As dean of the Panuska College of Professional Studies (PCPS) at The University of Scranton, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Fall 2009 Challenges in Theory & Practice newsletter. I invite you to explore our extensive newsletter, including our new web presence that will be showcased soon. Our undergraduate and graduate programs are dedicated to the highest academic standards through the “helping professions” with a faith-inspired concern for justice.

The Edward R. Leahy, Jr. Endowment and PCPS promote the mission of The University of Scranton by engaging in a conference on disabilities. The 8th Annual Northeastern U.S. Conference on disABILITY focused on the theme of healthcare reform and disabilities. The annual Conference is an important opportunity for us to reflect on how we respond individually and in solidarity with others. My heartfelt thanks go to this year’s co-chairs, Dr. Barbara Wagner and Lisa Burns. Their dedication manifests a profound commitment to the values of our College and the Leahy Endowment.

PCPS has a clear and compelling mission to prepare men and women for “service to others” through a comprehensive liberal education. It is only in service to others, according to the teaching of St. Ignatius, that one becomes more fully human and, hence, more fully divine. Our outstanding faculty and students are committed to the encouragement of learning, education of the whole person, and the service of faith and the promotion of justice. In fact, in the 2008–2009 academic year, our students completed 14,713 academic hours in service and civic engagement. PCPS offers 36 specific service learning courses including freshman seminar, which provide our College with the grand total of 74 course sections with a service learning component. Many of our service hours impact the work in our Leahy Community Health and Family Center, our learning laboratory. Our Leahy Community Health and Family Center has grown from one program – a free medical clinic for the uninsured – to 17 programs in less than two years. Our Center now offers “free” clinics in sub-acute medicine, physical therapy, nutrition and counseling.

The Panuska College of Professional Studies is committed to the preparation of our students in this Jesuit Catholic tradition. On October 21, 2009, Fr. Matthew Ruhl, S. J., provided a lecture on “Charity vs. Charitable.” Father Ruhl is the pastor of an urban Jesuit parish in the heart of Kansas City, Missouri, and the former pastor of St. Joseph’s Parish in East St. Louis, Illinois. He is determined to cycle from Cape Flattery, Washington, to Key West, Florida, in 100 days. This cycle for change, www.cyclingforChange.org, came after reading Catholic Charities USA’s Campaign to Reduce Poverty.

In the words of Herbert Spencer, “The great aim of education is not knowledge but action.” I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter, and please realize if there is anything I can do to help you now or in the future, do not hesitate to call or e-mail me at debra.pellegrino@scranton.edu.

Sincerely,

Dr. Debra Pellegrino

Mother Teresa, who spent much of her life tending to the destitute and dying on Calcutta’s streets, penned this statement, “We cannot do great things on this earth. We can only do little things with great love.”
The Edward R. Leahy, Jr. Endowment was founded in 1995 by Edward and Patricia Leahy to honor the life and memory of their son, Edward R. Leahy, Jr., whose personal disabilities were attended to with compassion and skill by many health professionals over the course of his life. The Leahy Endowment provides financial resources to support theoretical and applied research, faculty development, and support for programs that advance the cause of disabled persons who need long-term assistance. The endowment supports the work of persons practicing in physical and occupational therapy, nursing science and related health-care areas, with particular interest in individuals and groups that approach their practice as scholars, teachers and practitioners. Primary recipients are University of Scranton faculty from the Panuska College of Professional Studies, consisting of the Departments of Counseling and Human Services, Education, Exercise Science and Sport, Health Administration and Human Resources, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy.

Each fall the Endowment publishes a Call for Proposals to identify faculty candidates for next year’s grant awards. Awards are granted in May for the following year. The selection committee is comprised of members of the University’s allied health faculty and the dean of the Panuska College of Professional Studies.

The Endowment was established and is supported, in part, by the Leahy family and is enriched annually by gifts from corporations and individuals who wish to support the work of the Edward R. Leahy, Jr. Endowment.

In the occupational therapy (OT) department, small groups of graduate students partner with faculty mentors to develop their knowledge about, and competencies in, the research process. Throughout their graduate year, the students engage in a diversity of projects that may include (but are not limited to) the formulation of research questions, critical reviews of the literature, and data analysis. Throughout their year, the students engage in a diversity of projects that may include (but are not limited to) the formulation of research questions, critical reviews of the literature, project design, data collection, and/or data analysis.

When the editors of the third edition of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) textbook: The Texture of Life: Purposeful Activities in Occupational Therapy asked Dr. Rita Fleming-Castaldy, OTL, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, to assume authorship of a chapter on empowerment in occupational therapy, she integrated this scholarly endeavor into her faculty-mentored research work. Dr. Fleming-Castaldy’s research cohort – comprised of Allison Amole ’09, Allison Kearney ’09, Colleen Scannell ’09, Lauren Siconolfi ’09, and Nicole Spaldo ’09 – embraced the opportunity to learn more about the relationship between empowerment and occupational therapy. Each member of this research cohort chose an individual area of interest and completed a comprehensive critical multi-disciplinary literature review regarding the theoretical foundations of empowerment and current practices. They engaged in intense scholarly debate in and out of their scheduled research seminars about the relevance, meaning and value of empowerment to all persons that OT practitioners serve. This research cohort continuously discussed their research and critically reflected on the barriers and challenges to the implementation of empowering practices in OT. They identified the vital importance of advocating for the empowerment of all persons with disabilities and other disenfranchised populations, and critiqued the chapter’s proposed learning activities. The work of Dr. Fleming-Castaldy’s research cohort significantly contributed to the development of her chapter entitled “Activities, Human Occupation, Participation, and Empowerment” and is acknowledged in the published text. These students presented their research during the OT Department’s Third Annual Celebration of Scholars, the 2008 PCPS’ Community Celebration of Scholars, and the University’s 9th Annual Celebration of Student Scholarship. Post-graduation, this cohesive research cohort collaborated to complete a conference presentation proposal for the 2010 annual national AOTA conference, which was favorably reviewed by a juried conference committee. Consequently, this graduate research group will reunite in Orlando, Fla., to present its work, entitled “Occupational Therapy and Empowerment throughout the Lifespan: A Critical Review and Recommendations for Practice.”


Summer 2009 Study Tour of Kenya, East Africa

Dr. Tata Mbugua and Patricia Gross, Associate Professors of Education, were joined by Professor Sandra LaManna, Faculty Specialist, and Allison Bartels (B.S. ’07, M.S. ’08) for a two-week educational/service trip to Kenya from July 22–August 5. The participants were hosted by the Catholic University of East Africa’s constituent Jesuit College, Helsinki.

The three goals of this trip were:
- To complement University of Scranton initiatives on international service, with a focus on social justice on the African continent in general, and Kenya in particular
- To provide opportunities for international service to faculty and university alumni in Kenya
- To respond to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Call to solidarity with Africa on issues of faith and social justice

There were a variety of sites visited in an effort to provide experiences that captured the rich diversity of Kenya. A visit to Nyumbani, a center that caters to HIV/AIDS orphans in Nairobi, provided opportunities to interact and play games with these children, thereby dispelling some of the stigma associated with the pandemic. Attending mass in Swahili language at St. John’s Parish, Riruta, with almost 700 people, was a spiritually rewarding cultural experience filled with song, dance, and prayer. At St. Mary’s School in Nairobi, an all-boys Catholic school, the group was welcomed by the principal and faculty and given a brief overview of the school over a cup of Kenyan tea. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the education system in Kenya, the group visited the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) which prepares all curricular materials and offers professional development for teachers. A two-day safari to Amboseli Game Reserve provided insights on the one hand, and preventing environmental degradation on the other. The Nairobi Museum tour confirmed the notion that Kenya is the “cradle of mankind.” Additional trips demonstrated the scope of poverty in Kenya. At St. Cecilia’s Primary School in the Kibera slum of Nairobi, children whispered delight at seeing pencils. Dr. Mbugua explained that the pencils would probably be broken in half to multiply their use. At the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp in Nakuru, volunteer residents who taught over 60 children (ages three to seven) per UNICEF tent, generated a list that included such basics as teaching guides, national curricula syllabi, notebooks, paper, and pencils. Moved to prompt social action, the group took a trip to the local book store where US$150 enabled them to provide these necessities, along with two soccer balls, bringing smiles to all. And it was a visit to one school, Nduraru Primary School, that provided the focus of future service endeavors. While school uniforms are mandated, children at this school wore the required uniform sweaters that were literally unraveling, dresses that were torn, and shoes that were severely worn out.

The trip proved to be educationally rewarding, culturally enriching, and a great opportunity for service. A summer 2010 trip to Kenya is under discussion for faculty and students. Additional trips demonstrated the scope of poverty in Kenya. At St. Cecilia’s Primary School in the Kibera slum of Nairobi, children whispered delight at seeing pencils. Dr. Mbugua explained that the pencils would probably be broken in half to multiply their use. At the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp in Nakuru, volunteer residents who taught over 60 children (ages three to seven) per UNICEF tent, generated a list that included such basics as teaching guides, national curricula syllabi, notebooks, paper, and pencils. Moved to prompt social action, the group took a trip to the local book store where US$150 enabled them to provide these necessities, along with two soccer balls, bringing smiles to all. And it was a visit to one school, Nduraru Primary School, that provided the focus of future service endeavors. While school uniforms are mandated, children at this school wore the required uniform sweaters that were literally unraveling, dresses that were torn, and shoes that were severely worn out.

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College, Hospital Aid Ex-Soviet State

The University of Scranton is partnering with Moses Taylor Hospital to train health care administrators for a new hospital under construction in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, a former Soviet State.

The university recently received a $100,000 grant, funded by the United States Agency for International Development and the American International Health Alliance, to expand the plan to include the hospital. Since 1999, faculties from the university, a Jesuit school, have been training health care providers in Georgia. Moses Taylor Hospital is joining with numerous private health care providers in Georgia for the training process, including Medichild Georgia Company, a health care provider in Georgia for 10 years.

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Town Meeting Concludes Conference on disABILITY

The University of Scranton’s 8th Annual Northeastern U.S. Conference on disABILITY concluded with a town meeting examining the effect healthcare reform would have on those with disabilities. U.S. Senator Robert Casey participated, via teleconference, in the discussion with a panel of experts assembled in the McIlhenny Ballroom of the DeNaples Center.

Sen. Casey spoke about a bill in congress called CLASS, or the Community Living Assistance Services Support Act, which helps to make it illegal for insurance companies to discriminate against those with pre-existing conditions.

“We cannot move away from this challenge and pass it on to another generation,” Sen. Casey said. “We want to do the right thing in healthcare, in particular we want to do the right thing in regard to Americans with disabilities.”

The panelists spoke on the importance of universal and equal healthcare for all Americans. William Gannon, executive director of Pennsylvania’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, said that it should be a civil right to have universal healthcare and that having two healthcare systems—one for the wealthy to buy into and one for the rest of the U.S.—will never help those with disabilities.

“I don’t believe that the healthcare issue is ever going to be resolved in any bill coming up for action, or in the long run, until those issues of universality and equality of care are addressed in whatever that bill is,” said Gannon, adding that this is his personal opinion on the topic.

“We want to do the right thing in healthcare; in particular we want to do the right thing in regard to Americans with disabilities.”

— Senator Casey

PANUSKA COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Debra Pellegrino, Ed.D., Dean of the Panuska College of Professional Studies, opened the town meeting with a town meeting examination of the effect healthcare reform would have on persons with disabilities, seated, from left: Michael Stoehr, education consultant for the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network; Harold Blass, assistant executive director of the Luzerne County Intermediate Unit; and Fredric Schroeder, Ph.D., research professor at San Diego State University, who works in the area of vocational rehabilitation and is the former ninth commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Attorney J. Joseph Grady ’81 served as moderator.

The town meeting concluded the day-long conference held on campus on Oct. 7. The conference, sponsored by the Edward R. Leahy Jr. Endowment and The Panuska College of Professional Studies, featured professional presentations and scholarly papers on the successful transition of youth with disabilities from school to adult life.

The conference was presented by the University’s J.A. Panuska, S.J., College of Professional Studies and the Edward R. Leahy, Jr. Endowment. Honorary chairpersons of the conference were Edward Leahy, ’68 and Patricia Leahy, director of governmental affairs of the National Rehabilitation Association.
The N.Y. Yankees and The University of Scranton go back a few years. It was first during fall semester 2007 that Dave Hair, M.Ed., Department of Exercise Science & Sport Chairman, was contacted by the New York Yankees Baseball Club. They were interested in inviting one of the upper class Exercise Science students to serve as a summer intern with the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton AAA Team. The Yankees were seeking a qualified student who would assist the certified athletic trainer and certified conditioning coach.

After numerous conversations, Mike Wickland (from the Yankees Tampa Office) and Dr. Dave Hair agreed to proceed with the undertaking. All agreed that the student must have a strong background in strength training, stretching techniques, safety issues, and athletic injuries – all areas that are covered within the Exercise Science & Sport major. The student also needed to be willing to complete weekly journals for each of the athletes with whom he worked.

Once the internship was announced, numerous student applications were received. After phone interviews with the Yankees and interviews with the department faculty, John Pugliese ’09 was chosen. As a lifelong Yankee fan, Pugliese relished this opportunity to spend time with one of his favorite sports teams. He worked with the team at all home games from mid-May until classes began in late August 2007. The Yankees’ evaluation of John was extremely positive.

For summer 2009, the Yankees’ request was a bit different. They had a need for a student to work with the AA team in Trenton, N.J. Once again, qualified applications were received by 15 students. Richard Raiani ’10 was chosen for the position. Richard was to perform the same tasks, but with a different team. At the end of summer 2009, the Yankees again expressed their pleasure with a University student.

During summer 2009, Wickland and Hair met to discuss the possible continuation of this program. The Yankees expressed an interest in the possibility of expanding the number of internships to three. It is possible that the teams in Wilkes-Barre/Scranton, Trenton, and Staten Island will have University of Scranton interns during summer 2010. Several other Major League Baseball Clubs have been contacted with the hope of establishing similar opportunities.

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On May 9, 2009, the newly formed undergraduate Counseling and Human Services honor society, Tau Upsilon Alpha, held its 2nd Annual Induction Ceremony in Weinberg Memorial Library’s Scranton Heritage Room. The executive officers, Douglas Rand, Amanda Doria, Melissa Oliveri, Kathryn McKendry, and Kristen Maresca, along with the chapter moderator, Elizabeth Jacob Ph.D., inducted 19 new members. Also in attendance were keynote speaker, Anne Marie Topolczo Ph.D., associate professor in CHS, and invited alumni speaker, Brian Patchcoski, Chapter Epsilon’s previous president.

Excellence in Community Health Education ........................... Michelle T. Philippy
Excellence in Counseling and Human Services ......................... Douglas Rand
Excellence in Early Childhood Education ............................... Nicole Cacciabev
Excellence in Elementary Education .................................... Melissa K. Kaminski
Mary E. Quinn Award for Excellence in Secondary Education ...... Daniel J. Packer
Excellence in Special Education .......................................... Christina L. LaBounty
Excellence in Exercise Science and Sport ............................... Megan A. Connelly
Excellence in Health Administration .................................... Christina M. Wright
Excellence in Human Resource Studies ................................. Andrew C. Brennan
Excellence in Nursing ....................................................... Michael P. DeSarno
Sigma Theta Tau Award in Nursing ....................................... Justine E. Zobeler
Excellence in Occupational Therapy ..................................... Casey D. Holladay
Frank O’Hara Award for General Academic Excellence .......... Megan A. Connelly

FACULTY PRESENTATIONS

Darryl DeMarzio, Ph.D.


Carol A Côté, Ph.D.


Karen Brady, D.Ed.

Rita Fleming-Castaldy, Ph.D.

TaHa Mbugua, Ph.D.

Renee Hakim, Ph.D.
Seeing Teaching and Teacher-Education as a Spiritual Journey. Philosophy of Education Society, Montreal, Quebec, March 2009.

The Teacher’s Gift of Sacrifice as the Art of the Self. Philosophy of Education Society, Montreal, Quebec, March 2009.

Karen Brady, D.Ed.
Exploring Problem Based Learning and Clinical Reasoning: An Action Research Study. 2nd International Problem Based Learning Symposium, Republic Polytechnic, Singapore, June 2009.

Taha Mbugua, Ph.D.

Renee Hakim
NURSING

Patricia Wright, Nursing Department, was recently chosen to participate in a seminar on the grounded theory research method. Participants discussed their research and received feedback on their use of the method. The seminar was sponsored by the Grounded Theory Institute and was facilitated by Dr. Barney Glaser, who developed the grounded theory method. Wright's attendance was supported by the PCPS Junior Faculty Development Program.
Dr. Robert J. Spinelli, Assistant Professor and Director of the Undergraduate Program in Health Administration is bringing his classroom to the community during the fall semester. As part of the course requirements for Service Learning in HADM 111, students will meet service learning requirements by volunteering at the Leahy Community Health and Family Center and the Lupus Foundation of Pennsylvania, Pocono Northeast Branch. These undergraduate students, ranging from freshmen to seniors, are coordinating their service learning experiences at these two community organizations.

Dr. Spinelli, a board member of the Lupus Foundation, is also utilizing these two organizations to meet graduate level course requirements. HAD 515 Health Care Planning and Marketing requires students to complete a marketing plan for a health care organization. The plan, which also includes elements of a business plan, is the major class project which must be completed by all students. This semester the class was divided into two groups: one group worked with the Leahy Center, while the other worked with the Lupus Foundation.

Dr. Spinelli is excited that his class will be completing projects that will be utilized by both organizations and ultimately improve health care in Northeastern Pennsylvania. As part of the classroom presentation of these marketing plans, board members from both organizations will be invited into the classroom.