

## Virtual Visits with MSU Scientists Enrich Science for Montana Kids



**Tech Ed Student Wins National Award**

**S**imone Scafide, a junior in technology education from Sewell, N.J., was selected to receive the Foundation for Technology and Engineering Educators Litherland Undergraduate Scholarship for 2012. The scholarship is awarded to one student nationwide and is based upon interest in teaching, academic ability, and faculty recommendations. Scafide will receive the award at the annual International Technology and Engineering Educators Association (ITEEA) conference in March in Long Beach, Calif.

Scott Davis, associate professor in technology education, wrote in a recommendation that “There is little doubt that Simone’s career goal is to teach... her determination and energy will make an excellent teacher.”

Scafide said she is interested in teaching technology education at a middle school or working in special education adaptive technologies.

In her spare time, Scafide volunteers as a mentor for Science Olympiad students, and at a local elementary school’s Literacy Night. She is also a member of MSU Technology Education Club and ITEEA.

**E**lisabeth Swanson, associate professor of science education and the director of the Science/Math Resource Center, received an extension grant to continue Science Inquiry Learning in Classrooms (SILC) with Bozeman and Helena schools and six rural school districts in Montana. Nick Lux, assistant professor of instructional technology, is a SILC co-PI, and with Swanson, partners with faculty in chemistry, engineering, and Native American studies, and with local schools. Swanson said the goals of the program are: to engage K-8 students in science inquiries in energy alternatives being explored by MSU scientists and engineers; to expose the students to energy researchers through a virtual visit; and to expose students to careers in emerging energy fields.

In early December, Swanson, Lux, chemistry faculty **Chris Bahn** and **Bill McLaughlin**, and **Walter Fleming** from Native American Studies hosted a core planning team meeting and demonstrated a virtual visit using the video conferencing technology in Reid Hall 223. **Julie Workman**, a student research engineer at MSU working with wind energy, answered questions from sixth grade students in a Helena classroom, who were building a miniature wind turbine.

Based on the needs of teachers in the grant, Lux created a web site “Explorations in Emerging Energy Concepts” (E3C), which he calls “a collaborative working environment” for science teachers. There are four inquiry modules that focus on alternative energy—wind, biofuels, solar energy, and hydrogen fuel cells.

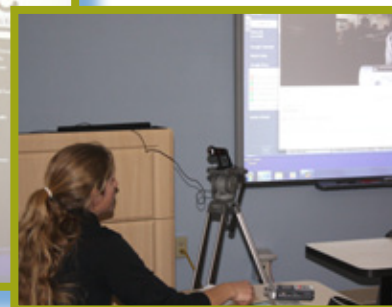
“Teachers can upload questions, add content, upload reflections about their students’ work with the inquiry models, and upload data and findings,” said Lux.

Of the virtual visit, Workman said, “It was a great experience for me. I was able to take what the kids had learned and supplement it.”

The core planning team will now evaluate the virtual visits and look for ways to improve the experience for the participants.



Left, Nick Lux demonstrates the E3C web site.



Virtual Scientist Julie Workman converses with students in Helena.

## Counseling Students Find Ways to Help in the Community

Students in **Rebecca Koltz's** Professional Issues in Counseling class planned, completed, and evaluated advocacy projects this past fall semester. Koltz, who is an assistant professor in the counseling program, assigned her first year students "advocacy projects which focus on becoming actively involved in the community." The students divided into four groups and planned their specific projects, which included a suicide prevention forum; a communications and healthy relations seminar for MSU undergraduate students; an informational fair at Belgrade Senior Center to promote wellness and mental health in the senior population; and the organization of the very first honorary counseling society in Montana--Chi Sigma Iota Society.

**Julio Brionez**, a first year mental health counseling student from San Francisco, and his group hosted the suicide prevention forum in the SUB Ballroom and had speakers from state, county and school organizations. The group also featured a survivor who lost a son to suicide.

"We wanted to get four different perspectives and ideas on what we can do to prevent suicide," said Brionez.

Around 30 people attended the event, and the majority of the audience were advocates for suicide prevention and a few suicide attempters, said Brionez. It is a subject "no one wants to talk about."

Koltz said the advocacy project was a practical assignment. "Students want to help where they can and this project gets them involved in their first semester in the counseling program," she said.

## Bailey Receives Funding for Grandparents Program

**Sandy Bailey**, family and human development Extension specialist in HHD, has received funding from three separate sources over this last year to support and expand the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program. Foundations that contributed \$10,000 each include the Brookdale Foundation of New York, the Beim Foundation, and the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation. The funds will be used for programs on the Crow and Northern Cheyenne reservations and in the rural areas of Gallatin and Park counties.



### COUNSELING ADVOCACY PROJECTS

#### SUICIDE PREVENTION FORUM:

Julio Brionez, Kari Halvorsen, Megan Obert, Mary Mulcaire-Jones

#### CHI SIGMA IOTA SOCIETY:

Melissa Baggett, Andy Creighton, Abbie Lawler, Rachael Lingerfelt

#### PROMOTING WELLNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH IN THE SENIOR POPULATION:

Julie Gauthier, Karie Gundrum, Adrianna Willoughby

#### COMMUNICATIONS AND HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS SEMINAR:

Katie d'Autremont, Melisa DeMeyer, Allison Gidley, Melissa Heinrich



# Alumni Notes

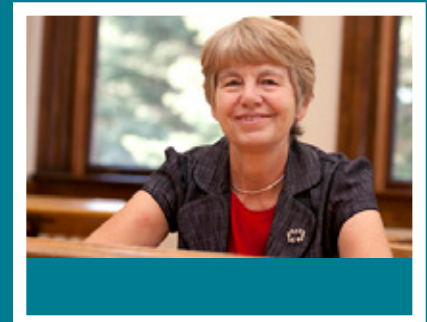
## Ed Leadership Alum Named MT Superintendent of the Year



**A**t the fall conference of the Montana Conference of Education Leadership, MSU alumnus **Daniel Farr** of Sidney, Mont., was named Montana's Superintendent of the Year for 2012. The award honors successful Montana school district leaders who work with their entire learning communities to provide the highest quality education. Farr received his bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees from MSU and has been the superintendent of Sidney Public Schools since 2009. Prior to the superintendency, he was Sidney's high school principal and K-12 curriculum director for ten years and also served as summer migrant education director from 2002 to 2009.

Farr grew up on a ranch near Cody, Wyo., until his parents sold it and moved the family to Billings. He finished his public school education there and graduated from Billings West High School. His first teaching experience after graduating from MSU was in Culbertson Public Schools as a junior/senior high teacher and school counselor. Other education experiences include high school principal in Poplar, Mont., and junior/senior high school principal in Three Forks, Mont. Farr is a member of numerous professional education associations and has received several other awards relating to the education profession.

## Child Development Alumna Named MT 2011 Professor of Year



**A**n MSU child development alumna was named the 2011 U.S. Professor of the Year for Montana, honoring her work in undergraduate teaching. Julie Bullard, professor of education and director of early childhood education at the University of Montana-Western, was presented the award by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

Bullard earned a bachelor's degree from MSU in 1975 and then worked as a house parent for abused and neglected children in Billings. While earning a master's in elementary education with an emphasis in early childhood, history and social science from MSU-Northern in Havre, Bullard also worked preparing future child development teachers for Havre Head Start, and the Fort Belknap and Rocky Boy reservations. In 1989, she became director of a grant funded early childhood education program at UM-Western (now called the Western Early Childhood Education program) and saw the program grow from three to nine sites across Montana, offering certificates, associate's and bachelor's degrees, and a minor to a teaching certificated endorsement.

Bullard received a doctorate in education from MSU in 1996 and has been very active on state and national boards that affect undergraduate education. Besides helping write the national standards for early childhood professional preparation, she is also the author of "Creating Environments for Learning: Birth to Age Eight," published by Pearson Publishers in 2010.

## PE Alums Receive Awards

A number of health enhancement alumni have been recognized this past year with awards in their states. Three of the most recent are Jim Hunt (HE '03), Trudy (Fochs) Weaver (HE '05), and Niki Webster-Graham (HE '99).

Hunt is in his eighth year of teaching elementary physical education in Marietta, Ga., and has received the Birney Butler Outstanding Educator award from the Georgia State Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The award recognizes educators who demonstrate professional excellence and commitment to the mission of PTA. The *Creek Chronicle* school newsletter states that Hunt “is passionate about the well-being of our students and is well-versed in the test data that supports the link between healthy habits and cognitive development.” Hunt has created a web site that contains a great deal of information about the research he and his colleagues have used to develop a very successful physical education program. Click on the link to view: <http://sopecreeklibrary.typepad.com/pe/>

Hunt, who grew up in Georgia, chose to attend MSU because he liked a university with great outdoor recreation opportunities and he wanted to be a teacher. Hunt credits assistant professor of health enhancement Nancy Colton with his success by stating, “I am so thankful for the foundation you (Colton) helped build during my time at MSU.”

In November, Niki Webster-Graham received a national award from the National Native American AIDS Prevention Center, “Honoring the Red Ribbon,” for her work in HIV prevention. The award recognizes a single Native person each year. Graham, who is Salish and grew up in Ronan, has been at Salish Kootenai College for seven years. She began working at the college as a training coordinator for the Northwest AIDS Education Training Center. Since 2008, she has served as the director of the college’s Center for Prevention and Wellness. The program is grant funded and is currently funded by three different agencies.

She previously taught health enhancement for one year in Bozeman and three years in Nevada before moving her family back to Montana, where her husband accepted a teaching position. Graham is currently working on a master’s in public health at the University of Montana.

Trudy (Fochs) Weaver, a 2005 health enhancement K-12 alumna, was named Idaho Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year for 2011. Weaver has taught at O’Leary Middle School in Twin Falls, Idaho, for the last three years and was recognized for her quality physical education program, her use of various teaching methodologies, and innovative learning experiences. Weaver also credits “MSU for getting us (students) involved in MAHERPD (the professional physical education organization). Without their hard work and dedication, I would have never reached this life long goal.”

Trudy Weaver accepts the ID Middle School Teacher of the Year 2011 award.



Jim Hunt and wife Molly at the awards banquet in Georgia.



Niki Webster-Graham is honored with national Red Ribbon award.

