

Spring 2020

## Premier, Spring/Summer 2020

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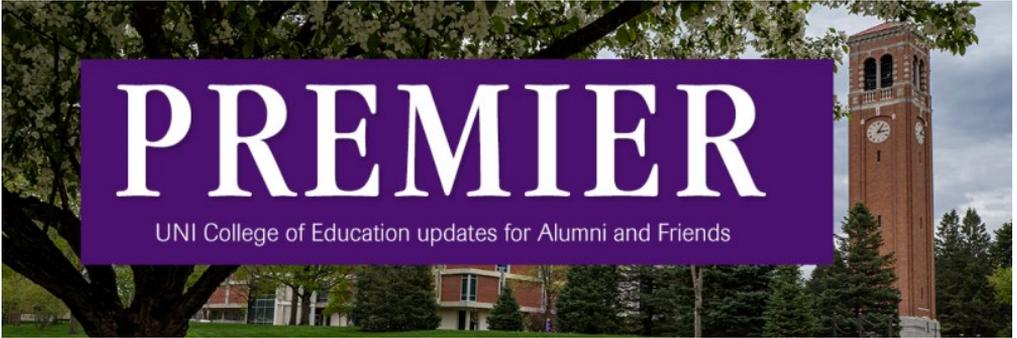
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# Premier Spring/Summer 2020 E-Newsletter



Premier is published for University of Northern Iowa College of Education alumni, friends, faculty and staff.

## Premier Spring/Summer 2020

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# From the Dean: An Unprecedented Spring

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Unprecedented. Never before seen. Unlike any other.

Such descriptors of the life and times of COVID-19 became common this spring. Even when overused, they seemed apt.

As students returned from spring break, we had one goal: to keep them on track toward completion of their courses and degrees. We did just that, with 475 graduates honored during our virtual commencement ceremonies.

In this issue of our Premier e-newsletter, we offer some glimpses at the College of Education response to COVID-19, as we:

Shifted to remote learning for all our students in teacher education, health and human services;

Adapted what this meant for field and clinical experiences and internships; and,

Watched as faculty and students discovered, in real time, the meaning of public health.

As spring semester drew to a close, I shared my great appreciation with faculty and staff for their steadfast commitment to our students. And, I thanked our students for their patience, resolve and persistence.

**I thank you, our alumni and friends, as well.**





Many of you assisted directly or indirectly, whether that was helping us adapt changing field experiences, joining in for a Zoom conversation with students instead of in person, or contributing to the #UNIttogether

scholarship fund for students. I also salute your efforts to serve students, clients, patients -- or just “be there” for parents, children or neighbors -- the best you could during these challenging times.

Part of our role as educators is to reflect. We’ve been doing a great deal of learning and listening in response to COVID-19. We know our students actually prefer being on campus, so we’re thrilled to be welcome them back on August 17.

As this issue was being finalized, the killing of George Floyd--and the response it triggered worldwide--pushed another critical issue to the forefront.

In a note to faculty and staff, I stated: “As demonstrations continue to flare up across the country to protest the ubiquitous violence and deaths of Black Americans, we must commit to active and dynamic work to dismantle systems and structures that are inherently biased, racist and exclusive. We must continue to question the macro-level assumptions that surround us, especially those in academe.”

This is a moment for us to move beyond increasingly polarizing rhetoric and elevate our work toward transformation and sustained change.

As our leadership team develops action-oriented objectives for the coming academic year, at least one will focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. We plan to continue dialogue started last year with students to address diversity, equity and inclusion issues. And, we plan to look, specifically, at curriculum, partnerships and recruitment and retention to do our part in identifying areas of opportunity for increased accessibility, affordability and engagement.

Even with the uncertainty of the continued impact of COVID-19, we can, and we must, press forward toward change. We hope to engage, learn and create that change with all of you.

Stay safe and strong,

**Colleen S. Mulholland**  
Dean, College of Education

# A Living Lab for Public Health



No one would wish COVID-19 on anyone. But for a group of UNI College of Education faculty, staff and students, the worst pandemic in more than a century has become a living laboratory.

With six tracks comprising the third largest of the health and human services undergraduate majors within the college, public health and education took the spotlight this spring. Faculty weren't just introducing concepts to students, they were educating family, friends and colleagues about the meaning of terms like epidemiology, contact tracing and herd immunity.

"It's always a good time to be getting into public health, but our ability to point to public health as a really vibrant, active thing that's happening in the community is enhanced right now because it's more visible," associate professor **Disa Cornish** [told \*The Business Record\*](#) in May.

"The tricky thing is that when public health is working well, no one knows it's even there! It's a silent science that keeps us healthy every day (think about the clean water running from your tap, the good access to fresh fruits and veggies, the bike and walking trails)," Cornish shared in a [\*\*web blog\*\*](#) in

which College of Education shared from various perspectives during COVID-19. “And when we forget something is there, we forget to fund it! I hope this will serve as a reminder that public health efforts deserve our attention.”

From shifts to remote coursework and internships to connecting via social media and getting hands-on at the front lines, College of Education public health faculty and students were immersed in public health. Here are just a few of their stories:

## **On the Front Lines**

### **A Mix of Crazy and a Reminder of the Good**

### **Creating a Social Community**

### **Coping with Stress: Let's Talk**

# On the Front Lines



Every day, living with the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020 seemed to bring new understanding, new challenges and new questions. And as the wave moved from the coasts inland, the intensity and the need for answers and assistance grew.

UNI public health faculty, staff and students lent their support, whether helping dispel myths with friends and family, volunteering at the local food bank, or even working as essential workers in part-time jobs.

Others, like professors **Michele Devlin** and **Catherine Zeman** provided both leadership and counsel in multiple ways. Both were part of an early panel to educate the UNI community on COVID-19. Zeman, whose emphasis is environmental health, serves on the Black Hawk County Board of Health. Devlin is also a trained EMS responder and member of various response teams. As part of the Iowa Disaster

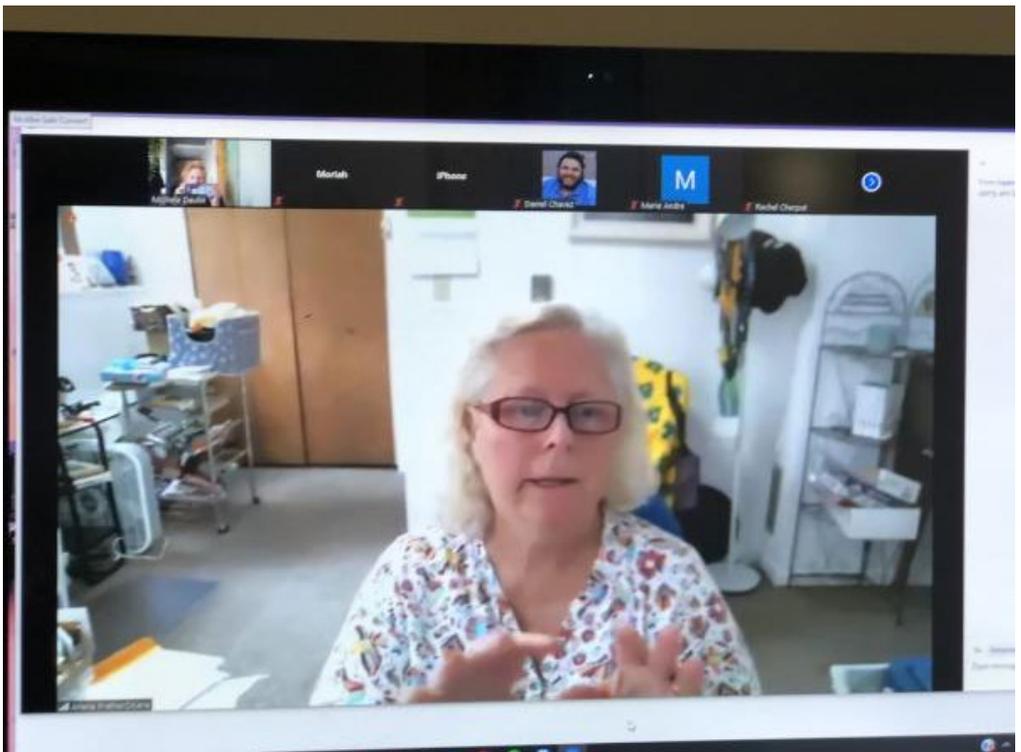


Medical Assistance team, she helped conduct more than 400 COVID-19 tests among employees of meatpacking plants in northeast Iowa. In May, she headed to the Navajo Nation as a member of Team Rubicon, a large national non-profit disaster organization made up of veterans and first responders. (Read more: [UNI public health professors help fight COVID-19](#))

Closer to home, Devlin also serves as the public health consultant and technical advisor, pro bono, for EMBARC, the state's nonprofit that serves the needs of refugees at four sites in Iowa, including Waterloo. Many work in meatpacking plants in the region.

“They (EMBARC) are doing amazing work trying to help these refugees that are disproportionately affected by COVID-19,” Devlin says. She helped with training interpreters about COVID-19 and advising on policy and operational issues. She also teamed up with Zeman and **Arlene Prather O’Kane**, an alumna (M.A., ‘10) in youth and human services, to coordinate a new service.

“One of the really cool things is we helped them set up a 24/7 virtual case worker and medical hotline for the refugees. I trained their staff, and then I am one of the EMTs/nurses that provide virtual services and try to help them medically over the phone with questions,” she says.



Devlin had reached out to Prather O’Kane, who also has a nursing

background, to see if she might be interested in volunteering at EMBARC. Prather O’Kane had retired after 20 years of service with the Black Hawk County Health Department in 2016. Recently she has been working as a PRN RN with Pathways Behavioral Health Services detox unit in Waterloo. She welcomed Devlin’s suggestion as she’d been unable to provide direct patient care since she and her husband are in high risk categories for the coronavirus.

“I have actually known about EMBARC for many years, since I would attend Coalition meetings for my job as a manager at the Black Hawk County Health Department,” she says. “I have always liked working with the refugee and immigrant population locally.”

Her voluntary role soon turned into a part-time position. As of May 1, she became a part-time medical assessment coordinator and caseworker at EMBARC, overseeing the virtual healthcare team of registered nurses and emergency medical technicians. She helped train the EMBARC interpreters about COVID-19 and HIPAA privacy and confidentiality policies so they could help relay health information to the families they work with.

On the phone, Prather O’Kane has answered medical questions about issues like returning to work after COVID-19 and signing up for disability. She has coordinated three-way phone calls involving the caller, interpreter and herself.

She says having this opportunity to help these families means a lot, as a member of Black Hawk County and as a nurse. “Since I am not able to serve with my nursing experience on the ‘front lines,’ the opportunity to be able to still utilize my skills and experiences working with EMBARC is, I believe, a ‘God-incidence.’ I am glad to share my knowledge and expertise with others,” she says.

Sharing has also meant voluntarily making masks and face shields at her home and delivering them. “By doing this service, I can still feel “safe” from the virus, promote safety for others and feel that I can do my part during this time,” she adds.

In addition to taking her turn with rotational shifts for the 24/7 coverage, Zeman, along with Devlin, worked to keep the hotline team apprised of new developments, epidemiological trends, new virology information, and new trends in treatment. As spring turns into summer, the hotline remains a critical resource for many.

“The EMBARC 24/7 line will continue to be a resource for any newcomer/immigrant who has questions concerning COVID-19 health issues,” says Zeman.

# 'A Mix of Crazy and Reminder of the Good'



**Cassidy Flory**, who finished her senior year this spring, has a story similar to many choosing public health. Her initial major was nursing at her local community college. Nursing, she says, is a noble profession, but...

“I started to wonder if that was really for me. Public health combines my passion for helping others with my love of healthcare. I just really enjoy the idea of being able to help even more

people by planning and implementing a program that would reach potentially hundreds of people,” Flory says.

“Experiencing COVID-19 has only made me more sure of my decision to pursue a degree and career in public health. The idea that I could someday be in a public health department helping to keep the residents of a community safe and educated is very exciting to me.”

Flory lived the transition to online learning, found herself “Zooming” with her fellow SPHA student leaders, and joined in a Zoom chat with Cornish that was posted on the COE public health Facebook page.

She recalls professor Susan Roberts-Dobie explaining at the very beginning of the introduction to public health that everything is public health -- for example, panic buying.

“Those of a lower socioeconomic status do not have the ability that someone from a higher status may have in relation to stocking up on these essentials,” she notes. “As a future public health worker, a pandemic or epidemic is the last thing you would ever hope for. When we talk about past pandemics such as the Spanish influenza in class, it is so hard to relate to as it happened so long ago. It’s a heart-breaking, scary learning experience that will no doubt help shape our futures in public health.”

As a public health student, early on she focused on the facts and found herself helping translate for her friends and family. “With my coursework, I have been able to explain some topics and definitions I never really thought I would use. I have also found that my coursework has encouraged me to spread useful tips through my social media for my friends. I work with the elderly and this has been really hard on them...but it has been interesting to be able to share with them what I know and what I have learned from my education.”

“The last 30 days have been a mix of crazy and a reminder of the good,” Flory says. “As unfortunate as this is, the COVID-19 pandemic has really highlighted the public health field. People are coming to realize just how our public health officials are working around the clock to keep our communities safe,” she says.

“Things haven’t been easy. Work is different. Family time is different. Time with friends is not happening. And that’s okay. During this pandemic I have learned a lot from my community and humanity about what really is important.”

# Creating a Social Community



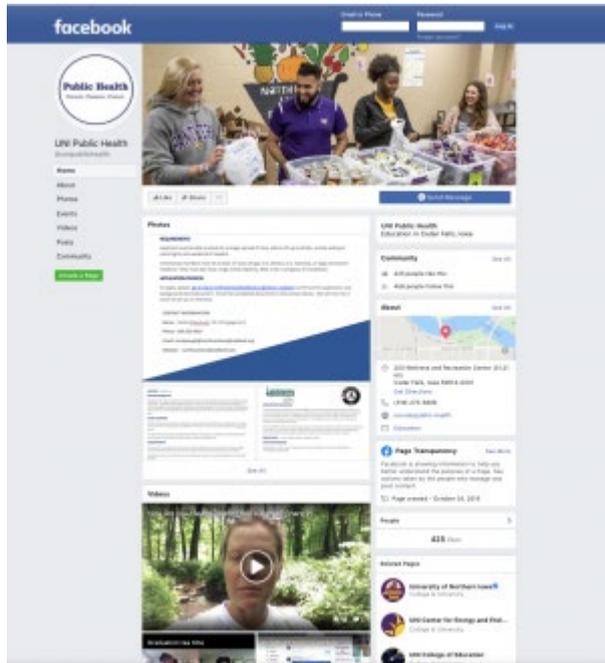
This spring, the unexpected turn of events brought by COVID-19 pushed **Disa Cornish** to the front lines as an educator--to students, family and the community--through a new venue: social media.

Serving as a resource is part of the role of public health, as evidenced by the pivotal presence of the Centers for Disease Control during times of prevention as well as pandemic. Until recently, the [@UNIPublicHealth](#) Facebook site was a mix of job openings, public health-related news, conference notices and apparel offers. That changed with a post about COVID-19.

“Our approach to social media pre-COVID was not coordinated. We posted things as they came across our desks,” Cornish says, noting, with appreciation, the efforts of graduate student Melissa Lemke. “During spring break, which started officially on March 16, I found myself struggling with a sense of loss. I was starting to realize that our UNI public health community had been dispersed and I missed the structure of regular daily contact. So I took a chance and just started posting videos.”

That first post led to another, and then another. Working from her desk in

her kitchen at home, she used the recording function of Zoom video, the software that served as the platform in the transition to remote learning. Cornish went solo on her first post. She then teamed up for occasional gatherings with **Susan Roberts-Dobie**. The first get-together covered what they were struggling with, what was going well and what they were worried about. By late May, she had hosted video chats with her son (helping define various public health terms), with alumni, with fellow faculty and with master's students.



“The response has been wonderful. Students and alumni are enjoying hearing from faculty and really interacting with us. We get great comments and messages with questions and ideas,” she says. “Personally, my favorite videos to record have been the ones with alumni. It is so fun to see those students again and talk to them about everything they're doing! I am constantly impressed by our students and their creativity, passion, and drive.”

While educating others through these chats, she has learned as well from her guests.

“Our public health professionals are working so hard right now! And there is great curiosity about the field of public health. People are interested in what we do and the breadth with which public health efforts operate.

“And I've learned that our UNI public health students are all serving as informal and/or formal sources of information for their friends, families, and communities about public health. The UNI public health faculty are so proud of that!”

What began as a response to an initial sense of loss turned into an opportunity for community and education. She expects the conversations to continue.

“I do see the pandemic continuing for a while, so I'm sure that topic will stay relevant for a good long while,” she says. “The UNI public health faculty is going to keep teaching, engaging in our communities, and working as public health professionals. We will continue to let our community know about those efforts. And, we will continue to use our online platforms to provide information, resources, and (hopefully) some fun.”

As the semester ended, Cornish, Roberts-Dobie and other faculty in the program donned their faculty gowns and caps to wish their graduates well via video. Cornish says this social media effort reinforced her image of the UNI public health community as strong, supportive and resilient. “I guess I already knew that, but I think we're all feeling it a little more now.”

# Coping with Stress: Let's Talk



“Stress and Coping” is among the courses required for the wellness and fitness emphasis in public health. COVID-19 became a topical focus, says **Diane Depken**, associate professor in public health and education.

“The online discussions were useful, both from a pedagogical perspective as well as from a student anxiety and stress perspective,” says Depken.



Over two weeks, the students talked -- online, in asynchronous, or non-"real time" style -- about media saturation, overload and misinformation and how to reduce its impact; how to provide social support and connection in a time of social distancing and how that impacts community; and how to build hope and optimism in the midst of this pandemic?

Here is an edited version of some of the students' comments:

## Media/news information and impact

*“This thing has gotten crazy over the last month...I have just been making sure I pay attention to the right sources because everything you see is not true. We need to take this time to relax and stay safe...If I can stay home and make a difference and not getting sick on top of that makes me feel like we as a country can unite and come together even closer than before after all of this is over.”*

*“Misinformation about the seriousness of this virus is having a huge impact on how people are reacting to it. The people who believe that this virus is nothing more than a “flu” are impacting how quickly it’s spreading by not taking the preventative measures necessary to flatten the curve... and because everyone is reacting differently to the virus; due to location, beliefs, age, etc., some people are responding more strongly to the outbreak than others.”*

*“During a time like this, it is important for people to remain calm and know the facts to avoid further mass hysteria. People should take mental, physical, and emotional breaks from reality to lower stress and anxiety. At-home meditation, exercise, and communication can help you take a break from the media to focus on your own well-being.”*

## Social support

*“Social distancing is imperative right now... During this pandemic, communities are coming together to support one another while remaining safe. For instance, in my community teachers have rallied together driving in their own cars to go see their students. In addition, the community has come together to provide means for students who are under the age of 18 to help families who cannot provide during these unprecedented times. This practice of community support has helped relieve stress for families in my community.”*

*“One thing that really surprised me, when dealing with isolation of quarantine, were the Internet challenges seen on social media. Before the quarantine, I would have seen these tasks as annoying ... it has actually been a really fun way to keep up and interact with the people that I would be spending time with if we were not in quarantine..It is very different from the face-to-face connection that we are used to feeling, but the idea remains the same, even though we are apart, we are all in this together.”*

## Hope and optimism

*“In a time like this, I think it is great to sit back and reflect..I’ll be the first to say that I am struggling with classes online, but this is a time for me to grow in a place that is a weakness for me... it is important to come together as a community and support people in need, in the best way that you can. Spread positivity on social media rather than the negative posts...This is a tough situation that we are all in but that is just it, we are all in this situation so we can all help each other out.”*

*“Every day, I have been trying to find different activities to make me happy and give me a sense of optimism. For example, I have been on more bike rides lately than I had been in who knows how long...Biking helps me clear my head and I come back from a ride feeling refreshed and energized...I have been spending a lot of quality time with my roommates and enjoying our last month together before we go our separate ways...Finding a few things to do each day that make you happy can really help change your outlook on everything that is going on right now.”*

*“One thing I think we can learn all from this is how to be kinder to people and not taking everything we are given in life for granted...In this desperate time of need, many people are struggling so it is important to check on the people you love and care about. We can spread more positive and hopeful messages by listening to informational and positive podcasts, as well as using social media and local radio stations in all communities.”*

# A Change in Experience



On March 11, the 11th message on COVID-19 on University of Northern Iowa's [prepare.uni.edu](http://prepare.uni.edu) website read: "UNI Temporarily Shifts to Exclusive Online Courses After Spring Break."

When students returned to classes on March 23, life had changed, for everyone. And we now know the "temporary" shift is not permanent, but remains through the summer as planning for a return to on campus classes August 17 is under way.

This transition to remote learning had a profound impact on students, faculty and supporting staff. Learning was different -- not only for coursework, but for another hallmark of College of Education preparation: experience in the field.

As the planning for a return to campus is shared via the [forwardtogether.uni.edu](http://forwardtogether.uni.edu) website, a look back at a surprising spring:

**Finding Alternatives for the Field**

**Staying on Track with Internships**

**Learning to Assess and Care via Telehealth**

# Finding Alternatives for the Field



At University of Northern Iowa, a favorite phrase regarding the UNI Teacher Education Program's field placement is "early and often," culminating in 16 weeks of student teaching. Mid-March, this model of experience got turned upside down.

As schools closed and discontinued on-site instruction, there was, initially, some scrambling as the Executive Council of the UNI Teacher Education Program, College of Education leadership, the Office of Teacher Education, student teaching coordinators (STCs) in the Teaching department and other faculty involved in special education and curriculum and instruction worked together to interpret and adjust to governor-issued proclamations and Iowa Board of Educational Examiner guidelines.

Even without knowing how temporary initial school closures were, the Executive Council decided students would not return to local, regional, out of state and international settings for various placements after input from school district partners, who were busy figuring out how their springs would conclude as well.

Going forward, while activity varies within the levels of field experience, the

faculty recognized a common thread: the need for alternative experiences to offset the loss of face-to-face observational or hands-on time in a classroom. As many faculty were shifting--seemingly overnight--into online learning and the self-education that required, STCs and other faculty were also scouring resources and collaborating to create a new version of field experience.

This was particularly true for student teaching.

### **A surprising finish for student teachers**

Due to differing school calendars, some students had begun their second eight-week session of student teaching as mid-March hit. Many others were expecting to shift schools after spring break. Suddenly, all needed “something else.”

As it turned out, a purposeful potpourri of efforts supported this final chapter at UNI for these seniors.



“Individualization marked the work of UNI student teaching coordinators during the school closures. The goal has been to provide independent and collaborative learning opportunities for student teachers to develop their teaching competencies in preparation for their teaching careers,” wrote **Mary Donegan-Ritter**, head of the Department of Teaching, in

an update in late April.

Their efforts were not a one-size-fits-all. STCs in the different regions assessed needs of their students, talked with each other, and had the flexibility on options to offer.

“We started as a coordinator group to outline what we wanted to do uniformly across all the centers, and then, depending on where the students were in their placement, created differentiated learning experiences,” says

**Beth Harris**, student teaching coordinator for the Cedar Valley, working with **Mary Beth Rygh** and **Lynn Dykstra**.

Donegan-Ritter outlined the types of projects student teachers undertook:



- Professional growth projects. Creating growth plans with a focus on their specific needs, meeting

with STCs or in small groups to discuss their work, teaching and learning and getting feedback.

- Content-alike small group meetings. Four to five student teachers, meeting weekly with their STCs for content-aligned seminars.
- SMART Goals. Completing work on SMART Goals--part of a video signature growth assignment for the semester--including learnings gained through alternative learning activities.
- Alternative learning activities. Drawing from lists of articles, videos and podcast resources created by STCs to expand knowledge and skills related to teaching competencies or researching their own resources and professional development activities.
- Lessons/unit of instruction. Developing two separate lessons or a two-day unit of instruction; for face-to-face or online teaching. Students taught their lessons to the STC and their peers in small groups and provided verbal and written feedback for each other.
- Final reflections/evaluation narratives/letters of recommendation. A reflection summarizing insights from completing this online student teaching experience.
- Teaching in an online environment. Reviewing articles, webinars and other resources to prepare for teaching in an online environment.
- Seminars. Always a part of the student teaching semester, this spring's seminars were adjusted or added to, such as "How to prepare and make your lessons/curriculum available to students via online learning."

These alternative learning experiences helped some student teachers fill gaps in knowledge; for others who had already secured a teaching position, they had a head start on preparing for their new classrooms.

## Challenge and learning in adapting



Similar efforts occurred in working with Level 3 and Level 2 students and as needed, Level 1 (though most had completed their observations by mid-March). **Amy Lockhart**, who oversaw a group of 18 Level 2 students, saw both challenges and learnings through the process.

"At UNI, our students get a plethora of field opportunities, but many involve teaching one-on-one with classroom students or working in

a small group of university students. That's why this Level 2 experience is crucial in the early identification of students who may need further assistance as they move through the program," she says. "To plan a six-week field experience online in one week was a huge undertaking. However, give a situation that needs solving to the Department of Teaching, and it will get done. Our department has faced adversity many times, and we always rise to the task at hand," she says.

One challenge was finding videos that could help approximate getting acclimated to a classroom environment (physical space, wall space, materials and technology).

"Obviously, without a classroom to see, I needed to find some good and not-so-good examples of classroom tour videos for them to view. This turned out to be really successful as students' observations were more in depth than I anticipated," Lockhart says.

She estimated she watched or skimmed more than 80 videos to share with colleagues. She now expects to add videos to her in-person seminar.

"Had I not been quarantined, I know I would have never had the time to view that many videos and to take notes over all of them. So, for that time, I am grateful! Now I have new materials to use in class when it isn't online!" she says.

Though formal placements ended, voluntary connections continued. For example:

- For Level 2, **Ashley Jorgenson** created a "Quarantine Connection" experience that paired elementary students (including her son) with a UNI student. Connecting virtually, the UNI students helped each child choose a topic of interest for tutoring and planned activities geared toward fun and learning-centered content.
- **Curt Nielsen** collaborated with a group of volunteer mentor teachers from Lincoln, Becker and Aldrich elementary schools locally as well as Waukee Middle School for a mentoring exercise with Level 2 students. Mentors included his two sons and a daughter-in-law--all UNI alumni who wanted to help.
- **Lynn Dykstra** noted that a few of her secondary level students were asked to join their cooperating teachers' Google classrooms, attend online meetings at their schools and plan virtual lessons to share with the middle and high school students.

That type of cooperation and commitment was evident throughout a

surprising semester, perhaps more so than ever before.

“UNI field experience coordinators and student teaching coordinators are resilient and dedicated to doing what is best for UNI students. They had to make a huge shift in how they teach and work with students and they did so by being collaborative and creative,” says Donegan-Ritter.

### **One silver lining: job interviews**

One silver lining to the spring was an unusually active March and April for job interviews. Principals and superintendents reached out and began interviews sooner. A big help? The signature assignment the Teaching department asks of all students: create a video that demonstrates teaching proficiency. Many student teachers completed this assignment in their first eight-week placements.

Harris says principals she engaged with commented on how professional and confident the UNI student teachers came across in virtual interviews.

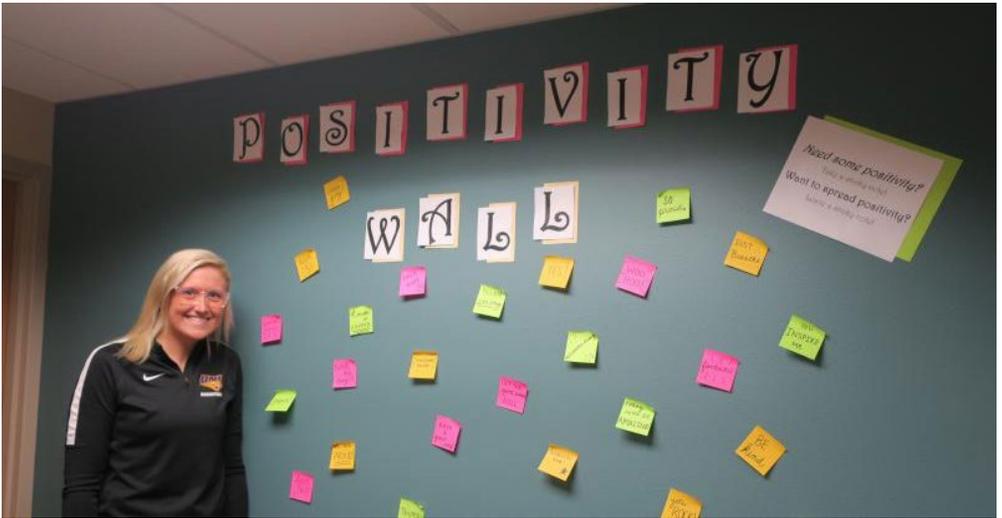
Even with the adjustments made for these unprecedented times, Harris adds, “We’re launching teachers who are ready to be teachers, and every one of the coordinators would share that.”

Looking forward, Donegan-Ritter recognizes challenges and some uncertainty remain, but she believes the faculty are ready.

“There is a shift in thinking occurring away from what placements in schools can give UNI students to how UNI students can support PreK-12 schools whose students will be returning to classrooms after five months at home,” she says, adding:

“Faculty are thinking outside the box about how we can be flexible in how we schedule UNI students and what we expect our students to do in partner school classrooms. I expect that our UNI students are going to be taking an active role in supporting learning in whatever forms it takes.”

# Staying on Track with Internships



Public health students were among those impacted by the very subject they're studying when it came to field experiences. **Sherry Hester**, instructor in public health and education, kept her 14 students on track as they successfully shifted to online projects.

"A lot of projects students were working on were cancelled, like health fairs, doing programs at schools, so we needed to shift gears and work on things that were down the road for the host sites," Hester says, noting students turned to projects like remote community surveying or developing health education programs or curricula.

"Students continued to get experience, it was just different. I really couldn't be more proud of them for being that flexible. This is a life skill they worked on and on the fly. This is going to help them down the road in the work world," Hester says.

## Three internships and a job



This past spring semester, senior Leddia Tallman was busy with three internships to meet her community experience requirements. She was setting up educational tables at high school basketball games, coordinating a wellness challenge at a local senior wellness center, and calling community members for a survey related to substance abuse prevention. Then COVID-19 happened. She

connected with Hester and confirmed that all three organizations would allow her to continue remotely.

Tallman had moments where she felt overwhelmed in balancing it all. About the same time, she also began a new part-time job as executive director of the Waukon Chamber of Commerce. And, as she moved to work remotely, she found she preferred being hands-on compared to sitting at a computer all day.

“This experience has made me realize that although there are some projects that I may not be excited to complete, the end result made it a thousand times worth it,” she says. “I know that I will be able to use pieces of these internships at all three sites not only in a career, but in my personal life as well.”

### **Getting a firsthand look, and then...**

Fellow public health student Megan Maahs remained on site for an additional three weeks at her internship site, the People’s Community Health Clinic, where she was interning with CEO Christine Kemp. Suddenly, she was helping the clinical team manage through a pandemic.

“As part of my role, I took it upon myself to come up with different ideas to spread positivity throughout the clinic, to let the staff know that we appreciate all that they were doing and we know that times are crazy, but we just want to give you electronic hugs and send some positivity their way,” Maahs says.



In early April, she moved to working remotely, assisting with a community health assessment and helping, from afar, with additional ideas to communicate support.

"It was hard for me to leave, I enjoyed being right there in the middle of it all," Maahs says. "I couldn't have asked for a better internship or experience. I learned something new every single day. I hope to put what I learned in my back pocket to pull out while working in healthcare administration someday."

"I want to praise our internship placement sites, some whom we have worked with for many years," Hester adds. "I think that is what makes our public health internship program at UNI so successful: we have phenomenal students, outstanding sites and great community partnerships."

# Learning to Assess and Care via Telehealth



Students in the [master's of athletic training program](#) faced another kind of challenge: moving from hands-on, face-to-face clinical experiences with patients and oversight with local preceptors to virtual simulations and mentoring, all done online.

For the first two weeks after spring break, **Tricia Schrage**, coordinator of clinical education, connected with preceptors at clinical sites to see if they remained able to mentor students--virtually via telehealth with actual patients, or in a mentoring role remotely. She also was confirming accreditation requirements, all to ensure an acceptable level of clinical experience.

On April 6, clinical experiences went virtual. Schrage explained how it worked with a key partner, Athletico Physical Therapy: "Students participated in virtual clinical experiences at least once per week for four weeks with one to four preceptors. The sessions emulated face-to-face experience in some capacity, as there were rich discussions centered around various injury assessments and rehabilitation strategies," .

Students actively engaged in patient care by viewing video of patients

captured by preceptors. Preceptors also acted as patients, allowing students to perform injury assessments and develop a care plan, all using a telemedicine--or telerehabilitation--approach.



### **Preceptors and students adapt**

Schrage noted this was uncharted territory for everyone. “The four preceptors involved did an incredible job engaging and mentoring students, all while navigating unfamiliar territory with their own patients,” she says.

Among the preceptors working with students were alumni Kayla Hutton, ('13, B.A.), Taylor Vaske ('16, B.A.) Stephanie Bradley-Diehl ('06, B.A.) and Hannah Rinken, who is

completing her master’s research project.

“We often lecture on the importance of effective communication in athletic training, but the use of telemedicine and telerehabilitation brings effective communication to a whole new level. Students quickly learned that they must be intentional and strategic in describing each and every movement they want their patients to perform as they conduct either an assessment or rehabilitation exercises,” she says.

A similar scenario played out for students in the professional undergraduate athletic training program. Using Zoom, students experienced intake, assessment and care planning virtually when they were no longer able to continue at a local free medical clinic. Students worked with a simulated patient (husband of a faculty member) while being observed and mentored by Schrage and program coordinator Kelli Snyder.

Schrage says telehealth, telemedicine and telerehabilitation are here to stay. She recalls the first time she walked students through a virtual shoulder assessment in a Therapeutics Intervention class after spring break: “I chuckle as I think about the debriefing session following that exercise. With hands on their heads, the students appeared dumbfounded; they were mentally exhausted. It was certainly a powerful learning tool.”

By end of semester, she says, “It was fascinating to observe how our students have embraced telemedicine. Our program plans to integrate these topics into our courses. This will allow students to be educated on current evidence, best practice guidelines, state practice acts, and national/local laws centered around these topics.”

All in all, everyone adjusted as best as they could while meeting the standards required. As summer began, students in these and other areas were moving into internships, some which were starting remotely, others which were beginning to shift on-site. Master's of athletic training student Alex Crum, was typical: having secured an internship with the Indianapolis Colts, he found himself "on hold" instead of heading to summer training camp in May. In early June, he received the word he can pack his bags and head east.

# Learning Goes Remote



A switch flipped on March 23 at University of Northern Iowa and the College of Education, as education went remote. For some, the transition was sudden; for others, even seismic. Perhaps not fully satisfying, but necessary. And, here and there, an experience that represented opportunity.

For **Elana Joram**, professor, educational psychology, foundations and leadership studies, it pushed her into unfamiliar territory. And as was common, she had help.

“I had been toying with the idea of having Zoom meetings but wasn’t sure because I’d never tried it,” she recalls. She first met with **Farah Kasheh**, an educational technologist who works out of the HNI Instructional Resource and Technology Center, to learn the basics. She then asked colleague **Kenneth Hayes**, an instructor in EPFLS, for some tips.

“We met virtually, and he walked me through some very basic aspects – what to say to students at first, how to bounce in and out of breakout rooms, etc. Especially helpful was his modeling of what he would typically

say and the procedures he used in his virtual classes," says Joram.

"Thanks to Farah and Ken, I felt very prepared for my first virtual class. The students seemed to really enjoy having the contact, and the sense of normalcy."

Hayes' advice to Joram was heard by many during the transition: "Give yourself grace. It's a big learning curve here. Don't be afraid to reach out to us (your colleagues) for assistance. Don't default to 'online' only -- use Zoom. There is nothing like 'real time' connections that make this transition smoother and your class richer."

## **New tools for many**

Zoom, Panopto, Blackboard--these were tools that were less or more familiar to some. With plans to go to fully remote learning, the university Information Technology team went into action. A comprehensive remote learning webpage--with information and resources specific to faculty, staff and students--went up quickly and was part of the [uni.edu/prepare](http://uni.edu/prepare) COVID-19 informational site. Online workshops were added, and IT became a hub for information, assistance and equipment check-out.



"The communication and collaboration between IT and faculty/staff were prompt and strong. The teaching had to continue and that was our prime focus. Many faculty continued teaching 'face-to-face' via Zoom, and many switched to a hybrid format using Zoom synchronously, and other tools such as Blackboard or Panopto to teach asynchronously," Kashef says.

She saw her workload double right after spring break. As a member of the UNI information technology and educational technology media services (IT-ETMS) team, she is dedicated to the College of Education but supports the overall campus, where the educational technologist to faculty ratio at UNI is almost 3:697.

"I have to admit, I am so proud of the College of Education's faculty. They were prepared to face this challenge. They are also comfortable reaching out and asking questions. They are incredibly advanced when it comes to educational technology and when the campus closed, they quickly came up with creative ways to keep teaching," she says, noting from March 23 to May 12, her five-person team responded to 532 requests for assistance,

with 20 percent coming from the College of Education. “I connected with them from home via Zoom, Service Hub, and email. What I found to be helpful for the faculty, besides the Zoom meetings, were the recorded workshops or the recorded personalized how-to videos I made on the spot.”

## Getting started

The first week going remote was a challenge, but a beginning. “If I could summarize the first week into one word it would be preparation,” says **Melissa Stueve**, an instructor in athletic training. “I found myself figuring out how to use Zoom, how I was going to teach a hands-on upper extremity evaluation course, and preparing supplemental assignments for observation students. Our first two Zoom labs went better than expected.”

**Mauricio Nunez**, kinesiology, converted his PEMES 3151 lecture to a live video feed. “The students seemed to respond well to this the first week and in all three sections about 95% of the students logged in and participated,” he says.

“I was impressed by how well my students adapted to online learning. Every class period I saw students who worked deeply and collaboratively with their peers on authentic problems of classroom practice,” says **Ron Rinehart**, associate professor, EPFLS, referencing the shift for his Learnings and Motivations course.

“One shift we made was toward collaborative reasoning and writing. In my experience learning to write well is preceded by learning to reason well. Since moving online, students had unprecedented access to each other's reasoning via our collaborative writing. Students worked in small groups to use their knowledge of theories of motivation and learning to analyze problems of practice and then evaluate each other's solutions to these problems. This promotes metacognitive discussions that are rich in higher-order thinking.

“I found that meeting face-to-face on Zoom, and making sure that we have a positive classroom atmosphere, provides some social and emotional stability during times of change,” he adds.

## Opportunity, with challenge

The emphasis on remote learning yielded opportunity as well. Faculty foresaw future tweaks to the curriculum, incorporating their “on the fly” learnings and resources uncovered. Student teachers focused on remote learning in classrooms in seminar discussions and projects to better prepare for their future in K-12 schools. The flexibility to join in classroom

discussion or departmental planning wearing pajamas or jeans or while walking the dog had its pluses. Among faculty, this unexpected shift led to increased collaboration and communication.

“One lesson learned is the need for frequent, focused, and direct communication with faculty and staff. I held both weekly practicum/field-based Zoom meetings with agenda [both my agenda items as well as those solicited from the faculty], as well as weekly ‘touch base’ meetings for the entire faculty and staff, with planned topics and discussions,” says **Susan Etscheidt**, head, special education. “These weekly Zoom meetings provided a needed forum for communication and fostered a sense of collegiality and community.”

## Student perspectives

A fully online campus was not the plan as the semester started--nor was it the desire as the semester ended. In part, that was due to the additional variables that faculty, staff and students were navigating: balancing work and family, the shift of formal and informal K-12 education to parents at home; limited child care options; students moving home; job loss for many, while others remained in essential part-time positions.

In a survey of students (see [“Survey Says...”](#)), students acknowledged difficulties in this transition for everyone, while pointing out areas for room for improvement as UNI prepares for a return to class this fall. Among the open-ended comments:

*“I think that while it was a challenge for everybody we came through. Personally my professors have adapted very very well to the change. Overall, I think that this just shows how much face-to-face interaction with classmates and instructors was undervalued by myself and many other students.*”

*“It was difficult, but I know that it wasn’t just difficult for me, it was difficult for students and professors, so we were all learning together. I definitely do not prefer this kind of learning, I would MUCH rather be in a classroom.*”

*“My program is almost entirely online but the stress of working full time from home, taking care of children fulltime and adjusting some of my coursework is extremely overwhelming.*”

*“Teachers have tried everything they can to help me continue to learn, and you can tell they are all trying their very best. I am very thankful for all the support our teachers have given us.”*

*“I think many professors have realized that they have to really engage us for us to come online.”*

## Graduate programs adjust as well

Graduate students who earn their degrees in conjunction with programming offered through UNI Continuing and Distance Education did not experience as big a shift this spring (outside of balancing everything else going on with work and family).

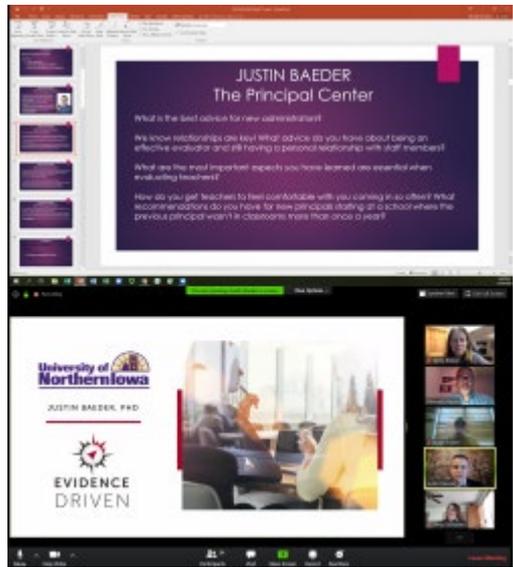
However, some graduate programs are fully face-to-face, while other distance education programs are a hybrid. Each

summer, educational leadership faculty welcome a new cohort of principalship candidates during a two-day orientation on campus. This year Hayes has crafted a virtual welcome for the July introduction.

Similarly, the hybrid superintendency program is primarily online, but with two two-day sessions on campus each summer for two cohorts. Students look forward to the face-to-face interactions with UNI faculty and current superintendents, or “critical friends” within the program. This year they will connect via Zoom instead.

**Denise Schares**, associate professor, conducts a series of leadership camps as part of the Institute for Educational Leadership. Schares was able to package existing materials into 15 modules which are self-paced, particularly important for participants who are working through their own return to school planning for their school districts.

“After the initial discomfort of seeing and hearing myself on the recordings, the modules went together easily and the website was created,” Schares says. “The difficult part is not being together for the conversation, but participants indicate they were able to have the recommended conversations with other leaders in their districts or family members. We are very hopeful that we can return to face-to-face delivery for fall, but we’re making the best of uncertain times.”



# They Said It: Learning Amid Disruption

From the return after spring break on March 23 to graduation on May 8, a long list of learnings emerged, some of which were captured in the COE student survey. Here are other comments shared during and as the semester came to an end:



**Katie McGrane,  
student, movement  
and exercise science:**

One of my best stories probably involves my biomechanics professor Mauricio Nunez. The moment we went to online learning, he was

sure to reach out and keep us in the loop and still had Zoom lectures at the regularly scheduled time. This really helped me stay organized and made this huge change a little more approachable. I can say with confidence that I sent him at least two emails each week, each email filled with questions, and he responded in a timely manner to those emails and was always willing to help or Zoom with me. I really wanted to excel in his class and with his help, I was able to do just that...The biggest take-away from this recent experience was how truly important it is to create relationships with your professors for each class.

**Robin Dada, head, curriculum and instruction:** COVID-19 appeared on the scene, something no one could

predict with an impact that required a change of practice like we had not seen before. Things that were impossible one day, became things that had to be considered and adjusted.



Students have previously stated and continue to do so that different sections of the same course do not seem to be similar. One of my take-aways has been the introduction of Course Leaders in C&I who will convene all faculty teaching a specific course to review the syllabi for the course, prior to distribution to students, to discuss common assessments used, with the understanding that data produced by these assessments will help improve the courses and will be reviewed at the end of the semester. The sharing of alternative assignments that different faculty developed out of need during COVID-19 will be shared and may actually become recognized as productive assignments that we'd previously not considered.



**Blair Bodermann, student, physical**

**education teaching:** The biggest take-away for me was the amount of motivation needed to finish the semester online. At first, I felt very motivated to attend all Zoom meetings and have a set schedule so I wouldn't feel behind on classes. As the weeks went on, I would push off assignments and instead of watching the live Zoom, I'd watch the recording instead. I needed more motivation in order to complete the assignments and finish the semester strong. ...My best experience was being introduced to Panopto and Zoom. I have never

used these two services before, but I needed both in order to complete assignments. I now feel more confident with using both.. I hope for next fall we will return to campus because I am taking my Methods courses then, but if we are online, I feel confident that I will do well.

**Farah Kashef, faculty technology**

**integration specialist:** I've learned that

"prevention is better than cure." Having a plan B for unusual circumstances never hurts. Who

knows when the next campus closure is, so we all need to have a couple of backup tools and evaluate them yearly. I encourage faculty to include their plan B on the syllabi, so there

are no surprises for the students. I am also incredibly lucky to be working with colleagues that I can communicate with and trust. Tremendous teamwork went on behind the scene by the IT from finding creative ways to checkout devices, to installing software remotely, to increasing wifi access in certain parking lots around campus. Everyone worked hard to get the mission accomplished.



# Survey Says...



*“I think that while it was a challenge for everybody, we came through. Personally my professors have adapted very very well to the change. Overall, I think that this just shows how much face-to-face interaction with classmates and instructors was undervalued by myself and many other students.”* -- Student comment, May 2020 student survey

More than 2,000 students in all levels and degree programs at the University of Northern Iowa College of Education experienced a spring semester like none other. Before the end of semester, more than 325 shared their thoughts on the experience in response to a COE student survey.

So, how did it go?

Overall, students recognized the transition to remote learning was difficult for everyone. They appreciated the communication, feedback and support they were given. If given a choice, though, 80 percent said the experience did not increase their interest in online teaching. Sixty-five percent still preferred face-to-face learning, while 25 percent were open to a hybrid approach.

The students shared concerns with communication (lack of consistency, completeness, timeliness); inconsistency in expectations, level and quality of coursework; and access to technology. They also cited the impact on their mental health and well-being as they dealt with stressors including loss of jobs and income, or, in contrast, continuing to work as an “essential worker” while trying to complete their studies, with many unexpectedly at home with family.

While students in many of the college’s graduate programs are more accustomed to working online, many were not. The unexpected and quick shift to remote learning and changing requirements for field experiences added to their discomfort.

### **Insights for next steps**

Many findings parallel similar surveys conducted by the other UNI colleges. “Going forward, we will learn from this, identify what we can do as College of Education faculty and staff, and collaborate with all our UNI colleagues to provide the quality education, support and understanding our students expect,” Dean **Colleen Mulholland** wrote in a message to faculty and staff as she thanked them for their efforts.

“This has been an incredibly stressful time for all. But, we rallied together to create an alternate learning environment to meet our goal of successfully helping our students complete their semester. The future remains uncertain, but we will get through this, together.”

# Class Notes: Spring/Summer 2020

Class Notes are compiled from information sent in personally by alumni and from news releases. **If you would like to share your news**, go to [unialum.org/submit\\_class\\_notes](http://unialum.org/submit_class_notes) or mail to UNI Alumni Association, 304 Commons, Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0284.

Have you moved and need to update your mailing address? Send an email to [alumni@uni.edu](mailto:alumni@uni.edu) or call 319-273-2355 to update your information.

*From June 1, 2019 to May 31, 2020*

## 1960s

'60 **Norman Wolfe, BA**, Stuart, is retired, does a lot of fishing, writes poetry and short stories and enjoys traveling. He has 50 grand and great grandchildren and is a big UNI football fan.

## 1970s

'72 **Jan Dinger Duggan, BA**, Saint Cloud, MN, retired from teaching kindergarten in Fairfax County Public Schools in Alexandria, VA.

'75 **Gail (Carlson) Eichstadt, BA**, Sioux Falls, SD, retired as senior staff attorney with Disability Rights South Dakota in June 2019.

'78 **Rebecca (Willson) Keeling, BA**, Waterloo, received the 2020 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She teaches 6th grade math and science at Blessed Maria Assunta Palotta Middle School.

## 1980s

'82 **Ann Kness, BA**, Webster City, retired in 2015 after 33 years of teaching. She continues to substitute teach, volunteer at church and local

library and serves on the board for the local recreation center.

**'86 Saul Austin, ASC**, Waterloo, was named one of the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier's 8 Over 80 for 2019.

**'86 Deb Vangellow, BA**, Sugar Land, TX, was named one of the Top 50 LPGA Teachers for 2020 2021 by the Ladies Professional Golf Association.

**'87 Deb (Zeimet) Little, BA, MA '96**, Tripoli, received the 2019 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

## 1990s

**'91 Sherry (Tryon) Parker, BA, La Porte City**, received the 2020 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She teaches second grade at Dysart Geneseo Elementary.

**'91 Lisa Raine, BA, MA '95, ASC '97**, Vancouver, WA, is the union director for the Washington Education Association.

**'94 Barbara (Sabelka) Schwamman, BA, ASC '16**, Osage, was a nominee for the 2019 2020 Iowa Superintendent of the Year award by the School Administrators of Iowa.

**'97 Denise (Gunderson) Aalderks, MA, ASC '97**, Dike, received the 2020 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She teaches 5th grade at Aldrich Elementary in Cedar Falls.

## 2000s

**'03 Bart Schmitz, BA**, Cedar Falls, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2019. He is the program manager of the John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center at UNI.

**'04 Becky (Ahlstrom) Lins, BA, MA '06**, Cedar Falls, received the 2020 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. She is a counselor at Peet Junior High.

**'05 Liz (McKenna) DeJoode, BA**, Cedar Falls, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2019. She is a health innovation consultant with PDCM Insurance.

**'06 Michael Gleason, BA, MA '09**, Waverly, is an associate professor of leadership and the director of the Institute for Leadership Education at Wartburg College.

**'07 Jamie (Hutchinson) Rathjen, BA, MA '11**, Cedar Falls, was named one of the Cedar Valley's 20 under 40 by the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier for 2019. She is the founder and executive director of Guiding Star Cedar Valley and founder of Fiat Fertility Care Center.

**'07 Kyle Reeve, BA**, Tipton, is the principal at Tilford Elementary School in Vinton.

**'08 Lindsey (Leonard) Wilson, BA**, Bennington, NE, received the 2020 Alice Buffett Outstanding Teacher Award. She is a social studies teacher at Morton Middle School in Omaha.

## 2010s

**'11 Brent Green, BA, MA '19**, West Des Moines, was promoted to senior benefit analyst of human resources with UnityPoint Health.

**'11 Robby Krapfl, BA, MA '13**, Chicago, IL, is a large enterprise account executive with Gartner, a global research and advisory company.

**'13 Ryan Christoffer, MA, ASC '13**, Waterloo, received the 2020 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. He teaches 4th grade at Highland Elementary.

**'14 Ryan Lehmann, BA**, Cedar Falls, received the 2020 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching. He teaches 2nd grade at Lowell Elementary in Waterloo.

**'17 Kelsey (Hansen) Randall, BA**, Waukee, is a program associate with ITA Group.

# Celebrating Excellence: Spring/Summer 2020

## University Awards and Recognition

UNI James F. Lubker Faculty Research Award: **Deb Gallagher**, special education (SPED)

Regents Award for Faculty Excellence: **Amy Peterson**, SPED

UNI Outstanding Teacher Award: **Jacob Reed**, kinesiology

Distinguished Scholar Award: **Michael Waggoner**, educational psychology, foundations and leadership studies (EPFLS)

Regents Award for Staff Excellence: **Michelle Holland** and **Heidi Seegers**, student advising

## College of Education Awards

Teaching: **Mason Kuhn**, curriculum and instruction (C&I)

Service: **Nicole Skaar**, EPFLS

Diversity and Equity: **Taraneh Matloob Haghanikar**, C&I

## Ross A. Nielsen Endowed Fellowship Awards

**Amy Petersen** and **Wu-Ying Hsieh**, special education

**Kenneth Hayes**, EPFLS

**Scott McNamara**, kinesiology

## Faculty Achievements

**Curtis Nielsen**, teaching, was named a 2020 Clinical Fellow by the

National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS), while **Sarah Montgomery**, curriculum and instruction, received the Outstanding Honors Faculty Award for Spring 2020.

Receiving \$4,000 grants to support in-depth scholarship research as part of the 2020 COE Faculty Summer Fellowships were:

- Curriculum and instruction: **Dana Atwood-Blaine, Nandita Gurjar, Karla Krueger, Mason Kuhn**
- Educational psychology, foundations and leadership studies: **Elana Joram, David Hernandez-Saca, Wu-Ying Hsieh, Amy Staples**
- Kinesiology: **Kim Hurley, Sophia Min**

Approved for faculty promotion and/or tenure adjustments:

- Professor: **Julianne Gassman, Christopher Kowalski, Heather Olsen**, health, recreation and community services
- Associate professor with tenure: **Kimberly Hurley, Sophia Min**, kinesiology
- Assistant professor: **Allison Barness, Becky Hawbaker**, teaching

## Student Leadership Awards

Joining student leaders across campus in earning UNI spring student leadership awards were:

- Servant Leader Award: Hannah Luce, recreation, tourism and nonprofit leadership.
- Panther Pantry Volunteer Award: Sammey Bunch, movement and exercise science.

# College News and Notes: Spring/Summer 2020

## Mulholland continues as dean



Provost Jim Wohlpart announced that Colleen Mulholland, who has served as interim dean of the College of Education since August 2019, will continue as dean through the 2022 academic school year. An initial search was closed, and Wohlpart says a new public search is planned during the 2021-22 school year.

“The stability that Dr. Mulholland has offered over the last year and will offer over the next two years is essential in assisting us in navigating the

challenges before us,” Wohlpart said.

Mulholland joined the college in July 2018 as associate dean for undergraduate studies and student support services. She came to Cedar Falls after 10 years with the University of Indianapolis, where she most recently served as interim dean for 18 months. She was appointed assistant dean in 2014 after joining the faculty as an assistant professor in secondary education.

Mulholland earned her doctorate in education in curriculum and instruction and master’s in instructional design from the University of Central Florida. The Michigan native attained a B.A. in middle school education with a

specialization in English language arts and social studies from University of Kentucky, and previously taught middle level and high school English in Florida. She holds national board certification in English language arts/adolescent young adulthood.

## Countryman named head for Teaching



Effective July 1, Lyn Countryman, a professor in the Teaching department, will step into the role of head, Department of Teaching. Countryman has been with UNI for 30 years, and served previously in several roles with the Malcolm Price Laboratory School. She replaces interim head Mary Donegan-Ritter, who will

return full time to her role as associate professor, early childhood education.

## Be A Teacher!



Nearly 400 prospective students and family members joined in at two new events in fall 2019: Transfer! Teach! Transform!, an afternoon event for prospective transfer students in early childhood and elementary education; and Be a Teacher Day, specially dedicated to students interested in teaching at all PreK-12 levels.

The latter event was a collaboration of admissions and all four colleges which support the UNI Teacher Education program. COE educational leadership alumni Eric Rosburg (M.A.E.,ASC/principalship, '15),

a Cedar Falls junior high associate principal, and Mike Fisher (M.A.E., '11, ASC/superintendency, '15),



superintendent for Charles City schools, joined several current students on a panel that kicked off Be a Teacher Day at the Gallagher Bluedorn Great Hall.

## Time to code!

Pre-service UNI teacher education students and faculty gained hands-on experience in computer

coding on December 9

when the college's

Instructional Technology

Division hosted an "Hour of

Code" in the Schindler

Education Center. The

event was part of a

nationwide initiative by

Computer Science

Education Week and Code.org to introduce millions of students to one hour

of computer science and computer programming. "As a college of

education, it's important that we prepare our future teachers for curricular

changes which include greater emphasis and exposure to computer

science," said Magda Galloway, instructional technology. With this initial

foray, Galloway and colleagues are already planning for next year.



## EPFLS faculty explore moral and intellectual virtue

Five COE faculty have begun exploring the literature on traditions of moral and intellectual virtues, studying how that connects and can inform changes in two foundational courses for teacher education on learning and

motivation and dynamics in human development.

Their efforts are supported by a \$149,964 grant awarded by the Kern Family Foundation for calendar year 2020. Participating are EPFLS faculty Benjamin Forsyth, department head and the study's principal investigator, Ron Rinehart, Elana Joram, Anthony Gabriele and Suzanne Freedman.

Forsyth says the expected deliverable will be recommendations on changes in curriculum for courses taught by the EPFLS faculty. The group also hopes to bring guest speakers on related topics to campus over the next year.

This grant is in addition to support previously received from the Kern Family Foundation for expanded leadership educational opportunities by EPFLS's Institute for Educational Leadership, under the direction of Denise Schares. The four-year IEL project includes think tanks and leadership camps, school board dialogues, mentor training and support for the Iowa School Finance Leadership Conference.

## Camp Adventure closes

Following months of discussions, Camp Adventure Child and Youth Services closed May 1. Numerous factors contributed to this decision, including declining participation, unsustainable budget deficits and the impact of COVID-19 which accelerated the decision.

Camp Adventure, a program within Health, Recreation and Community Services, had been offered through UNI since 1991, and was affiliated with several other universities. It provided thousands of students from Iowa and across the nation a service-learning opportunity through running summer youth programs primarily for military families or participating in summer and fall internships.

Many faculty and staff have fond memories of the rich history of Camp Adventure, having served both as guides and participants during their student years. Domino Chumrley-Birch served as interim program manager. The previous manager, Susan Edginton, retired in November 2019 a few months after her husband Dr. Chris Edginton retired. Dr. Edginton founded Camp Adventure.

## AEAs and UNI partner to 'grow' school psychologists

A "grow your own" distance education program to increase access to

mental health services in schools is underway, thanks to a grant secured by the Green Hills Area Education Agency from the U.S. Department of Education with UNI School Psychology program assistance.

School psychology faculty helped write the grant and are contracted to assist in its implementation with Green Hills and Prairie Lakes AEA. The goal is to add 10 school psychologists in high need rural areas of western Iowa over five years.

“This is a great opportunity to work with Green Hills and Prairie Lake AEAs. We’re grateful for their commitment to the practice of school psychology in Iowa,” said Nicole Skaar, school psychology program coordinator.

The first cohort was recruited from Green Hills and Prairie Lakes AEAs and districts they serve. They started courses in January and are expected to graduate with their Ed.S. degree in Spring 2022. The next cohort will be recruited in Fall 2021, begin courses in January 2022, and graduate in Spring 2024.

## Revamped Doctor of Education program launches

A revamped and streamlined program awaits future students entering the College of Education’s [Doctor of Education Program](#).

Now delivered in cooperation with [UNI Continuing and Distance Education](#), the updated program shifts from rolling admissions to a cohesive, cohort-based model and offers a more robust combination of online and hybrid learning. Credit hours total 48, down from an average of 60 hours, with a flexible, three-year plan of study, two courses per semester.

In addition, the program has added an intensive study area (ISA), postsecondary education: student affairs.

“With this revamped program, we are even better positioned to meet the needs of today’s professionals who are preparing for their next step as leaders in formal and informal education and community settings,” said Colleen Mulholland, dean of the College of Education.

The first fall 2020 cohorts in educational leadership (including special education) and PSE: student affairs begin this fall. The next round of cohorts will start in fall 2022.

## New names, new minors fall 2020

Kinesiology and Health, Recreation and Community Services (HRCS) will welcome students to new or newly renamed degree options this fall.

- Leisure, youth and human services is now recreation, tourism and nonprofit leadership (HRCS)
- M.A. in community health and recreation, a blend of the previous M.A. in community health and M.A. in leisure, youth and human services (HRCS)
- Athletic training and rehabilitation studies minor (HRCS)
- Strength and conditioning minor (kinesiology)

Program faculty say most of these changes reflect student interests, program trends nationwide and UNI program strengths.

## Professional development and education kick off new year



Before COVID-19 emerged, the College of Education hosted a full slate of professional development and educational outreach events which reached hundreds of faculty, staff, professional colleagues and

community members. These included:

**2019 Education Summit**, November 11-12, featuring presentations and dialogue centered on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Practice: Challenging Systemic Inequity and Injustice in Education and Health. Coordinated by the Center for Educational Transformation, the summit explored research, practices and policies that underpin the current education and health care systems in the United States.

Weather kept two keynote speakers from attending, but Ahmad Washington, assistant professor, counseling and human development, University of Louisville, led a contingent of UNI faculty, community members, health care and other guests, and K-12 students who participated in individual, panel and



poster presentations. They focused on four strands: culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy and practice; community, school and university partnerships; inequity and injustice in education and health; and cultural and linguistic competence in school and healthcare systems. Christopher Burke (ASC, '16, principalship, and M.A., '15, educational leadership and postsecondary education), 2019 Iowa Teacher of the Year, facilitated conversations focused on the criticality of the whole self (e.g., social, emotional, and cultural) and how they intersect with school outcomes, including academic achievement.



**Bill and Linda Tubbs Teaching Connections**, January 30-31, professional development which explored the needs of emergent bilingual learning students and families. A diverse mix of community partners including representatives of EMBARC, Heartland AEA, McFarland

Physical Therapy and Marshalltown and Waterloo schools joined COE and UNI faculty in dialogue for two days on this important topic.

**African American Children and Families Conference and African American Read-In**, February 27-28. First came the first graders -- nearly

1,000 of them from Waterloo and Hudson schools -- for the 14th Read-In, filling Maucker Union with day-long activities. A record number of middle and high school students along with UNI students, university and community professionals attended the 9th



annual conference: "Transforming Communities for the Betterment of the Lives of African American Children and Their Families." Gloria Kirkland-Holmes, who coordinated these events from the beginning, reminisced about their origins and growth prior to her upcoming retirement in an InsideUNI feature.

## In memory... Christopher Kliewer



Christopher Kliewer, a 24-year member of the special education faculty in the UNI College of Education, passed away on November 5, 2019.

Kliewer was a true advocate for children with disabilities and their families. Throughout his tenure at UNI, Chris received numerous awards and recognition for his teaching, research, and service, including the Regents Award for

Faculty Excellence in 2009. He was a distinguished scholar in the areas of disability studies, inclusion, literacy and students with significant disabilities, and one of the first inclusive education scholars interested in the implications of literacy learning for young children with significant disabilities.

Through several federally funded grants, his work contributed to advancing understanding and practice in his field. He was active nationally in advisory roles, on editorial boards and as a speaker at national educational and inclusion conferences.

Kliewer had a gift for explaining complex constructs in a clear, understandable fashion and loved to tell his students stories drawn from his classroom experiences teaching young students with disabilities. He leaves behind an inspiring and enduring legacy.

## Honoring our retirees

Ten faculty and staff, who together represent nearly 250 years of experience, retired by the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

- Susan Edginton, 28 years, Health, recreation and community services
- Kathy Johnson, 12 years, Kinesiology
- Gloria Kirkland-Holmes, 41 years, Curriculum and instruction
- Rick Knisveld, 27 years, Teaching
- Loleta Montgomery, 6 years, Educational psychology, foundations and leadership studies

- Karen Peterson, 25 years, Health, recreation and community services
- Mary Stichter, 30 years, Teaching
- Paul Waack, 38 years, Kinesiology
- Michael Waggoner, 32 years, Educational psychology, foundations and leadership studies
- Robert Weaton, 7 years, Teaching

# Foundation News: Spring/Summer 2020

## Leitner awarded 2020 Strottman Memorial Scholarship



Bailey Leitner, a senior at Dubuque Senior High School, became the fifth Strottman Scholar upon receiving the 2020 **Sally Gearhart Strottman Memorial Scholarship in Elementary Education** at University of Northern Iowa.

“I am so very honored to have received this award and recognition. I thank you for choosing me,” said Leitner when surprised by a visit from Colleen Mulholland, interim dean, and Kim Hanna, COE development director, and family and friends at Dubuque Senior in January.

## #UNtogether fund meets giving day goal

More than \$50,000 was raised through the **UNI Foundation's** #GivingTuesdayNow fundraiser on May 5, reports Kim Hanna, the College of Education's director of development.

The foundation received 545 gifts. The **#UNtogether fund** will be used this fall to provide scholarships for new and returning students who have been affected by COVID-19. The first \$50,000 raised is being matched by personal contributions for the UNI Annual Fund by the UNI Foundation Board of Trustees.

For more information on how you can support UNI, contact Hanna at 515-450-8771 (cell) or 319-273-7319 or [kimberly.hanna@uni.edu](mailto:kimberly.hanna@uni.edu).