



Education Department Newsletter February 2019

Message from the Chair



Dr. Jessie Store,
Chairperson

Welcome to the Alma College Education Department's (new) newsletter! The goal of this biannual newsletter is to provide information that may be of interest to our graduates. We are pleased to share news and updates with you.

Like all Educator Preparatory Institutions, the number of prospective educators went down in the last couple of years while the need for qualified K-12 teachers has kept growing. We are working hard to get students excited about becoming educators and our enrollment is starting to pick up again. This period of low enrollments in Education courses has been a constant reminder to be grateful to you for all the work you do as you selflessly and generously serve our children, our future. We are glad to be your partners in this very important work. If you know any student who may be interested in becoming a teacher or pursuing any field of education, please email me so we can reach out to them. Please also consider recommending them through the **Refer A Scot** program so they will be eligible to receive a \$1,500 referral scholarship.

You may have already heard that the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is changing its certification structure to PK-3, 3-6, 5-9, and 9-12 grade bands (beginning in Fall of 2021). We are excited to be a part of the team that identifies the core teaching practices to be included in the upcoming programs. I will be traveling to Lansing in February to work with principals, the MDE, and other Educator Preparation Institutions on this project.

Lastly, we are considering the development of a professional development series for alumni in their first three years of teaching. If you are willing to share information about your

Student Spotlight



Mallory Munderloh '19

This semester our student spotlight is on Mallory Munderloh a senior from St. Louis, Michigan. Mallory is currently student teaching in a 5th grade classroom at Pine Avenue Elementary School in Alma and would love to continue working with upper elementary students in the future.

When asked about her most memorable moment(s) in education at Alma College, Mallory offered that, "All of my classroom placements and observation hours have been great learning experiences...I could always count on being in a great mood after being in the classroom."

Special Thanks

professional development needs, interests, and preferences with us, please complete [this brief, 15-minute survey](#).

Please keep in touch and read on for news and updates.

Accreditation

We are currently pursuing the renewal of our national accreditation through the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. We submitted our report in July and have recently received information about the upcoming visit by our accreditation team in early April. Whilst here, they would like to interview a variety of people who are knowledgeable about our program, including alums. They may also invite comments and survey feedback. Please do respond to their requests for feedback, and we hope to see some of you if you are invited for an interview. For those of you who have already responded to our own requests for feedback, many thanks for contributing to our report. We are always grateful for your thoughts about our program as we continue to seek ways to improve.

Faculty Scholarship



In October Dr. Thelen presented her research at the School Science and Math Association conference and her book chapter titled "Preparing and Using Observations in Faculty Teaching Evaluations" was published in Faculty Development: A Resource Collection for Academic Leaders.



Dr. Jessie Store is presenting her research at the Research Council on Mathematics Learning in February and recently published A grounded theory of productive practices for algebraic thinking in Investigations in Mathematics Learning.



In February and March, Dr. Peggy Yates is presenting her research at the National Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and at the Pacific Rim International Conference on Disability and Diversity.

In late March, Brian Hancock is co-presenting his work (with colleagues from Michigan State University) at the annual NARST conference. Brian also co-authored Designing Educational Systems to Support Enactment of the Next Generation Science Standards, which was the #2 most

We would like to give a special thank you to Jonathan Parlow '84, William '81 and Jeanne Westerhof, Linda Wolgast '65, and James Schierbeek for their generous donations to the Alma College Education Department. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

Alumni Spotlight



Justin Thelen '16

This semester our alumni spotlight is on Justin Thelen ('16). Justin is an English and Business teacher and head varsity football coach at Kalkaska High School. He credits his comfort in the classroom to the small class sizes and individualized attention he received while at Alma College.

When asked about advice for future Scots looking to pursue a career in education, Justin says it's important to "always extend yourself and pursue best practices. There are so many phenomenal educators who utilize different methods with the classroom, and constantly learning from those who have had



popular STEM+C paper in 2018 (according to the Math and Science Partnership Network).

success is an integral part of the profession."

Faculty/Staff Highlight



Brian Hancock '05

This fall we welcomed Brian Hancock as our newest full-time faculty member in the department. Brian is an Alma College alumnus ('05) and has joined us to support our secondary and science education students. He is married to Kristie (Gehrs, '03), a 2nd grade teacher at Hillcrest Elementary in Alma, and they have two daughters (Grace and Harper). Brian is currently finishing his dissertation at Michigan State University and is excited to return to Alma College!

Education Club



Kim Gray '19
President

Alma College Education Club has worked toward making an impact on campus and in the community. We have collaborated with Forgotten Children of Eastern Europe to raise money and write letters to orphanages in Ukraine, as well as pen pal letters to Alma Public School students. We began, and hope to continue, a partnership with the Alma College Head Start program wherein we bring students on campus for events.

We put on a Halloween event in October, a holiday event in December, and are planning a Dr. Seuss reading night in March. It is our intention to introduce younger students to higher education as well as give our members experiences to further their future careers!

Kim Gray, President

Fun Facts

In each newsletter we're going to include one or two "fun facts" about our faculty/staff! Do you think you know which two people these fun facts pertain to? If so, e-mail Dr. Peggy Thelen (thelen@alma.edu) with your guesses! All entries received by March 1st will be entered into a drawing for Alma College Education Department swag, and we'll announce the winner in the next newsletter!



Person #1: I played lacrosse for seven years in school...who am I?

Person #2: I am one of 14 children, with no twins...who am I?

We want to hear from you!

Upcoming Events

Alumni meetings: Check your e-mail for an Education Department alumni meeting in the Grand Rapids area (April 12) - we'd love to see you there!

Homecoming is scheduled for September 21, 2019 - join us in the alumni tent!

Scots on Social Media



College Links

Do you know an Alma College Education Department graduate you feel should be highlighted in our newsletter?



Do you have a new teaching/education position (or other good news!) that we can share with our alumni community?

Will you be on campus in the coming weeks or months?

Feel free to e-mail Brian Hancock (hancockb@alma.edu) or Dr. Jessie Store (storejc@alma.edu) - we want to hear from you!

[Submit an Alumni Note](#) | [Buy Alma gear](#) | [Refer a Student](#) | [Attend a performance](#) | [Explore Athletics](#) | [Give](#)



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