community partnerships, but it can be hard to step back and let the main stakeholders direct the outcome.

"Sometimes I take the lead, other times other members of this collaborative take a larger role. It's been a learning process as an educator to let go," Nation says. "I feel good that there are times when I thought it should be done a certain way and various stakeholders felt empowered enough to say, 'No, that doesn't serve our purpose very well.' And then we were able to successfully negotiate something of mutual benefit."

Sydney Rogers, executive director of Alignment Nashville, says she often holds up Nation as an example of an educator who enhances the work of everyone around him. "It's a win-win for everyone," she says. "It improves his research, and the schools get the benefit."

She adds, "He's one of those people who has the especially helpful ability to move forward our process by being able to see both the research and practical needs clearly."







## MODEL FOR A POSITIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY

LARRY MCCORMACK/THE TENNESSEAN

*Positive Behavior Support gets high marks in grant-based school programs*

by Jan Read

**A**t Eakin Elementary School, a Nashville public school a stone's throw from Vanderbilt University, Principal Roxie Ross is putting Positive Behavior Support (PBS) to work. Since PBS was introduced at the school a few years ago, Ross has seen the school's atmosphere become more positive and more focused on encouraging students.

"We use Positive Behavior Support in our school every day," she says. "It's real for us. It's working for us."

PBS is a three-tiered model of prevention used to teach students behaviors that will help them succeed in the various settings of the school day. Its increased popularity can be tracked to the 2001 Surgeon General's report on youth violence and the 2004 federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Both called for evidence-based approaches to promoting positive behavior. School systems across the country use PBS to help transform their schools into positive learning communities.

Kathleen Lane has witnessed these transformations. As associate professor of special education at Peabody, her research focuses on investigating the relationship between academic achievement and behavior. She is overseeing a private grant geared

to implementing PBS programs and following their progress in Nashville-area public schools, including Eakin Elementary. The project began in 2005 and has goals of helping schools to design and implement comprehensive three-tiered models of prevention to better support all students. Lane's PBS model is broader than the typical model, including not just behavior goals, but also academic and social goals.

"Our goal is for students to succeed in school, and they need all three segments to be successful," she explains. "That's why my model integrates them."

What draws Lane to the PBS philosophy is that it's proactive. "We don't have to wait for the children to fail or struggle before we intervene," she explains. "With PBS, you teach the child what you expect them to do and how you expect them to do it. It's proactive instead of being reactionary."

Lane believes that PBS levels the playing field for kids. "The faculty and staff in each school develop the expectations for their community and then help all the students learn them. All the kids know what is expected of them. We don't wait for them to fail [misbehave] and then intervene. We tell them up front," she says. "Of course, there are consequences if

*Grace Todd, right, hands a tardy slip to a student while Winston Zuo-yu, center, fills out more tardy slips at Eakin Elementary School. Eakin uses the Positive Behavior System developed by Peabody faculty member and researcher Kathleen Lane. After receiving tickets for positive behavior at school, children qualify to be chosen for responsible positions and other prizes. Zuo-yu and Todd were chosen to help in the school office as morning tardy officers.*



they don't behave appropriately, but we also teach the requested behavior."

Oddly enough, the goal of Lane's Positive Behavior Support program is not better-behaved students. "It may look like that's the goal, but the real goal is to increase the time available for teaching and to make that time as effective as possible," she says. PBS helps the teacher have a more focused, disciplined classroom, which gives the students a receptive learning environment.

Lane explains that if a teacher can provide a safe, productive learning environment, a lot more educa-

*"The real goal [of PBS] is to increase the time available for teaching and to make that time as effective as possible."*

—Kathleen Lane



tion goes on. "It stands to reason that if you're spending your class time on discipline problems, you're not spending it on teaching," she says. "If I take the time to teach the behavior and then you behave better, I can teach more and I can teach more effectively."

The PBS approach uses three levels of prevention, with the interventions increasing with the levels. Lane likens the first, or primary, level to a vaccine, in that it teaches children the desired behavior which prevents, or vaccinates against, the undesired behavior and the associated negative consequences. About 80-85 percent of students respond to this primary intervention level, integrating the message of expected behavior and performing within those parameters. The second level is designed to reverse harm by supporting students who have not responded to the primary level. Lane says about 10-15 percent of students fall into this second level, where small group intervention with social skills or academic support is often effective. "We might work on how to resolve conflicts," Lane says. "While a student might have learned that aggressive behavior has worked for them elsewhere, we talk about the behaviors that are appropriate in a school setting and practice using them.

"We have to be very careful not to be disrespectful to the rules of their home or their culture," Lane

cautions. "In their world, aggressive behavior may be what works for them. We focus on the concept of 'while we're at school, this is how we behave.'"

The third, or tertiary, level is for the remaining five percent of students with ongoing behavior that is dangerous, disruptive and deters others from learning. Teachers work one-on-one with these students to understand the trigger for the behavior, provide help to develop better behaviors and keep the student and others safe. "We don't want to wait for them to fail," Lane says. "We are looking for an intervention that helps address the problems that the child is facing and find ways to deal with them."

Essential to all three levels is realizing that all behavior, positive or negative, serves a purpose for that person, and that understanding the reasons for a person's behavior often uncovers the path for changing that behavior.

Lane cites an example of a young girl who repeatedly acted out during "circle time" and as a result was separated from her peers. The cycle of acting out and being separated from the group was repeated over and over. The girl's behavior did not improve until the teacher understood that the child was profoundly shy and found circle time uncomfortable. The teacher developed a plan that encouraged a specific amount of participation in the circle, after which the student was allowed to remain in circle time, but without the anxiety or fear that she might be called on to participate.

"The behavior is always telling you something," Lane says. "You have to ask yourself if the work is too easy or too hard, if the setting is uncomfortable. You look for a pattern of responding. In brief, you are trying to determine what the student is seeking or avoiding."

To help the teachers identify these patterns, Lane works with them in teams to help identify the reason why students are engaging in the target behavior of interest. "We want to give the student what they need, when they need it," Lane said. "To do that, we have to understand the function—or reason why—the behavior occurs."

Lane's experience as a teacher and researcher has shown her that PBS is useful throughout the K-12 environment, but in different ways. In elementary school, Lane has found that PBS has proved effective at establishing a framework for behavior that supports learning and helps build the community.

In middle and high school, she cautions, teachers have to be aware that students are faced with rules and expectations that change from teacher to teacher.

"What's OK in one teacher's classroom may not be OK in the next teacher's classroom, and that can be confusing to children. This is one of the reasons school site teams need to establish schoolwide expectations," she says.

Lane says a key part of PBS is that it must be personalized to the community. The faculty, staff and parents must come together to decide what their culture is, what behavior they want to see and how that will be rewarded. "This doesn't work if an expert comes in and tells the school community what the desired actions are and what the consequences will be," she says. "Everybody has to get on board, and then they have to connect with each child."

At Eakin Elementary, Lane worked with the faculty to help them develop the school's expectations matrix and other PBS components to fit their school's culture. "We had several meetings, and they led us through several exercises to help us develop our plan," Ross says. "We incorporated our character education virtues into the program."

At Eakin, PBS is taught in the classroom starting with the first day of school, when the teachers outline the behavior expected in the school—from the classroom to the hallways to the cafeteria and even when the students are outside on the playground, arriving or leaving school, and riding the bus. The expectations are listed on a matrix that is posted throughout the school and included in the parents' handbook.

Ross says that with the matrix, teachers look for students who are behaving appropriately and reward them with a ticket. The tickets are redeemable for

**PBS**

drawings of special privileges, including "PBS Yoga with Ms. Ross" and eating lunch with friends at a special

table in the cafeteria. The PBS rewards even extend to the teachers. Ross says that teachers earn tickets for using positive language, managing tasks such as turning in report cards before the deadline and being responsible and safe.

Even with the schoolwide embrace of PBS, Ross acknowledges that she still sees a small percentage of children who aren't behaving. The secondary- and tertiary-level supports of PBS give the faculty new lenses for looking at the problem. "Every kid can do better, and the teacher has a role in that," she says. "When a child is causing a problem, we can sit down and focus on the behavior and come up with a strategy. That encouraging philosophy really affects how we deal with things."



From left, Chad Colby, former deputy assistant secretary, U.S. Department of Education; Catherine Freeman, senior program officer, National Research Center of the National Academies of Science; Claire Sullivan, former associate director, Domestic Policy Council; and Kerri Briggs, assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education, U.S. Department of Education. Colby and Sullivan joined Briggs and Freeman to teach one section of the course.

### Federal policymakers teach course at Peabody

Two federal policymakers—Kerri Briggs, assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education for the U.S. Department of Education, and Catherine Freeman, BS'93, senior program officer for the National Research Center of the National Academies of Science—co-taught a new special topics course in education policy at Peabody College this spring.

"We are very excited to be able to tap the expertise of two individuals who have played important roles in the formulation of recent federal education policy," Dean Camilla Benbow said. "The course exposed our students to firsthand knowledge of policymaking at a very high level."

The course, The Development and Implementation of Federal Education Policy, examined the intersection between politics and policy and the institutions and variables—political, legal, financial or public relations—that affect the way issues are resolved. It was designed to assist students in developing skills in research, analysis, writing and policy strategy, including learning how to absorb large amounts of material in a short time, analyze that material and prepare decision memoranda.

As assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education, Briggs played a pivotal role in policy and management issues affecting schools under the No Child Left Behind Act by directing, coordinating and recommending policy for programs designed to assist state and local education agencies with improving academic achievement, helping ensure equal access to services, and providing financial assistance to local education agencies whose revenues are affected by federal activities.

Freeman manages projects that examine the use of research data in the social sciences, the role of language acquisition in closing the achievement gap, and whether the development of common metrics is beneficial to the social sciences. She previously served as deputy assistant secretary for policy in the U.S. Department of Education, where she formulated and executed No Child Left Behind policies nationwide.

—Melanie Moran





Professor Sharon Shields, her dad and her dog have found community on campus.

# Lessons Learned

*Sharon Shields, professor of human and organizational development and faculty head of Murray House, reflects on the meaning of community, the importance of text messaging and why she loves living with college students*

BY Sharon L. Shields, PhD'76, with Geordie Brackin, BS'02, MEd'10

If you think your life is intense, consider this: I live in a house with 150 first-year college students. When The Commons, a residential community of students, faculty and professional staff, was introduced for the class of 2012, I jumped at the chance to participate in this innovative venture for a year. In my 34 years as a member of the Vanderbilt faculty, I have always been drawn to the idea of living—and learning—side by side with students. Seeing the growth, exploration and discovery of every student is inspiring. I've picked up a few things, too. Here are my five greatest lessons learned from living for a year in a house of first-year college students.

## Stay plugged in

One of the first things I did was to purchase a BlackBerry. To be a valued member of a community, you need to speak the language. I send more text messages in a day than any other 60-year-old I know. The music on my iPod has changed, too. There are more tracks by Beyoncé, Lenka and Yolanda Adams than there were before. Some of the most interesting conversations I've had with students have been about the Beatles. When I was 18, "Imagine" was a life-changing song. For my students now, some hearing it for the first time, it still is. Students are amazed I saw the Beatles' first live appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. This always leads to discussions about Vietnam, the Civil Rights Movement and the role of activism today.

## Be present

I often sit in the Murray House lobby to work. I know the students and they know me—and we can be together. It just so happens they're writing papers, and I'm grading papers. To them, I have become more than a person who only teaches. Students see me living life—I wear pajamas, I can throw the football, I get up early and go to class, I share friends, family and colleagues with them, and I like my morning coffee on the patio with my dog, Pip, running in the upper quad. My dad, whom the students call "Pop," lives with me. It's comforting for them to have a grandpa in the house. I hope they also see how much I truly care about them.

## Pull an all-nighter

Since moving in, my daily clock has changed. For students, midnight to 6 a.m. is a social time to congregate at the campus market for snacks as a study break. The lines are so long, midnight feels like midday. Students ask me to go with them. They get potato chips, popcorn and cereal. I go for iced coffee—decaf. I have also learned that the prime time for students to have house council meetings, staff meetings and committee meetings is at 9:30 at night—this is a big change for me. The campus seems to never sleep.

## Engage your community

I respect how these students strive to make a difference. One has a patent for a medical device; another student is a music composer at the Blair School of Music. Not only are they the brightest entering class at Vanderbilt, but they're also involved in tutoring, working in soup kitchens, serving physically challenged children, mentoring women who are just leaving prison and aiding immigrant communities. I sense this commitment to service is lifelong. How students connect because of these similar—and even different—interests is inspiring. Our house is engaged in service work with Mending Hearts and the Susan Gray School. Remember the first activity you were really passionate about? For me it was working as a tutor with a basketball program in Louisville, Kentucky, for inner city youth. I was convinced I was going to transform the city. I see the same passion here daily. The youthful exuberance and energy we all felt at 18 years old? It is alive and well at Vanderbilt. Trust me.

## Always keep learning

Living in a shared community with first-year students has changed my perspective and added depth to my relationship with students. I strive to connect these young people to their university, encourage their enthusiasm and create a shared wisdom. We are all learners and, in a way, traveling on similar arcs in our lives. I have been at Vanderbilt for 34 years and I'm still asking, What's my purpose? What's next? So are my students. I'm seeing them at their life's launching pad. It's an incredible circle; I feel like I'm 60 years old—going on 18.

My year living in The Commons has been remarkable. There are plenty more lessons I want to share—even more to learn. My responsibility to our students is to teach, to learn and to improve. Can I become better? I certainly hope so—I just signed up to live here again next year.

To [the students], I have become more than a person who teaches. Students see me living life... I hope they also see how much I care about them.



# Charles Kurz II

## A multi-generational family legacy

Scholarships for students with financial need are a family affair for Charles Kurz II, and one with a long history for this fourth-generation Philadelphian.

“Our family has always been interested in education,” Kurz says. “My grandfather was almost a self-educated person, and fortuitously my father and his brothers and my mother and her family all were able to attend college. They all recognized the value of a college education, especially for those who could not afford one.”

Long before Kurz or anyone in his family had set foot on the Vanderbilt campus, he understood the impact that a scholarship gift can have. In the late 1970s, the first Kurz Scholarship was established at Trinity College in Connecticut, Kurz’s alma mater, where it continues today. There’s a Kurz Family Scholarship at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, where Kurz, his father and an uncle studied. The family established named scholarships at the Episcopal Academy in Philadelphia where his children attended school and at the William Penn Charter School attended by Kurz, his uncles and cousins. The Webb Institute, a small private college in Glen Cove on Long Island, specializing in naval architecture and marine engineering, also has a Kurz family scholarship because the focus of the Kurz family business is in the maritime industry.

When Kurz’s son, Charles “Chad” Kurz III, attended Peabody (B.S.’04, M.Ed.’05), a Kurz Family Scholarship was established at Vanderbilt, too. For more than five years now, the endowed scholarship has enabled students

to attend Peabody who might not otherwise have been able to afford a Vanderbilt education.

Soon after Chad began attending classes in 2000, Kurz became engaged with parent life at Vanderbilt and began to volunteer for Peabody.

“My original connection started early in 2001 with the Parents Leadership Committee,” Kurz says. “I got involved subsequently with Peabody College’s component of the *Shape the Future* campaign. It

was then that the decision was made to create a Kurz Family Scholarship at Peabody.”

The need-based scholarship is intended for students who have an interest in human and organizational development or are graduate students in organizational leadership or studying to have a career in institutional advancement. One or two recipients are named each year, and Kurz enjoys taking an active lead in getting to know them.



Charles Kurz with this year’s Kurz Scholars, Kathryn Levene, ’09, and Maeghan Wilson, ’10.

“I try to have a personal relationship with our scholars,” Kurz says. “When I come [to Nashville], I call in advance and ask to meet with our scholarship recipients. I want to understand their personal passions, their academic progress, what they intend to do after they graduate from Vanderbilt and let them know of the Kurz family’s interest in what happens beyond their Peabody education.”

Currently, there are two Kurz scholars: Kathryn Levene, ’09, and Maeghan Wilson, ’10.

“Mr. Kurz is the greatest,” Wilson says. “He loves Vanderbilt so much. He keeps up [with the scholars]. He can tell you things about his first scholar, five years back, and the things he is doing today. He is really sweet.”

Kurz has stayed connected with Vanderbilt and Peabody even after his son’s graduation, through roles on the Parents Leadership Committee and the Peabody campaign committee. That connection continues through three generations—his mother, himself and his son. Kurz’s 94-year-old mother, Dorothy, is one of the founding members of Vanderbilt’s successful Grandparents Leadership Committee.

“I say ‘Once a Vanderbilt parent, always a Vanderbilt parent,’” Kurz comments. “It’s very important to keep parents and grandparents engaged after their son or daughter graduates from Vanderbilt, at least up until their first five-year reunion. If we can be kept active in the institution, then that same loyalty and commitment to alma mater should rub off on the student who graduates.”

Kurz also sees himself as an ambassador for the Kurz family to Peabody. He supports Vanderbilt at home by hosting small functions for Philadelphia families who want to learn more about Peabody. He actively participates in events sponsored by the Vanderbilt Philadelphia chapter.

“What I hope to do is mentor for my son how important it is for us to continue the legacy that we’ve established at Peabody for helping other students who are less fortunate to have the opportunity to benefit from a Vanderbilt education,” Kurz says.



Chad Kurz, BS’04, MEd’05, Dorothy Kurz and Charles Kurz

## Shape the Future goal met, scholarships the top priority

With \$62 million in gifts and pledges to date, Peabody has just surpassed its \$60 million Shape the Future campaign goal. Peabody alumni and friends stretched to achieve new levels of generosity, supporting scholarships, faculty chairs, research and important investments in facilities. With one goal reached, we’ve set a new one. Peabody’s Shape the Future goal is now \$75 million—with a priority focus on scholarship support. Now, more than ever, gifts for scholarships and financial aid are essential to ensure that outstanding students have the opportunity to attend Peabody.

“Strong leadership will be vital and a team effort will be important to help Peabody achieve its ambitious new goal,” says Charles Kurz II, whose own relationship to Peabody continues even after the graduation

of his son, Chad (BS’04, MEd’05). There are many ways to give. The Kurz family established an endowed scholarship that allows students who may not have the financial means to be able to receive a Vanderbilt education. A named endowed scholarship requires a minimum gift of \$100,000 (pledges can be made up to five years). Scholarship gifts of less than \$100,000 can be directed to Peabody’s pooled scholarship fund that combines gifts from a number of donors and puts that income to work generating interest. When a donor’s gifts in the pooled fund reach \$100,000, a new named scholarship fund is established, recognizing the donor’s generosity in perpetuity.

The Kurz family of suburban Philadelphia continues to support their named scholarship through annual and planned giving gifts. “My mother, a proud Vandy grand

parent, has been very thoughtful in utilizing provisions for making charitable IRA rollover distributions to provide additional funding for the Kurz scholarship at Peabody,” Kurz says. “My mother also appreciates being recognized by Vanderbilt as a member of the Sarratt Society.”

All gifts—large or small, endowed or annual—are significant and make an impact. Please find an opportunity to be a part of Peabody’s success in educating new generations.

For more information about giving to Peabody and supporting scholarships, contact Kerry McCartney, associate dean for development and alumni relations, at [kerry.mccartney@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:kerry.mccartney@vanderbilt.edu) or 615/322-8500. To make a gift to Peabody anytime online: <http://giving.vanderbilt.edu/peabody>.

### Double your gift

Many employers and companies match their employees’ contributions. If your company is one of these, your generosity to Vanderbilt could be doubled or even tripled. To learn if your company matches gifts, visit: [www.matching.vanderbilt.edu](http://www.matching.vanderbilt.edu) or ask your human resources representative.

## OpportunityVanderbilt

### A scholarship is the gift of opportunity...

Stacy Flores knows education changes lives, because it changed hers. Her Houston college-prep charter high school, founded by a Vanderbilt graduate, put her on the course to be a teacher. Now at Peabody with a double major in secondary education and English, she’s learning every facet of what it takes to teach and honing her writing and love of literature.

It’s the scholarship she receives that makes all of this possible.

“I’m always learning here, from my professors, from my classmates, at my campus job. I know that I can create change,” she says.

With a scholarship gift, you give other exceptional young women and men the opportunity to learn, discover and achieve at Vanderbilt.

*Opportunity Vanderbilt supports the university’s commitment to replace need-based undergraduate student loans with grants and scholarships, with a goal of \$100 million in gifts for scholarship endowment.*

Photo by Vanderbilt Creative Services



Stacy Flores, Peabody 2011 McAllen-Looney Scholarship

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# Roundtable

The 2008 Roundtable donor society dinner took place October 2 on the Commons Center lawn and not only honored educators, but treated the attendees to presentations of current student research being done at Peabody on both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Presentations ranged from a Peabody Ingram scholar's work on a public health study in China to a Ph.D. candidate's analysis of the relationship between student achievement and school organizational structure and processes. Ten students spoke about their research, and 14 educators were honored publicly at the event.



From left to right, 1) Anne Louise Sewell, BS'07, MED'09; Georgia Sewell; and Dean Camilla Benbow; 2) John and Tanner Rice, '11; 3) Mary Cain Helfrich and John Cain; 4) Bill and Sarah Rowan; 5) Cameron, '10, Courtney, Scott, and Carter, '09, Pastrick.

PHOTOS BY PEYTON HOGE

## Join us for the 2009 Roundtable dinner

Come celebrate with Peabody and make plans to spend the weekend with Vanderbilt in early October. The Peabody Roundtable annual dinner is set for **Thursday, October 1**, in the Wyatt Center Rotunda. The Roundtable recognizes the generous support of those who provide annual gifts of \$1,000 or more to Peabody. Vanderbilt's Family Weekend follows, with activities from Friday, October 2, through Sunday, October 4.





## Phila Hach, BS'49

### *An appetite for life*

One of her cookbooks is titled *From Phila with Love*, and it sums up the sunny outlook of Phila Hach, BS'49—world-renowned chef, caterer, businesswoman, lecturer and author of 17 cookbooks—who is still going strong at age 83.

She's met three United States presidents, Nobel Prize winner Albert Einstein, and once catered a meal for about 1,800 dignitaries when the entire United Nations delegation came to Nashville in the mid-1970s.

"I'm getting ready to go to Las Vegas to speak to about 4,000 or 5,000 caterers from around the world," Hach said in an interview earlier this year. "I will speak to these people about how you empower yourself to move forward through your adversities. Of course, we have an economic slowdown right now, but that shouldn't put you out of business. It should put you in more business with vision."

Hach earned her degree while serving as a full-time flight attendant, or stewardess, as they were known at the time, for American Airlines. She attended classes Monday through Thursday and then flew on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. She flew for 10 years, all the while continuing to learn about food during layovers.

"I was always in the kitchens of the great hotels," she says. "You had the Savoy in London, the Georges V in Paris, the Tivoli in Copenhagen, and the Sacher in Vienna. Every time I would go in, they would welcome me into the kitchen. I learned so much from these people. They would let me

have an apron, and I would watch them. It was just fabulous." She also sat in on cooking classes at the University of Hawaii during layovers, learning about the art of cooking Asian and Samoan dishes. While training flight attendants in Chicago, she attended the Antoinette Pope School of Fancy Cooking.

She met her late husband, Adolf Hach, in Paris after he offered to help her with luggage. Back in Nashville, she hosted what she believes was the first televised cooking show in the South, *Kitchen Kollege* on WSM-TV, while continuing to fly. She shared her TV table with the likes of June Carter Cash, Minnie Pearl, Julia Child and Duncan Hines.

Her future husband saw Phila on television about two years after first meeting her and wrote to her a number of times before she consented to go out with him.

They went on a yearlong honeymoon and then opened a catering business in 1956 in Clarksville, Tenn., where they later operated a very successful inn. For the past 25 years, she and her son Joe have owned and operated Hachland Hill Vineyard, a corporate retreat and bed and breakfast on her old family property in Joelton, Tenn. They have another business that caters international flights out of Fort Campbell, Ky.

Her favorite menu to serve? "I love the old recipes of the South, like country ham, chicken and dumplings, cheese grits with garlic, homemade biscuits and my grandmother's custard pie," says Hach.

—Lew Harris

*I was always in the kitchens of the great hotels. Every time I would go in, they would welcome me into the kitchen. I learned so much from these people. They would let me have an apron, and I would watch them. It was just fabulous.*

— PHILA HACH



## Jackie Page, BA'63, MA'64, EdS'89

### *On a mission, with attitude*

Jackie Page's mission throughout her professional and personal life has been about two things: access and attitude. Born with quadriplegia during the depression in Asheville, N. C., Page had to adapt to life with few resources besides her own self determination.

She came a long way, to receiving a bachelor of arts in sociology, a master of arts in counseling and an educational specialist degree in human development counseling, all from Peabody. Until her undergraduate education, Page was taught at home. During her childhood, that amounted to little more than 90 minutes two days a week. "My mother worked nights as a private duty nurse," Page recalls. "If she had to sleep, I'd have her put a textbook on my table, and I'd read. The teacher would get so aggravated, and say, 'Well, I'm not up to there yet.' But there was no TV; I didn't have anything else to do except read."

Page became the first Peabody student in a wheelchair to earn a degree. In later years she broke through other barriers as a disability advocate, both in her work with Outlook Nashville and Easter Seals in Asheville. She is best known for her nearly three decades as director of the Nashville Metro Government Disability Information Office. In that role, Page was a regular fixture on panels and at conferences, spreading public awareness about the needs and rights of those with disabilities.

"It was a dream come true to be able to introduce clubs, organizations and classrooms to someone who could describe the world as seen by a person with a disability," Page says.

Retired in 2005, Page recently has encountered significant health challenges. Rising medical costs and a dwindling retirement income forced Page to sell her home and give up her independence. She currently resides in an assisted living center in Nashville, dealing firsthand with the consequences of a state that has virtually no home- or community-based services or funding for people with physical disabilities.

Which brings the story back to access and attitude. "If [society has] the appropriate attitude, then [it] will have already done a lot of these things, and not need magpies like me saying, 'When are you going to put this in place?'" Page said.

"You can't have access without attitude. And it's difficult for people to learn what a person with a disability expects from others, unless there's access. So it's all intertwined."

— Ned Andrew Solomon



NED ANDREW SOLOMON

*If [society has] the appropriate attitude, then [it] will have already done a lot of these things, and not need magpies like me.*

— JACKIE PAGE



## Spring Whirl

PHOTO BY John Russell

Spring weather in Nashville changes in an instant. As cold fronts from the northwest brush up against warm fronts from the Gulf, the clouds billow and sometimes illustrate the violence of the clash. But on this spring day, no violent weather was in the forecast. Perhaps the clouds were mimicking the whirl of mental activity taking place within the mind of the single student crossing the mall.





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