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Center for Gifted Studies

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the Challenge

Magazine for The Center for Gifted Studies

Duke TIP Closes Its Doors: The Center Opens the Window

For more than four decades, Duke's Talent Identification Program (TIP) provided opportunities for off-level testing and enrichment for high-ability young people – and we've been right there with them. In fact, The Summer Program for Verbally and Mathematically Precocious Youth (VAMPY) began as the very first cooperative program for Duke TIP in the early 1980s. These campers all participated in the talent search in 7th grade by taking the SAT or ACT and earning qualifying scores (equal to incoming college freshmen). Additionally, The Center has hosted every single Kentucky Recognition Ceremony for Duke TIP except the first two, bringing tens of thousands of young people to WKU to celebrate their accomplishments.



The ceremony scheduled for May 2020 and the talent search itself were not held due to the pandemic. In-person camps and talent searches were cancelled not just by Duke and us, but also by centers and universities across the United States. Much to our deep sadness, Duke TIP was forced to close its doors permanently this fall due to COVID-19-related issues. Needless to say, those involved in talent development and gifted education throughout the world were shocked. And high-ability children throughout

Duke's 16-state region lost life-changing opportunities. This included our Kentucky young people.

We could not let this happen.

Staff at The Center are currently collaborating with several universities and centers around the United States to develop a plan to ensure we continue to identify and serve talented students across the Commonwealth. Iowa has always hosted its own state talent search, a departure from other states who participated in regional searches. Drs. Susan Assouline and Ann Shoplik from the Belin-Blank Center at the University of Iowa have been instrumental in creating a consortium of these entities interested in holding talent searches in their individual states. Unsur-

prisingly, Julia Roberts was one of the very first to contact Susan seeking answers, and, within a matter of days, people from a half-dozen states held the first Zoom call to establish this consortium to address needs of high-ability children in their respective states.

We will be the first state in this group to pilot our own talent search: The Kentucky Talent Search. Planning is underway, and we hope you will follow along with us as we open this new window of opportunity.

Letter from Julia



Dear Friends of The Center for Gifted Studies,

The 50th issue of *The Challenge*!

After summer programming in 2020 was disrupted by COVID19, I am happy to announce we are planning for SCATS and VAMPY on campus in June and July. We look forward to camp traditions as well as new opportunities within classes and in our time in the evenings and on the weekends. Help us spread the word that summer programming is back at WKU!

Other good news to announce is the launching of the Kentucky Talent Search. When we heard the disappointing news that the Duke Talent Identification Program was closing, it seemed important to keep the programming going to provide off-level testing for young Kentuckians.

Opportunities for assessing young people will be available for children in upper elementary school through their schools as well as to children in grades 7 and 8 through the ACT. Please stay tuned for details as the Kentucky Talent Search begins.

This summer will be our 39th year to offer the Advanced Placement Summer Institute. What an honor it is to host this long-running AP Institute, one of the longest running in the country! The AP Institute will be offered over three separate weeks with 35 workshops. Since it will be virtual, teachers new to AP or experienced AP teachers can participate from anywhere. Last summer, 42 states and 12 countries participated in the WKU AP Summer Institute.

One more opportunity to keep in mind involves travel. The Center is planning to travel to Italy and Switzerland over the fall break. Please let us know if you would like more information as these travel plans are finalized.

Thank you for supporting The Center with your gifts and words of encouragement! Thank you for disseminating our news for programming during 2021!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in pink ink that reads "Julia Link Roberts". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Julia Link Roberts
Executive Director

Table of Contents

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Tracy Inman

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- 1** Duke TIP Closes Its Doors:
The Center Opens the Window
- 2** Letter from Julia
- 4** Fall Super Saturdays Provides
Essential Opportunities
- 6** Alumni Update
- 8** The Center for Gifted Studies
Honors a Special Story Maker
- 9** Help Us Plan a Celebration
- 10** The Gatton Academy Bridge
to Aerospace Careers
- 12** What a Difference Summer
Opportunities Make: What a
Difference a Center Alum Makes
- 14** The World Council for
Gifted and Talented Children
Headquarters and a Virtual
World Conference
- 15** Ed Hamilton Honored as
2020 Louisvillian of the Year
- 16** Friends of The Center
- 18** *The Challenge* Turns 50
- 20** Breonna Taylor
Scholarship Established
- 20** Alumnus Named Marshall Scholar
- 21** Wanted: Graduate Students
Interested in Gifted Education
and Talent Development
- 22** Supporting the Emotional
Well-Being of Gifted Students
in Complex Times
- 24** Understanding the Social-Emotional
Needs of Twice-Exceptional Students
- 26** New Edition of *Teacher's
Survival Guide: Gifted Education*
Is Hot Off the Press

THE MISSION FOR THE CENTER

We are committed to encouraging excellence by providing educational opportunities and resources to three populations: gifted and talented students, educators working with gifted students, and parents of gifted students.



THE VISION FOR THE CENTER

An internationally preeminent center, The Center for Gifted Studies envisions expanding services in five areas: (1) offering educational programs for gifted children and youth, (2) providing professional development opportunities for educators, (3) enhancing communication and advocacy for gifted children, (4) conducting research and developing curriculum to remove the learning ceiling, and (5) building a testing and counseling component for gifted children and their families.

In October 2020, Madison Wells Staton of Morgantown taught Spooky Science for second and third graders for The Center's online Fall Super Saturdays. She recalls, "While we were learning about the carpals, metacarpals, and phalanges in the hand by building a paper model, one of my students asked if he could show everyone an anatomically correct skeleton he had at home. He pointed out where each of the bones we were discussing in class was, in addition to the radius and ulna in the lower arm. It was so special to see my students sharing their knowledge and ideas with their classmates in a virtual setting just as they would if sitting in class together."

Madison's memory highlights both the success and necessity of our Fall Super

Fall Super Saturdays Provides Essential Opportunities

Saturdays program. During the COVID-19 pandemic, unfortunately, the needs of many gifted students are not being met by schools struggling to provide educational services, and a number of organizations that have reliably provided gifted

enrichment have postponed or cancelled programs. In this time of restrictions, it was important to The Center to be able to hold virtual Super Saturdays classes where elementary-aged high-ability and high-interest students could learn new concepts, discover new passions, and make new friends — without limits.

Over two sessions of Fall Super Saturdays (September 12, 19, and 26; and October 17, 24, and 31), The Center offered 25 classes to almost 150 students. In order to provide quality online

experiences, we shortened the session to three weeks and each class to two hours, and we capped class size at 12. Using Zoom and Google tools, our experienced and enthusiastic teachers offered the usual broad range of classes, including Together or Apart We Create From Our Hearts, Extreme Survival Experts, and Escape! Create Your Own Breakout Room.

One element that made this Fall Super Saturdays extra special was the geographical range of students. Since they did not have to be within driving distance of WKU to participate, students came from 34 Kentucky school districts and ten states (specifically Alabama, California, Florida, Illinois, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah).

As expected, there were some challenges to teaching online. Catherine Poteet of Bowling Green, along with WKU SKyTeach student Kacie Gaekle also from Bowling Green, taught STEM at Home to third and fourth graders in October. She noted, "In a face-to-face class, students can see what the others are doing with their engineering projects and gather data from everyone when we discuss modifications. In an online class, we had to find other ways to share results from their test-



ing such as drawings and moving cameras. We were still able to meet the main goal of the course: learning and working through the engineering design process. And after all, being able to persevere when solving a problem is one of the most critical aspects of pursuing a career in the STEM fields.”

Ashley Davison of Bowling Green taught two classes: Experimenting, Exploring, and Creating Art with Science for first graders in September and Spooky Art, Spookier Science for first and second graders in October. She found the most important elements of Super Saturdays were present in a virtual format: “All of the smiling and excited faces were the same. The kiddos were

half an hour past the scheduled end of the last class, just talking with my students and letting them talk to each other. These were kids with a lot of passions who like to try new things, and many of them had had time to pick up new skills being at home so much. We had students showing off artwork and other things they were making, and one even played the ukulele.”

Offering online enrichment when so many students are already doing school online may at first seem unnecessary, but our teachers see it as essential. Robin says, “Super Saturdays allows students an opportunity to interact with each other while getting extra instruction during a time when everyone is worried about



very excited about what they were learning, and you could tell they really enjoyed it.”

Because she taught in both sessions, she was also able to see the effect her first course had: “I had some of the same students in October that I had had in September. In the October class, the students I had taught before showed off things they had created in our previous class during our ‘get to know you’ portion. They were all smiles and proud of what they had created. That really made me happy.”

For Robin Tyler of Franklin, who taught Riding the Waves for fourth and fifth graders in September, the most memorable experience happened after the course was over: “I stayed on for

what students will be missing by not being in school consistently. I have been teaching online since the beginning of this school year, and I know that many teachers are having to scale back on the rigor and depth of their teaching because there is a limit to how much you can communicate to 30-plus students virtually. At Super Saturdays, students are in small classes with other students at their level.”

Madison adds, “Super Saturdays are even more important now for students because they need to be challenged to think beyond the computer screen, to make new and dynamic connections with other students and teachers, and to see that virtual learning can be fun and exciting!”

Carter Adler (VAMPY 1992) lives in Copley, OH, and is second vice president at Mutual of America. He graduated from WKU with a BA in music in 2000 and from Michigan State with an MBA in integrative management in 2005.

Chris Copass (SCATS 1997, Travel to London 1998, VAMPY 1998-99) received a BA in biology from Transylvania University in 2006 and a PharmD from Sullivan University College of Pharmacy in 2011. He is a staff pharmacist at Radiopharmacy of Paducah, Inc. in KY.

Charles Haine (VAMPY 1992-95; Travel to Russia 1996) has worked in the motion picture industry since 1999. He completed an MFA at University of Southern California and has since worked as a freelance director, cinematographer, and entrepreneur. In 2008, he founded the production company Dirty Robber, which has gone on to success in feature films, shorts, commercials, and music videos. It was also the production company for the Oscar-nominated short *Buzkashi Boys* by Sam French. Among his directing

in 2015 with a major in architecture and a minor in business administration. She lives in Chicago where she works for SmithGroup as a licensed architect practicing healthcare with experience in strategic master planning and renovations. She currently serves as the co-chair of the AIA Chicago Healthcare Knowledge Community and as vice president of the UTK Chicago Alumni Chapter. In 2019, she was recognized as a Herman Miller Scholar for emerging professionals in healthcare design.

ALUMNI

Update

Cody Crofford (Super Saturdays 1998-99; SCATS 2004) of Blacksburg, VA, earned a BS in aerospace engineering from Virginia Tech in 2014. She is working on a Master's in computer engineering focusing in machine learning and computer vision with an anticipated graduation date of May 2021. Cody interns at Graf Research. She writes, "I was a systems safety engineer at Bastion technologies as an on-site NASA contractor. I worked on the propulsion and abort system safety of the space launch system. I also worked as a software test engineer as a General Dynamics contractor on NASA's Space Network Ground Segment Sustainment program." Among the SCATS classes she recalls are Intro to Mandarin Chinese, Programming in C++, Programming in Q Basics, and Computer Hardware where "we took old PCs apart and put them back together and learned how the components worked."

highlights is a music video for Fitz and the Tantrums and the recent trailer for Chuck Klosterman's novel *The Visible Man*. He has wrapped production on his first feature film, *Angel's Perch*, and his most recent project, *Salty Pirate*, debuted on Amazon Prime. Additionally, he is an assistant professor at the Feirstein Graduate School of Cinema at Brooklyn College. In 2011, he published *The Urban Cyclist's Handbook*, and he is currently the tech editor at *NoFilmSchool.com*.

Holly Harris (SCATS 2006) graduated from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville (UTK)

Keeli Johnson John (SCATS 1997) earned a BS in business administration from Appalachian State University in 2005 and a Master's in health administration from the Medical University of South Carolina in 2009. She is the director of administrative projects at Emory Healthcare in Atlanta.

Mackenzie Johnson (SCATS 2005) earned a BA in general studies from Eastern Kentucky University and an MA in media arts and production from University of Technology, Sydney. She is a video producer/editor for *Variety* in Los Angeles, CA. She says, "I speak

fondly of the memories I have had at SCATS! I loved the idea of being a 'college kid' when I was in middle school. Having the freedom to pick my own schedule and walk myself to class are some of my first memories of feeling truly independent."

Alexis Krivoschik (VAMPY 2004-07) received a BA in 2013 from New York University, majoring in anthropology with a double minor in Chinese language and political science, and a JD in 2016 from Case Western Reserve School of Law. She remembers taking Writing, Drama, and WWII and the Holocaust and says, "I definitely attribute my love of reading and history to those classes." For the past five years, she has worked in the legal department for Sphera Solutions Inc. She recalls, "My family and I moved around a lot even when I was involved with The Center (shout out to Corey [Alderdice] and Randy [Pinion] for picking us fly-ins up from the airport). That wanderlust hasn't left me, and I've been living and traveling all over the U.S. since high school. My time at The Center helped me embrace myself, including my nerdy side. VAMPY taught me never to be afraid to try new things, with a healthy dose of humility and the self-confidence to rise to challenges. I think of summers very fondly and cannot hear the '1812 Overture,' 'Iris,' or 'The End of the World' without getting a little misty."

Lesley Mann Lynch (Super Saturdays 1997-99; VAMPY 2004-05) graduated from the University of Kentucky with a BS in agricultural biotechnology in 2010 and received a Master's in bioscience enterprise from the University of Cambridge, St. John's College, in 2011. She writes, "I'm currently between jobs so that I may support my girls (three-years old and one-year old) during the pandemic. Prior to this, I led the implementation team at a tech start-up in San Francisco. Although I look forward to returning to work, 2020 has been an incredible opportunity for self-reflection and learning."

Gordon McKemie (VAMPY 1997, 1999) graduated from Emory University with a BBA in 2007. He is a portfolio manager for The Blackstone Group in New York City.

Terry McMahan (SCATS 1986) graduated from Centre College with a BS in math in 1994 and from Emory University with an MBA in 2003. He lives in Brookhaven, GA, and is the director of product development at TransUnion. He still remembers "making a camera made out of an oatmeal container" at SCATS.



Rachel Smith Moriarty (Super Saturdays 1998; SCATS 1998-2000; VAMPY 2001-02) graduated from Wake Forest University with a BA in communications and a minor in sociology in 2008 and received a certificate in accounting from the University of Virginia in 2019. She is a state associations specialist at the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization in Manassas, VA. She says, "I loved my times at SCATS and VAMPY! I have fond memories of playing in the water fountain, the games, etc., and I still talk to a few of my friends from back then even though it's almost 20 years later! I learned a lot both academically and about life. Being on a campus and away from home was a fabulous learning experience. It helped prepare me for the future, and I wouldn't trade the experiences I had there for anything."

Kaitlin Woodrow Morris (VAMPY 2010-12) earned a BS from WKU with dual certification in elementary and special education

and a minor in American Sign Language (ASL). After student teaching in Sweden and defending her honors thesis about using ASL to assist English language learners, she was named the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences' Scholar of the College and was given its Outstanding Undergraduate Student for Literacy award. Her research has been published and presented at conferences. Currently, she teaches in Bowling Green, KY, where she lives with her husband and two dogs. She writes, "The classes I took at VAMPY challenged me, and the friendships I made extended through high school. I grew both personally and academically, and my experiences were very instrumental in choosing my career path. They were a big reason why I chose WKU for my college experience as well."

Jacob Price (SCATS 2001-02) graduated from Georgetown College in 2010 with a BA in political science and from the University of Denver in 2013 with an MA in international human rights. He is a program manager for the Center for Civilians in Conflict in Washington, DC.

Lisa Cameron Schuster (SCATS 1996) earned a BS from Nazareth College in 2006, majoring in business administration and minoring in French. She is the Director of Programs for the nonprofit Men Having Babies. She explains: "Our mission is to educate, advocate, and help lower financial barriers facing gay men who want to become fathers through surrogacy. Through this grant program, we've helped hundreds of gay men become fathers. We also host conferences worldwide where I help coordinate and speak about ethics and budgeting, and share my experience as a surrogate for a gay couple."

Wesley Tinley (VAMPY 1994-97) graduated from Kennesaw State University in 2010 with a BA in history and a BS mechanical engineering. He lives in Smyrna, GA.

The Center for Gifted Studies Honors a Special Story Maker

Quick—Who is the 2020 Kentucky DAR Outstanding Teacher of American History Award recipient; counts Williamsburg, VA, as his “happy place;” puts together the annual Simpson County (KY) Schools Night of Innovation; is a tour guide for a Living History Cemetery Walk; is a University of Louisville McConnell Center Teacher Scholar; made a *Hamilton* crash course video for his friends in preparation for the *Hamilton* movie showing on Disney+; is an Eagle Scout; and has a resume of more equally amazing accolades, titles, and educational experiences? If you know social studies educators in Kentucky, then you answered Justin Mitchell. The Center for Gifted Studies would not function as it does without its amazing volunteers, and we are very happy to spotlight Justin as our Volunteer of the Year for 2020.

Justin has taught history, leadership, Kentucky Youth Assembly, and gifted and talented classes at Franklin-Simpson Middle School for almost ten years. His passion for teaching is evident whenever you talk to him. What is his philosophy of teaching? “My goal as a teacher is for



students to have fun and love learning history. History is just one big story, and we get to play a part in it on a daily basis. In my class, we dress up, act out skits, sing, travel to local stores to learn principles of economics, break down the lyrics of *Hamilton* and put them in their historical context, and much more.”

The Center was fortunate to become a part of Justin’s educational sphere in the summer of 2013, when he was a teaching assistant for a World Biographies VAMPY class. He then developed and taught a class called Pop Culture for SCATS in the sum-

mer of 2014, and developed that two-week class into his Pop Culture class (always in high demand) at VAMPY from 2015 to the present.

Because of the COVID outbreak, The Center had to make changes to its 2020 summer programming, including the cancellation of VAMPY. SCATS was retooled into a two-week virtual camp – The Center’s first ever virtual programming. How did Justin respond? He offered to help with The Center in any way needed to prepare for SCATS and The Center’s Advanced Placement Summer Institutes (also going virtual for the first time). Justin shopped for SCATS supplies (making multiple trips to multiple places); had the challenging task of counting pencils, food coloring, rubber bands, and other items; stuffed, sealed, and labeled packets; organized a (socially distanced outside) dinner for VAMPY teachers and staff; and made himself available to help Center staff whenever needed. These contributions were not just a summer of 2020 occurrence. Justin has always been one of the first to help out whenever The Center needs volunteers, no matter how small or large the task.

According to Justin, his connections with The Center has been beneficial for him as well. His time teaching VAMPY helps him reenergize and become a better teacher for his students at Franklin-Simpson Middle School. A few years ago, he developed a gifted and talented in-house academy called The Summit, designed to provide extended and enriched learning experiences for high-ability students at the middle school. He has also been asked to serve on state educational committees: “Doors have opened for me because of my connection with The Center and VAMPY. I got a call out of the blue one day from the Governor’s Boards and Commissions

office saying that they had a position open on the School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council as the gifted and talented representative, and they specifically mentioned my time teaching at VAMPY. The woman went on to say that she had a relative who went to VAMPY and knew how important this camp was for young people and knew that I was qualified to represent GT teachers across the state because of the reputation of the high-quality experiences that The Center puts on every year.”

It is hard to imagine life at The Center



**HISTORY IS
JUST ONE
BIG STORY.**

for Gifted Studies without the always smiling Justin Mitchell. We have benefited in so many ways from his love for life and his quest to make a positive difference not just

in the classroom but in the life of everyone he meets. His passion for teaching, his desire to make the world a better place (“My hope is that my students will be lifelong learners of history and will continue to make positive impacts in their local community, state, nation, and world in ways that I can’t even imagine”), and his offbeat humor are infectious, and everyone here hopes that our partnership with Justin continues for many years. Thank you, Justin, for all you have done and continue to do for your students, your community, and The Center for Gifted Studies.

Help Us Plan a Celebration

The year 2021 is The Center’s 40th year, and we want to celebrate all year long!

For our 20th anniversary, we held two celebrations. An Old Fashioned Picnic brought more than 500 people to the South Lawn in the summer of 2001. From watermelon-eating contests and sno-cones to balloon animals and a silent auction, The Center celebrated a long history of providing services and resources to gifted learners, their families, and their educators. We continued the celebration in 2002 with 20 Years and Counting: The Sky’s the Limit, by bringing scientist Homer Hickam, author of *Rocket Boys*, to keynote the reception and dinner. We also awarded the first three honorees of The Center’s Challenge Award: Doris Mills, Larry Laird, and Jody Richards.

For our 25th anniversary, almost 300 guests enjoyed a cook-out and games; many took hot air balloon rides above the WKU campus thanks to the Hitron family. Former VAMPY teacher Skip Cleavinger and his band The Rogues entertained the crowd with traditional Irish songs, and the crowd watched a slide show of our activities spanning all 25 years. Friends also had an opportunity to tour Schneider Hall for a sneak peek at the renovations

underway to transform it to house The Gatton Academy and our new offices. The afternoon included the inaugural meeting of The Center’s Alumni Association as well. The day finished with a fireworks display that captured the excitement of the day and the promise of more great years to come.

Five years later, in July 2011, The Center marked our 30th anniversary. The day kicked off with brunch and tours at The National Corvette Museum for over 300 guests. Later, Bob Pitchford, Advisory Board member and Aviation Heritage Park board member, gave personalized tours to guests at the park. In the afternoon, over 500 friends met up on the South Lawn for barbecue, cotton candy, and sno-cones. When they weren’t eating, our guests took hot air balloon rides and enjoyed balloon animals courtesy of Broadway the Clown.

We didn’t celebrate our 35th anniversary, so we really want our 40th to be special. We want to hear your ideas. Please send your thoughts to julia.roberts@wku.edu. And we hope you will celebrate with us.



Victoria Cain

specialized thermal control solutions for robotic lunar landers. His team's first piece of test hardware launches to the Moon in 2021, and a second test article launches a few years later.

Dr. Ryan Gott's (Gatton 2013; SCATS 2009) dissertation focused on using plasma for water purification. He started as a postdoc at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in January 2021. Ryan will be adapting his work for water management and plant treatment for space use. "I am grateful for my experiences at Gatton getting me started on this path," Ryan said, "and especially thankful for WKU professor Dr. Chris Byrne who guided and mentored me at the beginning of my research journey."

Gatton Academy students are used to reaching for the stars. Through a recent visit from the chief NASA scientist and through alumni stories, it is clear many are making that stretch a reality.



Dr. Jim Green, NASA Chief Scientist, spent nearly 90 minutes with Gatton Academy students on the afternoon of

November 6. In a brief presentation, he introduced students to various scientific endeavors within NASA, ranging from atmospheric study of the climate crisis to upcoming Artemis human missions to the Moon to the planned Perseverance rover on Mars. Then, Dr. Green spent an hour answering student questions.

The Gatton Academy has a historic commitment welcoming guest astrophysicists. Over the years, WKU alum and NASA astronaut Colonel Terry Wilcutt (currently NASA's Chief of Safety and Mission Assurance) has visited Gatton Academy students multiples times. In 2014, then-NASA Chief Administrator General Charles Bolden spent an afternoon with Gatton Academy students. Other visiting physicists have included Neil deGrasse Tyson (2009) and Michio Kaku (2014).

THE GATTON ACADEMY BRIDGE TO AEROSPACE CAREERS

It's no wonder that Gatton Academy alumni have been inspired to pursue a range of aerospace careers at NASA and throughout the aerospace industry. Several of these alumni are profiled below.

GATTON AND CENTER ALUMNI WORKING WITH NASA

Will Johnson (Gatton 2013; Super Saturdays 2003-05), now a thermal engineer at NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, is recipient of NASA's prestigious Early Career Initiative with \$2.5 million in funding. Will leads a team developing

Kelly Lynch (Gatton 2015; Super Saturdays 2007; SCATS 2009; VAMPY 2012) is a solid propulsion engineer with the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center. Her work in the propellant mix laboratory involves manufacturing inert solid and hybrid propellant for various programs such as the Space Launch System and Europa Lander. As a college student, Kelly completed six internships and co-op rotations with NASA. "Experiential learning is a great supplement to college education," she advised. "I highly recommend it, even if it involves graduating a year later than originally planned."

Phillip Wilkerson (Gatton 2018; Super Saturdays 2008-09) is still an undergraduate while simultaneously working as a Space Grant Intern for NASA's Langley Research Center and (separately) for Boeing. His work with NASA contributes to reducing or eliminating electromagnetic interference issues between NASA, Air Force, and Navy users in Hampton, VA.

GATTON AND CENTER ALUMNI WORKING IN THE PRIVATE AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

Dr. Aaron Bell's (Gatton 2009; Super Saturdays 2002; SCATS 2003-05; TA 2010) research career began as a Gatton Academy student with Dr. Steven Gibson (WKU Physics and Astronomy) studying interstellar medium. Aaron then completed his PhD at the University of Tokyo, worked with NASA through a two-month program, and recently joined Tokyo-based startup Ridge-i. At Ridge-i, he designs and implements machine-learning solutions

and modernizations of current Apache systems. Victoria points to Gatton study abroad programs as a confidence booster. "Knowing I found a way to navigate a foreign country gave me the courage to move to California for a summer to do an internship with NASA," she said. "It was there I fell in love with aeromechanics, and it helped to land me a job working on the Apache."

Lindsay Walton (Gatton 2015) works for Lockheed Martin in Boulder as a software engineer. She is developing mission processing ground software for missile warning satellites for the Next-Generation Overhead Persistent Infrared (OPIR) program.

Noah Latham (Gatton 2016; Super Saturdays 2005-09; Travel) is pursuing graduate study in aerospace systems engineering. In summer 2019, he interned at Reaction Engines in Denver, where the HTX heat exchanger that will be integrated in the Synergistic Air Breathing Rocket Engine (SABRE) is tested. Noah recalls being



Aaron Bell



Will Bickett



Katie Brown Casgrain



Ryan Gott



Will Johnson



Noah Latham



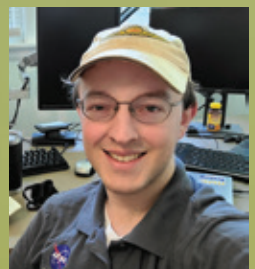
Kelly Lynch



Kristen Pedersen



Lindsay Walton



Phillip Wilkerson

to solve contracted problems, including those derived from geospatial image segmentation.

Katie Brown Casgrain (Gatton 2010) lives in Seattle working for Boeing. She started in Boeing's Flight Test department in June 2013. For the last three years, Katie's work has primarily been flight testing for Boeing's newest airplane, the 777-9 or "777x."

Will Bickett (Gatton 2012; SCATS 2007; VAMPY 2008-10; Counselor) works with Dynamic Concepts, Inc. in Huntsville. Will is currently working on the hardware-in-the-loop simulation for the new human lander system for NASA's upcoming Artemis Moon missions.

Victoria Cain (Gatton 2013; Super Saturdays 2004-07; SCATS 2008; VAMPY 2009-11) works as a test engineer on the Apache Attack Helicopter. Her efforts focus on testing new developments

pointed in the right direction as a Gatton Academy student. "I had the opportunity to speak with General Charles Bolden, the head of NASA at the time," he said. "I asked him how close we were to bridging the gap between aeronautics and astronautics (basically a combined plane and rocket). He told me we were already there, and he pointed me towards companies working on engines that could do just that."

Kristen Pedersen (Gatton 2016; VAMPY 2012-14; Travel; Counselor) is working in the engineering rotation program with Honeywell Aerospace in Phoenix. Her rotations include working on commercial airplane engines and a human spaceflight life support project. In the latter, Kristen will work on the prototype of a device to scrub exhaled carbon dioxide out of the air to make it safe for astronauts on deep space missions to breathe.

From the time **Danny Nobles** (VAMPY 1993; Travel to Russia) was in grade school, he wanted to be an aerospace engineer. Having earned a BS in aerospace engineering from Texas A&M University and worked for NASA and Oceanering Space Systems, he is now working on the development of a new spacesuit as an aerospace engineer at Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC).

What sparked your interest in space?

I remember vividly in first grade when I watched the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster live from my classroom. Then, in fifth grade, I was given a *Weekly Reader* handout that talked about why girls should study aerospace engineering. As a boy, I snickered a little bit, not understanding why girls should be more or less interested in aerospace engineering, but the details of space shuttle flights were quite exciting to me. I understood that NASA's goal was to make life better for all humankind, and you got to play with giant rockets. From that day on, I was determined, as a kid from Memphis, TN, that I wanted to be an engineer at NASA. In high school, I found a former NASA engineer who gave me lots of advice on how to get a job at NASA, and it involved lots of math, science, and engineering studies in college. I was inspired to work harder towards that goal.

How did your experiences at The Center affect your career path?

I grew up fairly poor in Memphis. I got a brochure saying that I could study physics at WKU's VAMPY program. It took a year to cut enough lawns to pay my way to the program, but eventually I

What a Difference Summer Opportunities Make: What a Difference a Center Alum Makes



had earned enough for the one summer. I was amazed and excited by the Physics class, and it further propelled me towards my interest in engineering. I began trying

to understand every mechanism that I could in order to gain a better understanding of mechanical advantage and the theories of flight and aerodynamics that made aircraft and rockets fly, and by what means they could be controlled in flight to get where they needed to go. I studied everything I could read about human spaceflight and built homemade kit rockets from Estes Corporation. In 1994, I wrote an essay and applied for the Russian Study Abroad program through VAMPY, and to my amazement, I was selected. Studying in Russia with other gifted students broadened my ideas and my patriotism and helped me gain a better understanding of our place in the world. Learning about other cultures also inspired me to travel as much as possible one day when I could afford it. I have now visited 13 countries, three for work with NASA, and one as a lead volunteer of a team of five

American Aerospace engineers to teach Chinese, Indian, and Pakistani high school students how to design a space settlement at an international competition. VAMPY propelled my interests in engineering, and the Study in Russia has helped me in my work on the International Space Station and with the safety panels that I have worked with around the world. I do what I can to both encourage young people to study and chase their dreams.

Tell us about your current project.

In 2017, I was asked to work full-time as the lead in-line safety engineer on the new lunar spacesuit that was being developed for the Artemis Program that will put the first American woman and the next American man on the moon in 2024. Our team has grown from just me to now



18 engineers that I lead through the technical work, and our pace is grueling, to say the least. In the end, this new Exploration Extravehicular Mobility Unit will be used for the International Space Station, the Human Lander System as both a lunar spacewalk suit and a vehicle launch entry suit, and on the new Lunar Gateway Space Station. Its successor will one day be used to walk on asteroids and Mars, and we are already developing the technologies to use this spacesuit in that location.

Do you have any advice for current students?

If I could give kids one piece of advice, it would be to aim for the stars — even if you miss, you'll be a lot further than you were when you started.

The World Council for Gifted and Talented Children Headquarters and a Virtual World Conference

The World Council for Gifted and Talented Children Headquarters and a Virtual World Conference

The WCGTC headquarters moved from the University of Winnipeg to WKU in January 2011. A new contract has been signed to continue hosting the headquarters at WKU through December 2025. Offices for the WCGTC are located in Gary Ransdell Hall.

The Executive Committee of the WCGTC is composed of seven elected members from across the globe. Julia Roberts, president of the WCGTC, will conclude her four-year presidency at the end of the 2021 World Conference. She is one of seven members of the Executive Committee, and Tyler Clark is the executive administrator.

The WCGTC hosts a World Conference every two years, and 2021 is the year for the biennial conference. The 2019 World Conference was hosted in Nashville, making it convenient for educators in the region to be among



the 700 attendees at the conference. The World Conference is a great opportunity for educators, researchers, parents, psychologists, and others interested in serving gifted children to network with like-minded peers from across the globe.

2021 will look different due to the ongoing pandemic; the World Conference will be offered in a virtual format, continuing access to international networking and idea exchanges for the benefit of gifted students. The World Conference will be hosted July 31 – August 1 and August 7 – 8, 2021 with a theme of *Developing the Future of Gifted Education*. The Center for Gifted Studies, in cooperation with the Executive Committee, will host the virtual World Conference. For more information about the World Conference, visit worldgifted2021.com.

To learn more about the WCGTC and become a member, visit world-gifted.org.





Academy students during the annual Gatton Week of the Arts in Louisville. Ed has met Gatton students at his 2009 sculpture and four bas reliefs of Abraham Lincoln on the Waterfront and then traveled to the Belvedere with the students to his 2003 sculpture of York, the enslaved man who traveled with the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Perhaps Ed's most famous work is *The Spirit of Freedom*, a

memorial to Black Civil War veterans that stands in Washington, DC, in the Shaw neighborhood near Howard University. Other well-known pieces of Ed's public art include *Joe Louis* at the Cobo Arena in Detroit, MI; *Amistad* in New Haven, CT; *Lincoln* at Centre College in Danville, KY; and *The Unfinished March*, Martin Luther King, Jr. Plaza in Newport News, VA. In 2004, WKU honored Ed for his achievements by awarding him an honorary doctorate.

Julia noted, "Ed Hamilton is recognized internationally for his exceptional talent as a sculptor. I am delighted to be friends with Ed and Bernadette, and I thank Ed for the many ways he shares his expertise and enthusiasm for the arts with young people."

Ed Hamilton Honored as 2020 Louisvillian of the Year

Longtime friend of The Center Ed Hamilton received a well-deserved honor when he was named the 2020 Louisvillian of the Year by the American Advertising Federation—Louisville. At the ceremony for the 50th recognition of this special award, Jenna Morales, President of AAF—Louisville, remarked: "As we near the end of a challenging year, I think we are all acutely aware of how important community leaders are when it comes to inspiring us, motivating us, and challenging us to better serve our city and one another. Ed Hamilton's decades-long impact on Louisville spans across the genres of education, art, and civics. We are thrilled to present him with the 2020 Louisvillian of the Year award."

Ed's ties with The Center for Gifted Studies began with his wife, Bernadette, who was the Director of Optional Magnet and Advance Program for the Jefferson County Public Schools and past-president of the Kentucky Association for Gifted Education (KAGE). Ed has shared his knowledge and talents with Gatton



FRIENDS

Shaun Assner-Alvey
(VAMPY 1993-95; Travel)
Ballwin, MO

Brown & Sue Badgett
Hanson, KY

Barnes & Thornburg, LLP
Indianapolis, IN
*To Help the Young People
of Munfordville*

*In Memory of Dora Jean Thornton
(mother of Steve Reed)*

Valerie Bayham
Brentwood, TN

Marilee Benson
Bardstown, KY

Sunday Boling
(VAMPY 1990-92)
West Hollywood, CA

Doug & Martha Brown
Winchester, KY

Miranda Brown
(VAMPY 2002-05)
Lexington, KY

Bob & Helen Bueker
Bowling Green, KY

Phil Burkeen
Bowling Green, KY

Janet Burks (Travel)
Bowling Green, KY

Pete & Kaye Buser
Bowling Green, KY

Victoria Cain (Super Saturdays
2004-07; SCATS 2008; VAMPY
2009-11; Gatton 2011-13)
Franklin, TN

Dick & Beth Chapman
Nashville, TN

Tyler Clark (Counselor)
Bowling Green, KY
*In Memory of Leslie Adams
In Memory of Jennie DelRicci
In Memory of George Scott*

Susan Cook
Bowling Green, KY

Dana Courtney
Sparta, KY

Raymond Cravens
Bowling Green, KY

Jeanine Cundiff
Nashville, TN

Yvonne de St. Croix
Southbury, CT
In Honor of Tyler Clark

Suresh Devarakonda
Union, KY

Carrie Dichiaro
Lexington, KY

Tom Donan
Bardstown, KY

Melissa Edds
LaGrange, KY

Adam W. Ellis, M.D.
Gallatin, TN

Jennifer Emberton
Scottsville, KY

Diane Esrey
Louisville, KY

Mark Evans
Louisville, KY

Sam & Mary Evans
Bowling Green, KY

Marjorie Farris
Richmond, KY

John Fitts
Bowling Green, KY

James & Mary Ann Flueck
Lexington, KY

Michael Flueck
(VAMPY 1989-92; Counselor)
Brownsburg, IN

Ben & Angella (Huddleston)
Foster (SCATS 1992;
VAMPY 1993-94)
Greenbelt, MD

John Gallagher
Prospect, KY

Donnie Gatten
Sturgis, KY
*Meg Gatten Memorial
Scholarship*

Ruthene Glass
Bowling Green, KY

Deb Guffy
Terrel, TX
In Memory of Faithie Guffy

Anne Guillory (TA 2008)
Louisville, KY

John & Phyllis Gump
Richmond, KY

John & Carolyn Hagaman
Bowling Green, KY

Bill & Sue Hamilton
Pflugerville, TX

Norman & Carole Harned
Bowling Green, KY

Richard Harris
Columbia, MO
*Kristin Harris Peterson
Endowed Scholarship*

Amanda Hines
(SCATS 1983-84)
Evansville, IN

Bill & Renita Hines
Calhoun, KY

John & Dawn Hitron
Louisville, KY

Rita Hodges
Clarkson, KY
*Phyllis Minton Memorial
Scholarship*

Brian & Sarah Holland & Family
Louisville, KY

John Hollis & Mary Lyon
Battletown, KY

Rocky & Mary Beth Hudson
Ooltewah, TN

Wimpy & Regena Hudson
Scottsville, KY

Leah Hughes (Super Saturdays
2002-05; SCATS 2006;
VAMPY 2007-09; Counselor)
Fairdale, KY

Tracy Inman
Bowling Green, KY

Teresa Jameson
Bowling Green, KY

Bert Johnson
Calvert City, KY
*Workshop Funding in Honor of
Dr. Sara Johnson (SCATS 2003;
VAMPY 2004-05; Gatton 2007-08)*

*VAMPY Scholarship in Honor
of Maude Mae Snow, Sara's
grandmother
SCATS Scholarship in Honor of
Paul Snow, Sara's grandfather
Camps Innovate & Explore in
Honor of Tramp, Bert's first dog*

Jim & Anna Jo Johnson
Bowling Green, KY

Lee & Judy Johnson
Alvaton, KY

*In Honor of Alex Johnson
(SCATS 1993-95; Travel)*

Thomas Johnston (VAMPY
1999-00; Counselor; Teaching
Assistant) & Anna Hitron
(VAMPY 1996-99; Counselor)
Louisville, KY



Ints & Melissa Kampars
Hardinsburg, KY
Jonathan Kern
Lexington, KY
Matt Kirk
Orange, CA
Patrick (SCATS 1985-87)
and Meredith Klapheke
Bowling Green, KY
Jesse Knifley
Bowling Green, KY
Jason & Engrid Lai
Blacksburg, VA
Lydia Latham
Franklin, KY
David & Laura Harper Lee
Bowling Green, KY
Holly Lewis (Travel)
Arlington, VA
Christopher & Melissa Lind
Nashville, TN
Steven & Judy Lippman
Louisville, KY
Will Luttrell (SCATS 1985;
VAMPY 1986-89)
Philadelphia, PA
Bronwyn MacFarlane
Little Rock, AR
In Honor of Dr. Jonathan Plucker
Charles & Fannie Louise Maddux
Pembroke, KY
Sarah Maines (SCATS
1998-2000; VAMPY 2001-02)
Versailles, KY
Charles & Bobbi Mann
Louisville, KY
Jami Mann
(Super Saturdays 1997-99)
Chapel Hill, NC
Carl & Donna Martray
Elberta, AL
Jim & Diane Matherly
Bay City, MI
Amanda Mattingly
Webster, KY
Prabodh & Daksha Mehta
Elizabethtown, KY
Justin Mitchell
Bowling Green, KY
Thomas Moody
Franklin, KY

Stacy Roberts Moots
(SCATS 1983-84; Travel)
Kirksville, MO
Brad & Phyllis Mutchler
Paducah, KY
Scott Nass
(VAMPY 1988-91; Counselor)
Palm Springs, CA
Mary Ann Teater Pardieck
Columbus, IN
Jeanne Marie Patterson
Pittsboro, NC
In Honor of Dr. Julia Link Roberts
Paul & Anne Pederson
Barbourville, KY
Ron & Jan Peeler
Bowling Green, KY
Shannon Bunnell Pickett
(Counselor)
Scottsville, KY
Jonathan Plucker
Germantown, TN
Frances Porter
La Canada Flintridge, CA
Thomas Price
Euless, TX
Bernard & Allison Ratterman
Crestwood, KY
Barry & Rebecca Richards
Cross Plains, TN
In Honor of Hope C. Richards
Paul & Marilyn Riney
Owensboro, KY
Dick & Julia Roberts
Bowling Green, KY
J. T. & Martha Sandefur
Chattanooga, TN
Ben & Pat Segó
Glendale, KY
Janet Skees
Louisville, KY
James Henry Snider
Franklin, KY
Jim & Joyce Ann Spiceland
Bowling Green, KY
Thomas & Cheryl Steiner
Hopkinsville, KY
In Honor of Fannie Louise Maddux
Bennie C. Stephens
Center, KY
Carl & Marie Stoltzfus
Elizabethtown, KY

Kathy Strunk
Gallatin, KY
Beverly Swanson
Owensboro, KY
Carolyn Traum
Princeton, KY
Robert & Aeko Troutman
Paducah, KY
Thomas & Chenzhao Vierheller
Banner, KY
David & Jill VonGruben
Wildwood, MO
Kristen VonGruben
(VAMPY 1990-93)
Fenton, MO
Jon Warren
(Counselor; Head Counselor)
Antioch, TN
Elaine G. Webb
Burkesville, KY
Kendrick & Claudia Wells
Louisville, KY
Jerry Whitney
Scottsville, KY
Michael & Sherry Whitten
Killen, AL
Mary Ellen Wiederwohl
(SCATS 1987-88)
Louisville, KY
Lori Wittlin (VAMPY 1987-89)
Bernardsville, NJ
David & Miki Wiseman
Bowling Green, KY
Joe & Judy Wismann
Talent, OR
T. Alan Yungbluth
Bowling Green, KY

**RILEY JANE LAWRENCE
SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Lawrence & Karen Baisch
Louisville, KY
Katherine Markham Ballard
(VAMPY 1997-99;
Travel to Britain)
Louisville, KY
Lindsey Bevers
Louisville, KY
Matthew Bricker
Fishers, IN
Derrick & Alissa Clark
Louisville, KY

Kimberly Croley
Corbin, KY
Wesley Daniel
(SCATS 1994-95; Counselor)
Gainesville, FL
Trisha Drake
Louisville, KY
Katy Geary
Louisville, KY
Danielle Gleason
Louisville, KY
Tracey Hinder
New York, NY
David & Sarah Markham
(VAMPY 1988-90) Lawrence
Louisville, KY
Eric & Mariann Lawrence
Louisville, KY
Eva Markham
Louisville, KY
Amy Masters
Louisville, KY
Scott Nass
(VAMPY 1988-91; Counselor)
Palm Springs, CA
Chivas Owle
Casselberry, FL
Aprile Parry
Louisville, KY
Karina Ruiz
Napa, CA
Carolyn Savko
Louisville, KY
Kristi Zimmerman
Shepherdsville, KY

**IN HONOR OF
TYLER CLARK'S BIRTHDAY**

Tom Clark
Raywick, KY
Deb Guffy
Terrel, TX
Sara Hourigan
Horse Cave, KY
Dick & Julia Roberts
Bowling Green, KY
Linda Wallin
Palatine, IL
Jon Warren
(Counselor; Head Counselor)
Antioch, TN

Who would have imagined that a conversation focusing on communicating with former participants between Julia Roberts and Ron Beck, one of WKU's first development officers, would turn into an award-winning full-color magazine now in its 50th issue?

Julia has long held that "an opportunity isn't an opportunity unless someone knows about it." With The Center involved in so many different aspects of gifted education, it became clear in the 1990s that we needed an effective way to inform the community about our work. A big part of the solution was our magazine,



The Challenge, whose inaugural issue was published in 1998. For all 50 issues, it has been edited by Tracy Inman and designed by Marcus Dukes of the WKU Division of Public Affairs with the goal of appealing to an audience of students, educators, and parents. The magazine shares the opportunities offered by The Center, recounts our accomplishments and events, describes our hopes for the future, and provides information about gifted education. Published two to three times a year, *The Challenge* is currently sent to 22,000 homes and organizations across the country and throughout the world.

The Challenge Turns 50



EMILIE MILCAREK



SAM OLDENBURG



SAM OLDENBURG



JESSE KNIFLEY



TUCKER ALLEN COVEY

Some features of the magazine have evolved over time. For example, the cover of the first 11 issues of the magazine featured photographs taken from various angles of a statue in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence: the Monument to Elisa Bonaparte Baciocchi, The Magnanimity of Elisa, Grand Duchess of Tuscany. Starting with issue 12, the cover has instead included photos of everything from happy campers to Duke TIP medals to Kentucky governor Ernie Fletcher to Schneider Hall to Center staffers in Denmark. Other elements of the magazine have stayed the same, such as the Letter from Julia, the Alumni Update, and annual articles on programming such as our summer camps.

The Challenge reflects the mission of The Center by including in each issue articles that focus on our three main audiences: gifted youth, their parents, and their educators. We have explained important topics like differentiation and cluster grouping, profiled first-time Super Saturdays teachers and Center volunteers, covered talks by noted gifted educators like Jonathan Plucker, reported on the World Council's Biennial World Conferences, and followed up on the lifelong friendships of Center alumni. During the campaign to start the school that became The Gatton Academy, our magazine detailed each challenge and victory. We have also regularly encouraged advocacy through articles like "The Importance of Joining Your State Gifted Association," and kept readers updated on upcoming events. And in every issue, we have the engaged, exuberant faces of young people served by our programs. As a complement to the magazine, The Center also established a website in 1998, and the page for *The Challenge* includes links to every issue, all of which are archived online.

Over the years *The Challenge* has received a number of design awards, including the Blue Pencil Award of Excellence from The Kentucky Association of

Government Communications as well as Graphic Design Periodical Award of Excellence from Council for Advancement and Support of Education Kentucky. In our tradition of talent development, Marcus has always been encouraged to experiment, innovate, and create – we

typically turn the copy over to him and let him work his magic with no design direction. And we have never been disappointed! He's enjoyed it as well as the sidebar shows.

We hope that you enjoy our magazine. 50 issues! What a milestone!

THOUGHTS OF DESIGNER MARCUS DUKES

The timing was perfect. I had been working as a student design intern in the Office of University Relations at WKU for a couple of years and reached the point where I understood the different applications I was using and also had experience working with university clients and print vendors.

As a student designer, I put together brochures, posters, newsletters, advertisements, etc., and along with several other interns, helped lay out the *Alumni* magazine, now known as the *Spirit* magazine. I knew this publication was sent out to tens of thousands of people connected with WKU, and it meant a lot to me to be part of something so meaningful and far-reaching.

I always got excited when my boss and mentor, Publications Director Tom Meacham approached me with new projects, but the day he asked if I would be interested in designing the first issue of a publication called *The Challenge*, I more than jumped at the chance. The subject matter sounded interesting to me, and, in this case, I would be the sole designer, shaping the look from cover to cover. I soon met with Julia and Tracy, who I instantly knew were both brilliant and down-to-earth at the same time. We just clicked. It was a significant time for me, and I was so grateful to get to know them and have this opportunity.

As we created those first few issues of *The Challenge* in 1998 and 1999, I always received such positive feedback from everyone at The Center, and it motivated me that much more to do a better job with each subsequent issue. I wanted the quality of the design to reach the quality of the writing, which has always been outstanding. Fortunately, I became a full-time designer at WKU during this period and could continue to work on my favorite project.

Over the years, the design has continued to evolve and improve, and the magazine is reaching a much larger audience than it did in those early days.

I still enjoy bringing all of the different elements together and organizing them into a cohesive whole. I continue to experiment with different layouts, colors, shapes, textures, and fonts to keep the design looking fresh.

Most of the time, the layouts are built around the photos, because nothing tells the story as much as the images of the students themselves. The photographers for The Center deserve so much credit for the powerful moments they capture. You can tell the students are highly engaged in what they're doing and really enjoying themselves. To be honest, I sometimes wish I was young again and in their place.

BREONNA TAYLOR SCHOLARSHIP ESTABLISHED

Friend of The Center Brenda Jackson has made a generous gift to The Center to establish the Breonna Taylor Scholarship for VAMPY. Beginning in the summer of 2021, her contribution of \$15,000 will fund one scholarship per year for the next five years for a Black student with financial need to attend camp.

Brenda's children, Craig Jackson (VAMPY 1991-94; Travel 1993-94, 1996) and Lucy Jackson Mackey (Travel 1993-94; VAMPY 1995-98), each attended VAMPY for four years. They also participated in Study-Travel trips with The Center, and Brenda herself has travelled with us seven times.

Brenda established the scholarship because of her great respect for the work that EMTs and other healthcare workers do as well as her awareness of the



personal and structural racism that Black Americans face. Brenda wrote her doctoral dissertation on Black education in Louisville, and she "saw the discrimination Black students faced. I saw how the cards were stacked against them. In Breonna's death, we saw the culmination of the tragedy, the devaluing of human life."

She says, "I am humbled by the opportunity and ability to give this gift. I saw the lasting effect of international travel on my children and the lasting gifts that VAMPY bestowed upon my family. I hope the recipients of the scholarship will gain as much as my family has gained from The Center. May Breonna's memory be a blessing."

Julia Roberts added, "The Center for Gifted Studies is indebted to Brenda and to others who make it possible for qualified children and young people to have opportunities to participate in summer programming when it is beyond the reach of their families. Thank you, Brenda!"

The Marshall Scholarship website notes that Marshall Scholars are individuals who can "strengthen the enduring relationship between the British and American peoples, their governments and their institutions." The program originated in the early 1950s as the United Kingdom (UK) was seeking new ways to strengthen its association with the United States. The UK Parliament named the scholarship in honor of U.S. Secretary of State George C. Marshall who created the Marshall Plan, assisting European countries after World War II. The scholarship, which provides financial support for studying at a higher education institution in the United Kingdom is awarded to individuals based upon academic merit, leadership potential, and ambassadorial potential.

ALUMNI NAMED MARSHALL SCHOLAR

In December 2019, Andrew Brown (Super Saturdays 2004-05; Counselor 2016; Gatton Academy class of 2015) of Louisville was selected as one of 46 awardees for 2020. Andrew graduated from Princeton University with a major in physics. The Marshall Scholarship is supporting him to pursue a Master of Science

in mathematical and theoretical physics at University of Oxford as well as a Master of Science in applied mathematics at Imperial College London.

"Being selected as a Marshall Scholar is incredibly gratifying to me; it feels like a validation of the work I have done so far, and a positive evaluation of the potential I have to do meaningful work in my career to come," Andrew commented. "I will get to meet close to 150 other current Marshall Scholars and learn from their ambitions and interests. I expect that this network of scholars and alumni will be invaluable as I pursue research in fusion energy, which is a deeply technical area of research, but also an area with profound implications for environmental and economic policy."

For more information about the Marshall Scholarship, visit marshallscholarship.org.

Wanted: Graduate Students Interested in Gifted Education and Talent Development

Western Kentucky University may be a perfect match for educators and other professionals interested in graduate study in gifted education. WKU offers graduate work in gifted education and talent development leading to the endorsement in gifted education, the Master's degree (MAE) in Gifted Education and Talent Development, and the Specialist Degree

(EDS) in Gifted Education and Talent Development. The gifted endorsement also can be earned as a component of the new Master of Education in Advanced Teacher Education which was launched in the fall 2020. An additional 12-hour certificate in gifted education and talent development is progressing through the approval process at the university.

The coursework with the exception of the practicum is offered online, so it is available to anyone no matter where they live. The practicum takes place on the beautiful campus of WKU during two weeks in June. That experience provides the opportunity to apply and integrate knowledge and strategies learned in the graduate coursework.

WKU is an exceptional site for learning about gifted education and talent development. On the campus are located The Center for Gifted Studies, The Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky, the headquarters of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, the office of the Kentucky Association for Gifted Education, and the Mahurin Honors College.

For additional information, go to wku.edu/gifted/graduate and contact Julia Roberts at julia.roberts@wku.edu.



Doctoral Cohort: Leading Diverse Learners

This summer, WKU is offering a cohort in the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program for P-12 teachers focusing on Leading Diverse Learners. The closed cohort is developed by an intradisciplinary faculty within the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences at WKU, including programs such as Gifted and Talented Education, Special Education, Technology Education, and the English Language Learners' program.

The Ed.D. Program is a practitioner-focused delivery model to best meet the needs of practicing professionals. Students

will complete 6 hours per semester (spring, summer, fall) each year. Courses follow similar patterns of weekend and/or hybrid format. Students continually enrolling three semesters per year and staying on track with their cohort should be able to complete all coursework including dissertation hours within 3.5 calendar years.

For additional information, go to wku.edu/edd/futurestudents/2021_closed_cohort_brochure.pdf or contact Julia Roberts at julia.roberts@wku.edu.

Supporting the Emotional Well-Being of Gifted Students in Complex Times

By Thomas P. Hébert, Ph.D.
University of South Carolina

We are living at a time of great societal discontent with a worldwide pandemic wreaking havoc in the lives of so many. It should not be surprising that many gifted young people are worried about the future. Their concerns are serious; therefore, educators and parents need an understanding of how psychosocial development influences children's responses to our complex times.

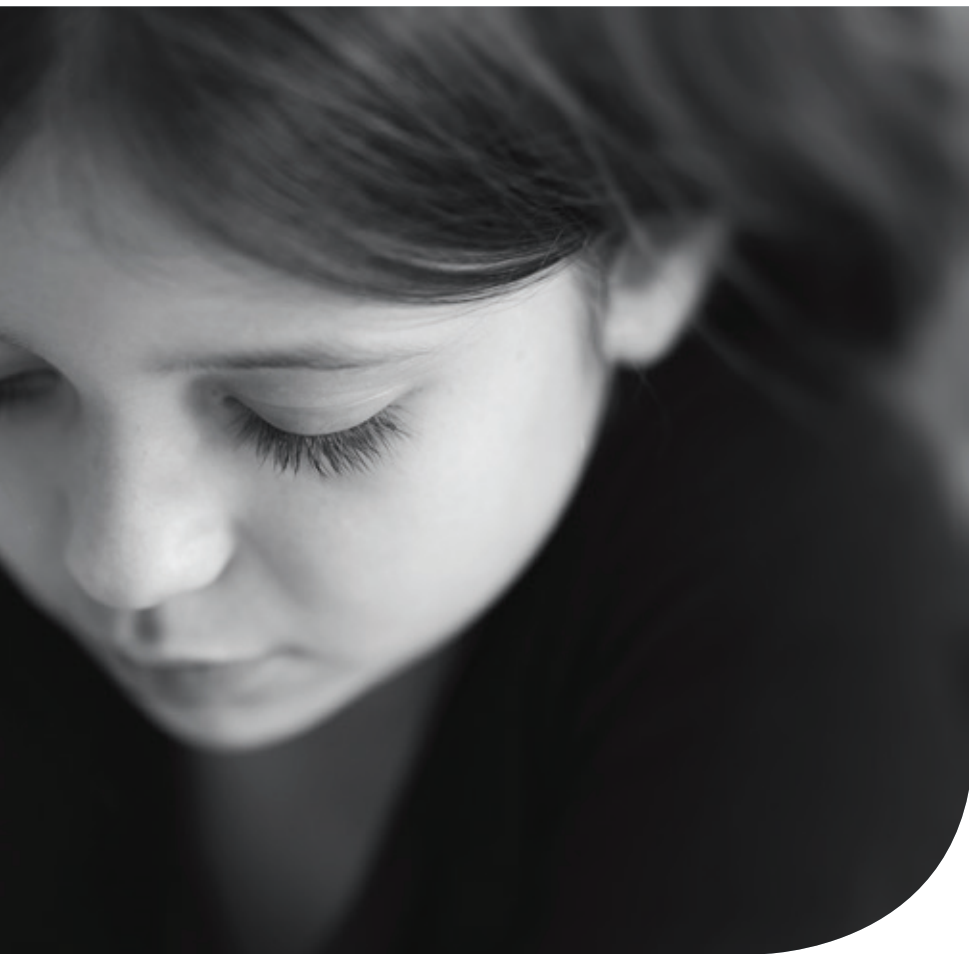
The work of Kazimierz Dabrowski (1902-1980), a Polish psychiatrist and psychologist, has enabled educators to understand the emotional responses evidenced in gifted students. Dabrowski described overexcitabilities that were understood to be innate and observable in infancy. He postulated five overexcitabilities: psychomotor, sensual, imaginal, intellectual, and emotional. Translated from Polish, the term *overexcitability* can be thought of as



heightened sensitivity. The overexcitabilities are understood to be an abundance of physical, sensual, creative, intellectual, and emotional energy.

According to Dabrowski, the most critical of all of the overexcitabilities is the emotional – an individual's capacity to experience extreme and complex emotions and intense feelings. Emotionally overexcitable children show a heightened concern for and reaction to the environment around them. This quality is evidenced in their capacity for emotional depth, intensity, empathy, attachment to people, inhibition, guilt, and anxiety. Gifted children experiencing this emotional richness will respond strongly to the loss of life in the pandemic, racial tensions in our country, climate change, and other serious problems throughout the world. As a result, there is a need for teachers and parents to guide gifted children to appropriate outlets for their intense feelings. One approach is involving students in social action projects to address the problems that concern them.





Quinn discovered a design on the Internet and began producing them with his 3-D printer. His mother posted several photos of her son and his ear guard project on Facebook, and soon he was inundated with requests. He extended his research and decided to program his printer to also produce a simple strap. The gadgets wrap around the back of the head and can be connected to mask straps, enabling people to adjust their masks and prevent bruises. Quinn's printer now operates 24/7, and healthcare workers internationally have benefitted from this young man's efforts (Free, 2020).

As teachers working with gifted students observe social and emotional characteristics such as moral maturity, sensitivity, and empathy, a rather natural approach to supporting those qualities is to encourage these young people to engage in social action projects associated with causes about which they are most passionate. For gifted students like Quinn Callander, involvement in such work does wonders for their emotional well-being and the people they serve.

Consider Quinn Callander's example. In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, photos were circulating online of many exhausted doctors and nurses with bruises on their faces from wearing tight-fitting medical masks. Quinn Callander, a seventh grader, saw the photos and went to work creating ear guards – devices that help relieve some of the pressure felt by health care workers.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Friedman, J. & Roehlkepartain, J. (2010). *Doing good together: 101 easy, meaningful service projects for schools, families, and communities*. Free Spirit.
- Hébert, T. P. (2020). *Understanding the social and emotional lives of gifted students* (2nd ed.). Prufrock Press.
- Thompson, L. A. (2014). *Be a changemaker: How to start something that matters*. Beyond Words Publishing.

Dr. Thomas P. Hébert, professor of gifted and talented education at the University of South Carolina, presented on the topic Supporting the Emotional Well-Being of Gifted Students in Complex Times for the 2020 Berta Seminar on October 16. Dr. Hébert has more than a decade of K-12 classroom experience working with gifted students and 25 years in higher education training graduate students and educators in gifted education.

The Berta Seminars are provided for parents and educators of gifted children and other interested parties to learn how to better address the social and emotional needs of gifted young people in and out of the classroom. Thanks to a generous gift from Kathleen and Vince Berta, this event is free to attend and open to the public.

For more information on the Berta Seminar, visit our website.

REFERENCE

Free, C. (2020, April 16). Nurses and doctors are posting photos of their faces bruised by masks. A boy stepped in to help. *The Washington Post*, paragraph 14.

In recent years, there has been increased awareness of the necessity to focus on the social-emotional needs of gifted students, in addition to their academic needs. This is especially important for students who are twice-exceptional – those who are gifted with identified special education interventions (e.g., specific learning disability; dyslexia; ADHD; autism). Dr. Susan Assouline and her colleagues (2015) estimated that 385,000 twice-exceptional (2e) students are sitting in our classrooms. However, this is likely to be an underestimation as we have no systematic way of identifying students in this unique population. Additionally, due to the masking effect, students' gifts and talents may be recognized but not their special education needs. Conversely, if their special education needs are recognized, their gifts and talents may not be. Finally, for many 2e students, their gifts may mask their special needs; their special needs mask their gifts; and they present as average. It is important for educators and parents to have an understanding of the social and emotional strengths and challenges of this unique population to provide them with the support that will allow them to grow, thrive, and succeed.

When they are recognized as twice exceptional, these students often feel a sense of isolation and loneliness – as if they don't belong with either their gifted or special education peers. While they may have strong intrinsic motivation as a result of their giftedness, they can become easily frustrated when they repeatedly struggle on certain tasks and in certain situations, which can lead to a fear of failure. The conflict of feeling bored when faced with some tasks and confused when faced with those that they cannot complete with ease can leave 2e students with the impression that they must prove that they are smart. As a result, some 2e students may rush through an

Understanding the Social-Emotional Needs of Twice-Exceptional Students

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assignment that they fear they might fail because completing the task seems more important than the quality of their work. In the end, these students may be highly critical of themselves, leading to lowered

self-esteem, self-concept, and feelings of anxiousness and dissatisfaction.

We must recognize that these students possess advanced abilities, despite their challenges. *It is important to remember that the 2e child is gifted first.*

The 2020 Twice-Exceptional Students Seminar was presented on September 23 and 24 by Dr. Matt Fugate, a former elementary teacher in the Houston Independent School District, where he also served as a gifted coordinator and magnet coordinator. Matt is currently assistant professor at the University of Houston, Downtown. On the first day, he spoke on Twice-Exceptional Students: An Introduction – Who Are They? What Do They Need? The topic for the second day was Addressing the Social-Emotional Needs of Twice-Exceptional Students.

Since 2011, The Center has offered the Twice-Exceptional Student Seminar for parents and educators to provide information

and strategies on supporting these learners, who are defined as having at least one exceptional ability and one disability.

National Twice-Exceptional Community of Practice Definition

Twice-exceptional individuals evidence exceptional ability and disability, which results in a unique set of circumstances. Their exceptional ability may dominate, hiding their disability; their disability may dominate, hiding their exceptional ability; each may mask the other so that neither is recognized or addressed. 2e students, who may perform below, at, or above grade level, require the following:

- specialized methods of identification that consider the possible interaction of the exceptionalities,
- enriched/advanced educational opportunities that develop the child's interests, gifts, and talents while also meeting the child's learning needs,
- and simultaneous supports that ensure the child's academic success and social-emotional well-being, such as accommodations, therapeutic interventions, and specialized instruction.

Working successfully with this unique population requires specialized academic training and ongoing professional development.

REFERENCE: Baldwin, L., Baum, S., Pereles, D., & Hughes, C. (2015). Twice-exceptional learners: The journey toward a shared vision. *Gifted Child Today*, 38 (4), 206-214.

1. Nurture their creativity by identifying individual strengths and interests. 2e students have been recognized for their creative thinking ability (for review see Fugate et al., 2013). Providing them with opportunities to address real world concerns allows them to come up with new solutions to authentic problems.
2. Explore their interest areas through independent investigation both at school and at home. Encourage them to ask questions and seek out new knowledge. This type of independent research can help these students develop organizational systems that meet their needs in a comfortable, nonthreatening environment
3. Encourage them to take up a sport, go for a run, or take up a creative endeavor. This can help them focus, calm, and center

themselves during periods of high stress and can increase their academic motivation and achievement (Fugate et al.)

4. Provide support, understanding that sometimes the 2e student may perceive that support as pressure. When there is a feeling of too much pressure, the 2e child may begin to shut down. If this occurs, give them time to step away from the situation (Fugate, 2016).

Ultimately, we must stop viewing twice-exceptional students as having deficits and disorders and start seeing them as gifted students first, who have challenges that can be mitigated through the recognition of their strengths. Only then can we can highlight their motivation, strengths, and resilience—and help them understand that they are not alone.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- Baum, S. M., Schader, R., & Owen, S. V. (2017). *To be gifted and learning disabled: Strength-based strategies for helping twice-exceptional students with LD, ADHD, ASD, and more*. Prufrock Press.
- Fugate, C. M., Behrens, W. A., & Boswell, C. (Eds.) (2020). *Understanding twice-exceptional learners: Connecting research to practice*. Prufrock Academic Press.
- Kennedy, D., & Banks, R. (2011). *Bright not broken: Gifted kids, ADHD, and autism*. Jossey-Bass.

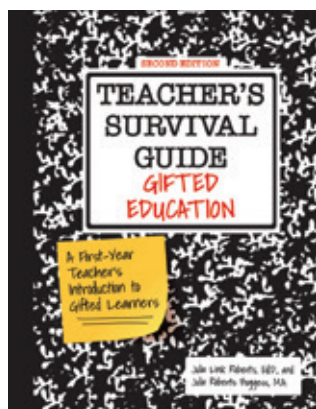
REFERENCES

- Assouline, S. G., Colangelo, N., VanTassel-Baska, J., Lupkowski-Shoplik, A. (2015). *A nation empowered: Evidence trumps the excuses holding back America's brightest students, Vol. 2*. The Connie Belin & Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development.
- Fugate, C. M. (2016). Are ADHD kids more creative? *Parenting for High Potential*, 5(2), 14-15.
- Fugate, C. M., Zentall, S. S., & Gentry, M. (2013). Working memory and creativity in gifted students with and without characteristics of ADHD: Lifting the mask. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 57, 234-246.

New Edition of *Teacher's Survival Guide: Gifted Education* Is Hot Off the Press

The second edition of *Teacher's Survival Guide: Gifted Education* was published in 2020 by Prufrock Press. Almost ten years after the first edition, Julia Roberts and Julie Roberts Boggess have featured the latest information and current resources in gifted education and talent development. This book highlights key topics in gifted education in an easy-to-read format, making it a very good book study for a group of educators, and it would work equally well for a group of parents. *Teacher's Survival Guide: Gifted Education* is packed with practical information, up-to-date resources, tips for success, and advice from experts in the field. As the title of the book suggests, this book

- is the perfect introduction to gifted education for any educators new to gifted education;



- addresses topics essential for understanding the needs (often created by their strengths) of children and young people who are gifted and talented;
- is designed to help teachers build their understanding of gifted education and gifted learners;
- provides a wealth of field-tested, proven strategies; and
- includes tips for providing resources and opportunities to spur talent development.

Each chapter features a key question, making the book ideal for an engaging book study, as well as survival tips and a survival toolkit of resources to keep readers on course as they navigate through gifted education.

Justin Mitchell reviewed *The Teacher's Survival Guide: Gifted Education*.

The book is a "must have" for any teacher who works with gifted children! The book is designed in such a way that new teachers and veteran teachers alike will benefit from the knowledge gathered from a wide range of experts in the field of gifted education. The chapters are broken into topics that focus on a certain aspect of gifted education which makes it perfect as a reference guide, especially when you are trying to find a quick answer. The layout is great, and I love the survival toolkit at the end of each chapter since it gives more resources if you are wanting to go more in-depth. This is one of the books that will be on my desk at school for quick access when I have a GT question, and I can't wait to share this with all of my colleagues!

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