

The College of Education and Professional Studies

2018 Alumni Awards

March 20, 2018



**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND
PROFESSIONAL STUDIES**

FACULTY RETIREES

2017-2018

DR. STEVEN CONN
17.5 YEARS OF SERVICE

MS. JOAN MCCAUSLAND
30 YEARS OF SERVICE

**College of Education and Professional Studies
2018 Alumni Awards**

CEPS Rising Star

The recipients of the CEPS Rising Star Award are within 10 years of graduation from Eastern Illinois University. They must have excelled in their field or in the career for which the CEPS degree prepared them.

CEPS Leadership and Service Award

The recipients of the Leadership and Service Award have had a significant impact in their chosen field, community, or society.

**CEPS Hall of Fame
Lifetime Achievement Award**

The recipients of the Lifetime Achievement Award have attained distinguished professional success and prominence. These honorees are living role models in their disciplines within the College of Education and Professional Studies.

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**College of Education and Professional Studies
2017-2018 Alumni Board**

Lisa DiNaso	Abby Durbin
Amanda Harvey	Jessica Hogue
Sheila Lambert	Becky Lawson
Adam Karcz	Kyle Thompson

College of Education and
Professional Studies

2018 Alumni Awards & Faculty Retirement Recognition

Welcome Recognition of Retiring Faculty

Dr. Doug Bower, Dean

Introduction of Honorees and Presentation of Alumni Awards

CEPS Alumni Board

Closing Remarks

Ms. Sheila Lambert, Chair, CEPS Alumni Board

2013 Recipients

CEPS Rising Star

Thomas Beals
Steven Dollahan
Stephen Duzan
Justin Schuch

Leadership & Service

James Basham
Mark Hudson
Quincy Suckow
Amy Zaher

Lifetime Achievement

Gary Balling
Richard Bowman
James Conyers
Brian Lichtenberger

2012

CEPS Rising Star

Lea-Ann Domanski
Christy Hild
Rodney Ranes

Leadership & Service

Diane Beedy
Lisa Dieker
Richard Elghammer
Suzanne Hahn
Ryan Jastrzab
David Pankau

Lifetime Achievement

Kathy Augustine
Tim Dimke
Linda Moulton
Debra Vogel

2011

CEPS Rising Star

Drew Campbell

Leadership & Service

Mark Koepsell
Donna Martin
William Smith
Michael Sterba

Lifetime Achievement

Larry Closson
Morrie Reece

2010

CEPS Rising Star

Colleen Coffey
Rebecca Minkwitz

Leadership & Service

Mark Drone
Roger Eddy
Susan Friend

Lifetime Achievement

Noelle Greathouse
John McNary
Mike Metzen
Sue Payton
Mike Rylko

2015
CEPS Alumni Award
Recipients

CEPS Rising Star

Candice Holbrook
Katie Lewis
Melissa McConaha
Leah Reynolds
Lisa Taylor

Leadership & Service

Chelsey Byers
Carey Dahnke
Bridgette Hensley
Andy Kistler
Julie Wollerman

Lifetime Achievement

Chuck Balling
Barbara Hundley
Richard James
Carol Schramm
William Thiel

2014
CEPS Alumni Award
Recipients

CEPS Rising Star

Adam Karcz
Jessica Leach
Joe Sornberger
Sarah Watson

Leadership & Service

Richard “Corky” Emberson
Angela Gentry
Ruth Kissner

Lifetime Achievement

Steve Allen
Suzanne Barchers
Kent Johnson
David Stotlar

2018 CEPS Alumni Award Honorees

CEPS Rising Star

Hilary Cecil
Tyler Ferber
Christine Foster
Jerrah Henson
Kortney Jones
Rob McKinney
Samantha Rosell

Leadership & Service

Paula Dowling
Anne Giarrante
Amy Loy
Angela McQueen
James Nave
Terry Tumbarello
Lindsay Wilson

Lifetime Achievement

Kay Bales
James Gunnell
Tina Stovall

Hilary Cecil

CEPS Rising Star

Hilary graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Kinesiology and Sports Studies (KSS) from Eastern Illinois University in 2012. Continuing with her studies, she received a master’s degree in KSS with a concentration in exercise science in 2013. While a graduate student, she was also an exercise science graduate assistant, where she taught undergraduate activity courses; supervised undergraduate students in the Assessment, Testing, and Prescription Lab; and worked with the EIU Adult Fitness Program.

After graduating from EIU, she obtained a position as a cardiology technician at Good Samaritan Hospital in Vincennes, Indiana. In this role, she performed diagnostic stress testing for patients, and after several years was promoted as the first clinical exercise physiologist to work in cardiac rehabilitation at Good Samaritan. She took the position with the vision of reconstructing the current cardiac rehab program and providing the department with the knowledge and skills she gained from her EIU education.

As an exercise specialist in cardiac rehabilitation, she works alongside the cardiology patient and family educators, cardiologists, and department nurses to reconstruct the existing Phase 2 Program (acute cardiac event monitored patients) by adding an education component for the patients, adding a detailed exercise prescription according to the patient’s need, implementing a new Phase 3 Cardiac Rehab Program (risk reduction and non-acute cardiac patients) and participating in community outreach programs.

Her goal is to continue to grow the Cardiac Rehabilitation program by adding more exercise classes for special populations (such as diabetes, weight loss, flexibility and stability) and facilitating opportunities to raise awareness of heart health in the community.

In addition to working at Good Samaritan, she is a fitness instructor and personal trainer at Transformations (an all-women’s gym) and a basic life support instructor for the American Heart Association. She resides in Olney, Illinois with her husband, Stephen, and their two dogs, Diesel and Duke.



2017 CEPS Alumni Award Recipients

CEPS Rising Star

Lee Althoff
Ericka Duncan
Andrea Grant
Alyssa Swan
Kyle Thompson

Leadership & Service

Brad Carter
Lindsey Frank
Sheila Mingee
Gina Parker
Jody Stone

Lifetime Achievement

Alan Hargrave
Sandra Johnson
Jill Owen
Joy Russell

2016 CEPS Alumni Award Recipients

CEPS Rising Star

Zachary Acton
Tracy Brogan
Tony Katzenmeier
Joseph King
Jaylyn Nassiri

Leadership & Service

Daniel Alemu
Angela Armour
John Biernbaum
Jamie Gower
Kelly Hussey

Lifetime Achievement

Mary Lynn Byers
Meryl Klages
Ken Klipp
Jim Littleford
Marilyn Morrow

Tina Stovall

Lifetime Achievement

After transferring to Eastern Illinois University from Lake Land College, Tina (Brown) Stovall earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a master's degree in Guidance and Counseling. She initially pursued a career in community counseling before accepting a position as an academic counselor at Lake Land College. As an academic counselor, and later director of counseling, Tina served students throughout their community college lifespan, from admission to graduation and beyond. One of the highlights of her initial years at Lake Land was developing and implementing a credit-bearing student success course to help students make a successful transition to college and improve their chances for success all along the way.

To support her interest in a long-term career in college student development, Tina pursued a doctorate in Community College Leadership at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. She served as a graduate research assistant and was named as a Carl W. Knox Fellow. Her dissertation research allowed further pursuit of her interest in the impact of participation in a student success course on academic performance. Her study was recognized as the Dissertation of the Year by the National Council on Student Development.



After receiving her doctorate degree, Tina relocated to serve as dean for Counseling, Advising and Multicultural Student Affairs at Moraine Valley Community College. After spending her life in rural Illinois, the move provided an exciting opportunity to live and work in a new environment as she provided leadership for implementing a comprehensive First Year Experience program, including a mandatory success course, for all new students. At Moraine, Tina was recognized with the Vernon O. Crawley Leadership Award.

In 2006, Tina left Moraine to return to Lake Land College to serve as Vice President for Student Services. In this position she enjoys working with talented staff and students across the college to provide an excellent educational experience for all students. She also enjoys the opportunity to support EIU College Student Affairs graduate students.

Throughout her career, Tina has been active in the National Council on Student Development and the Illinois Community Colleges Chief Student Services Officers. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for Sarah Bush Lincoln Health System and has previously served on the Board of Directors for Big Brothers Big Sisters and the Charleston Chamber of Commerce.

Tyler Ferber

CEPS Rising Star



Tyler Ferber is a school counselor at North Ridge Middle School in Danville, Illinois. Upon graduation from Illinois Wesleyan University in 2008, Tyler returned to his hometown in rural Vermilion County in Illinois and started his career in education teaching chemistry at Danville High School. Teaching in Danville was exciting as he learned the complicated art of teaching and maneuvered around students' never-ending requests to "blow something up."

At the time, Danville High School was in the beginning of a major restructuring, leading Tyler into a leadership role in the development of a full project-based learning approach to teaching. In addition to his role as a teacher leader, Tyler became certified as a New Tech Network Project-Based Learning Certified Teacher and Network Advocate. This role led him to provide trainings for teachers at his school and at the New Tech Network Annual Conference.

Alongside his success in teaching, Tyler felt a passion for helping students on a deeper level than the science he was teaching. This led him to Eastern Illinois University to earn a master's degree in School Counseling. An unexpected turn of events helped him gain an interim school counseling position at Danville's South View Middle School where he managed a caseload of 600 students while completing his degree. Despite Tyler's plans of returning to the high school setting, he fell in love with the craziness of counseling middle schoolers.

Tyler is currently in his fifth year as a middle school counselor and loves the emphasis on social-emotional learning at that level, advocating for students and providing support through group and individual counseling. In 2014, Tyler and the school social worker presented at the Illinois School Counselor Annual Conference on violence prevention strategies. He assisted Danville in a district-wide restructuring plan that combined two separate middle schools into a new 7th and 8th grade building. With students, parents, teachers, administrators, social workers, and other mental health professionals, Tyler has worked to build strong networks of support for struggling students.

He was recognized with an Award of Merit for Student Support and Personnel at the Illinois State Board of Education's 2016 Those Who Excel Award Banquet and also received a Golden Ruler Award for his work as a school counselor. Tyler currently lives in Fairmount, Illinois with his wife Whitney and their three children, Titus, Sonora, and Isabella. In his free time, he enjoys traveling with his family and spending time outdoors.



Christine Foster

CEPS Rising Star



Christine Foster graduated from Eastern Illinois University in 2013 with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with a middle school endorsement and concentration in mathematics.

During her time at Eastern she was very involved in a variety of activities including the Black Student Union and the Minority Teacher Education Association. Among other roles, she was a Peer Mentor Leader and a Prowl Leader.

Shortly after graduating Christine was a full-time nanny. She was offered a permanent substitute position at Lorenzo R. Smith Sustainability and Technology Academy, located in her hometown Pembroke Township, Illinois. After working for six months as a permanent substitute she was offered a full-time teaching position at the elementary level. She taught 1st grade, 2nd grade, and is currently teaching at the middle level.

In her spare time, she can be seen supporting many of her students' extra-curricular activities — cheering them on the sideline at their local parade, attending their athletic games and musical concerts, as well as volunteering at the back-to-school kickoff, where she supervised recreational activities for both older and younger students in her school district this year.

Most recently, she can be seen in a video entitled "For The A Challenge", where she is motivating her students to strive for excellence through a rap remix. It has been posted and shared via the Black Educators Rock (BER) Facebook page, which allows black education professionals to share resources, photographs, videos, and other pieces of information that may be valuable to this under-represented population nationwide.

Christine continues to be a leader in her hometown, as she always greets students with warm smiles, hugs, jokes, and words of encouragement in the classroom and the community. She not only creates engaging lessons for her students, but also works diligently with their families in an effort to provide support where needed.

She also worked with Kankakee Community College as a General Education Development teacher for two years. She is in her fourth year of teaching at Lorenzo R. Smith Sustainability and Technology Academy as the middle school math teacher. She greatly enjoys the school and the community she works in—there is no place like home!

James Gunnell

Lifetime Achievement



Dr. James Gunnell earned his bachelor's degree from Eastern Illinois University in 1982 and began his career as a general education teacher. He came back to EIU to earn his master degree in Special Education in 1992, after which he started his administrative career with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). As Special Education Services Division Administrator for the Illinois State Board of Education, Dr. Gunnell has served on numerous state-wide commissions and task forces and was named the Corey H. Facilitator for the Federal Court Case, Corey H. versus ISBE. The Corey H. case has been the most significant court case relative to special education teacher licensure. As a facilitator, he was integral to the settlement process and implementation of the federal court mandates.

Dr. Gunnell earned his doctorate in 2013 from Chicago State University and has had a tremendous impact on the field of special education leadership over his career, spanning nearly four decades. He represented Illinois on the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) Board of Directors for nine years and served as President of the Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education (IAASE). As an IAASE Board member, he has chaired committees, served on the executive leadership committee, and currently serves as the Federal Committee chair. He is active on the United States Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs Steering Committee, the Department of Juvenile Justice Commission, the Illinois Association of School Administrators, and numerous other associations and boards.

Currently serving in his 15th year, he is the Executive Director of the A.E.R.O. Special Education Cooperative which facilitates special education services for 11 member school districts in the Chicago suburban area. Dr. Gunnell was the 2014 recipient of the Larry D. Vuillemot Award from IAASE, a prestigious honor bestowed on an IAASE Governing Board member who is committed to providing high quality educational programs and services for students with diverse abilities. His most recent award, the Harrie Selznick Distinguished Service Award, recognizes administrators who have made significant contributions to the field across their careers and is the penultimate national award for a special education administrator.

Currently, Dr. Gunnell resides in Chicago and is the proud father of Anthony Gunnell and his wife, Jayme. He hopes to spend much of his retirement skiing in Boulder, Colorado with his son and daughter-in-law.

Kay Bales

Lifetime Achievement



Kay earned a master’s degree in Education in Guidance and Counseling/College Student Personnel from Eastern Illinois University in 1987. She has spent nearly 29 years working at Ball State University, now serving as Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services and Dean of Students. Kay leads a team of nearly 500 employees and oversees the division’s total operating budgets of nearly \$65 million and financial aid budgets totaling \$265 million.

She provides executive leadership for the departments of Undergraduate Admissions & Orientation; Financial Aid & Scholarships; Housing and Residence Life; Counseling Center; Health, Alcohol and Drug Education; Health Center; Public Safety and Parking Services; Career Center; Student Life; Student Rights and Community Standards; Multicultural Center; Disabled Student Development; Student Center, Retention and Graduation; Student Legal Services;

Title IX and Victim Services. Additionally, Kay serves as a faculty member of the Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education master’s program.

Since leading Ball State’s retention efforts, student persistence (a measure of retention) has increased more than 8 percentage points. During her tenure at Ball State she has acquired more than 3.5 million dollars in external funding to support student success. One example is the development of the Achievements app, targeting at risk students. The app has brought great national and international attention to how gamification can be used to support student success. This project has been written about in national forums such as The Chronicle of Higher Education, The New York Times, Campus Technology Magazine and Education Dive as well as having received national and international accolades.

At heart a student advocate, Kay has developed numerous student leadership and development programs serving thousands through the years. Kay has been instrumental in facilitating campus building projects including the University Police department, Student Center, two new residence halls and comprehensive renovations of three residence halls.

Jerrah Henson

CEPS Rising Star



Jerrah Stevens-Henson was awarded the Special Education Recognition Award in 2002 and graduated magna cum laude from Eastern in 2003 with a bachelor’s degree in Education majoring in Special Education with a strong belief that all students could learn, but not all the same way, or all on the same day. Upon graduation, she began her career as a special educator in Southern Illinois working in rural and suburban school districts in poverty. Early on in her career, she began advocating for students with special needs to be served in the least restrictive environment with the same high expectations of learning that inspired her as a pre-service teacher.

As each school year passed, she believed that school leaders play an integral role in establishing an inclusive community for all students, especially the students with special needs. This belief led her to pursue and obtain both master’s and specialist degrees in Education in Educational Leadership from Eastern in 2007 and 2008.

In 2010, Jerrah accepted her first administrative job as the director of special education for Carbondale Elementary School in Carbondale, Illinois. During her tenure as director, she worked toward increasing the number of students with special needs that were served, establishing high expectations for all learners, and building a team of special educators that passionately advocated for their students’ success.

In 2016, Jerrah transitioned to the principal position at Parrish Elementary School in Carbondale, Illinois, serving approximately 500 pre-kindergarteners through 1st-grade students. Parrish School’s Pre-K for All program earned the 2017 Award of Excellence for Inclusion of Children with Special Needs.

Currently, Jerrah is continuing her education as a doctoral student at Illinois State University majoring in Educational Leadership through a cohort established at Eastern Illinois University in 2013. She is a member of the Illinois Principals Association, Illinois Association of School Administrators, and Council for Exceptional Children. Jerrah and her husband, Jason, celebrated their 10th anniversary in Barbados and share their home with a miniature schnauzer, Taylor, and their baby due in August.

Kortney Jones

CEPS Rising Star

Kortney Jones earned a master's in College Student Affairs from Eastern Illinois University in May 2013. Upon graduating, she began her career at her alma mater, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) in the Office of Student Financial Aid as a Student Financial Aid Administrator.

One of the duties in her role was serving as the Coordinator for the America Reads America Counts program that placed college students in underserved elementary and middle schools to tutor youth in math, reading and language arts. She worked with several community educators and administrators to improve the program to continue to meet the needs of the Champaign-Urbana community.

In 2014, Kortney started working for UIUC's University Housing as a Residence Hall Director (RD). During her tenure as a RD she also advised the Central Black Student Union (CBSU). She led the CBSU in hosting two regional conferences on campus titled, "Our Place at a Predominantly White Institution" and "Building the Bridge: Uniting Predominantly White Institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities." These conferences yielded visitors from over 10 different campuses with an attendance of over 150 participants. She supported the CBSU in a plethora of large scale events geared towards the African American community, focused on social needs as well as on social justice.

Currently, Kortney serves as the Coordinator for New Student Programs in the College of Engineering. She oversees the summer registration program/procedures for all the major departments for incoming freshman/transfer students. She coordinates undergraduate recruitment efforts on behalf of the college, co-leading the college recruitment committee which plans on- and off-campus recruitment efforts to attract more women and underrepresented minorities to engineering.

While working toward her master's degree in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs, Kortney obtained a Master of Divinity through Christ Ministries, Inc. School of Divinity and was licensed and ordained as a minister. She is a wife, mother of 1.5, and Pastor of Acts Campus Ministry at UIUC which she and her husband have co-pastored since 2015.



Lindsay Wilson

Leadership & Service

Lindsay Wilson graduated from Eastern Illinois University with her undergraduate degree in sociology in December 2007. After completing her undergraduate degree, she continued her academic career at EIU, becoming a graduate assistant in the Health Education Resource Center during her first year and a graduate assistant in the Counseling Student Development Department during her second year. In 2010, she completed a yearlong internship with EIU's Counseling Clinic and graduated from the Clinical Counseling Master's Program with a 4.0 GPA and LPC licensure.

After accepting a position as a clinical counselor in the EIU Counseling Clinic, it became her professional home. She received her LCPC licensure in 2012. From the start of her work as a clinical counselor in the Counseling Clinic, Lindsay has overseen a variety of areas, such as the Disordered Eating Treatment team and the Internship Training program.

She has provided individual and crisis counseling to numerous students over the years and has facilitated a number of therapy groups such as grief group, emotional management group, general therapy group, substance psycho-educational groups, and eating disorder group.

In 2015, she became interim assistant director for the EIU Counseling Clinic, and the Sexual Assault Confidential Advisor for Eastern Illinois University. In addition to individual, crisis, and group counseling, which Lindsay continues to provide, Lindsay now provides clinical supervision to the Counseling Clinic staff, maintains the Counseling Clinic's accreditation, and participates in the Student Support team and Threat Assessment committee for the university.

As the Confidential Advisor for EIU, Lindsay helps to coordinate sexual assault outreach, prevention, and response for campus, provides administrative leadership for the Sexual Violence Prevention team, and reviews institutional policies and practices for the university.



Terry Tumbarello

Leadership & Service

Terry Tumbarello graduated from Eastern Illinois University with a bachelor's degree in business and finance, and received his master's degree in college student personnel. As an undergraduate, he worked as a Resident Assistant in Carman Hall and was involved in student organizations such as the



Residence Hall Association, the National Residence Hall Honorary and BACCHUS. As a graduate assistant for University Housing and Dining, he served as an Associate Hall Counselor and worked in the Office of AIDS, Alcohol & Drug Information.

After graduation, Terry accepted a position at Illinois College in Jacksonville where he served as an Area Director/Coordinator for Drug & Alcohol Education. He moved on to the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater (UWW) where he has been a Complex Director, Coordinator for Community Development, Assistant Director of Residence Life, Interim Dean of Students, and is currently the Associate Director of University Housing. Terry has also taught the New Student Seminar course at UWW for the last nineteen years, a course he first co-taught at EIU as a practicum for his graduate program.

Professionally, Terry has been involved in many higher education professional associations, such as the Upper Midwest Region Association of College and University Housing Officers (UMR-ACUHO) and the Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I). Terry recently stepped down from the UMR-ACUHO Leadership Team after serving 14 years, including as Association President. Currently, he is serving on UMR-ACUHO's Strategic Planning Task Force and ACUHO-I's Public Policy Advisory Committee.

In 2017, Terry was selected to serve as a faculty member for the National Housing Training Institute at the University of South Florida. Terry was selected to be the recipient of the Robert E. Mosier UMR-ACUHO Professional Enrichment Award for his work with mentoring new professionals into the field of higher education administration, also in 2017.

Terry and his partner, Cheryl, live in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin and are the proud parents of three children, Joey, Tommy and Jenny and their three dogs, Shadow, Molly and Kody. Terry and Cheryl met at EIU and have been married since 1994. His interests include spending time with friends and family, movies, reading, investing, fishing, boating, and coaching and playing baseball.

Rob McKinney

CEPS Rising Star

Rob McKinney earned his master's degree in Clinical Counseling at Eastern Illinois University (EIU) in 2014. During his time at EIU, he served as a graduate assistant for Dr. Steven Conn and Dr. Heidi Larson.

Currently, Rob is a doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education and Supervision department at Kent State University (KSU). Rob is a Licensed Professional Counselor in the states of Illinois and Ohio, a National Certified Counselor, and has most recently worked in a clinical setting with college-age students in the Counseling and Human Development Center. His research interests include multicultural considerations and religious/spiritual issues in counseling.



These two research interests are combined in his dissertation entitled, "A Narrative Analysis of Gay Males' Experience with Christianity: Identity, Intersection, and Counseling Considerations." Additionally, Rob's research interests include counselor preparation, education and identity. He recently published research in the Journal of Counselor Leadership and Advocacy, and has delivered over 50 presentations at international, national, regional, state, and local conferences.

He strongly believes in giving back to the counseling profession as an active member of various professional counseling organizations: American Counseling Association, Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, North Central Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling, and Chi Sigma Iota (Kappa Sigma Upsilon chapter).

While completing his Ph.D. at KSU, Rob has developed a strong professional identity as a counselor educator and supervisor as an adjunct instructor for John Carroll University (JCU). At JCU he has taught six different courses for the Counseling Department and supervised students during their clinical mental health counseling practicum and internship experiences.

In his free time, Rob enjoys spending time with his partner Nick, dog Blanco, and cat Milo. He enjoys traveling, visiting family and friends, reading, and watching movies. He is very excited to be a recipient of the CEPS Rising Star Award.

Samantha Rosell

CEPS Rising Star

Sam's commitment to special education and disability advocacy began in high school, when she accepted her first job as a recreation leader at a day camp for children with special needs. At EIU, where she earned a bachelor's degree in Special Education, she was absolutely inspired by the passion of professors like Dr. Melissa Jones-Bromenshenkel and Mrs. Sandy Johnson.

In 2015, Sam was accepted into the special education graduate program at University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) through Project PULSSE (Preparing Urban Leaders in Secondary Special Education) and Project SET (Seamless and Effective Transition) where she earned a Master's degree in Special Education with LBS IIs in Transition, Multiple Disabilities, Curriculum Adaptation and Technology.



Currently, Sam is in her 5th year as a special education teacher at Thornton Fractional North High School. She runs the SUCCESS Program, a district-wide self-contained functional program for students with low-incidence and multiple disabilities to strengthen and prepare them for the complexities of life after high school. One of Sam's primary focuses is parent empowerment, and accordingly, she created numerous events to support the families of her students.

Among these initiatives is hosting "Community Conversations" which bring together students with and without disabilities, parents, siblings, teachers and community members to talk about the challenges and opportunities that exist within the school and local community. The program also encourages student-led IEP meetings, in which her students take ownership over their disability and gain a strong, deeply-personal understanding of their strengths, needs and preferences.

Outside of her program, Sam has given presentations at the school, local and state level. Within her school, she provides ongoing paraprofessional training - helping the support staff within the self-contained programs to develop a stronger understanding of special education. Sam also presented at Equip for Equality in May 2016 with a group of colleagues from UIC about community integration, sharing strategies for parents and service providers.

Sam was named the Calumet City Teacher of the Year by the Lion's Club in 2016, and received the Thornton Fractional North Award of Excellence in 2017 for her contributions to the school community. Her career in special education is off to a fantastic start—Sam can't wait to see what the future holds!

James Nave

Leadership & Service



Following his undergraduate studies in Athletic Training at Indiana State University, Jim attended graduate school at Eastern Illinois University, while working as a graduate assistant for Bonutti Orthopedics. He graduated from Eastern Illinois University in 2000 with a master's degree in Kinesiology and Sports Studies in Exercise Science and currently serves as the director of sports medicine at Eastern Illinois University, overseeing the athletic training staff for all varsity sports.

After receiving his master's degree, Jim began his career in the field of Athletic Training at Bonutti Orthopedics in Effingham, while providing athletic training services to Newton Community High School. During this time, he had the privilege of working with a wide array of health care providers, from orthopedic surgeons to physical therapists, helping shape both his skill set and philosophy of practice.

He learned to work with a broad range of patients, from young to old. Newton High School was an exciting place to start an Athletic Training career, with excellent athletics. That first job, town and its people will always be very special to Jim.

Moving forward with his career, he was afforded the opportunity to work with great staff and a wonderful school, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (RHIT,) furthering his career at the next level - D3 collegiate athletics. Following his tenure at RHIT, he had the opportunity to work with the orthopedic team at Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Systems. It was another great opportunity to learn from orthopedic surgeons and the Eastern Illinois University's team physician.

In the summer of 2015, Jim was honored to have the opportunity to "return home" as the director of sports medicine at Eastern Illinois University. Currently, he supervises a staff of four assistant athletic trainers and 3 graduate assistants. They are a great sports medicine team, and the future is exciting.

Jim has a wonderful wife of 16 years, Jennifer, and two beautiful daughters, Adelaide (7), and Caroline (3). They love spending time together as a family and cheering for EIU.

Angela McQueen

Leadership & Service



Angie graduated from EIU with a bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Physical Education in December 1999. She started teaching math at Danville High School in January 2000. Angie substituted during the Fall 2000 semester and began teaching math at Mattoon High School (MHS) in January 2001.

She continued teaching math full-time until 2012 when she switched to teaching physical education. The following year Angie began teaching both physical education and math. She enjoys helping students that struggle in math but she also enjoys teaching kids about lifelong fitness and exposing them to non-traditional sports such as indiaca, kio rahi, rugby, lacrosse, and Gaelic football.

Angie earned a master's degree in educational administration at EIU in December 2008 and completed her educational specialist degree in December 2014. She wrote and received a grant from Action for Healthy Kids to help students improve their knowledge of lifelong fitness. While the MHS physical education department was already working with Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Systems, checking participating students' BMI (body mass index), the grant made it possible for Angie to purchase resistance bands and other exercise equipment, as well as DVDs such as T25, zumba, and yoga.

Her goal was to expose students to lifelong fitness and engage them with physical activities that they can continue to do as they age. The school also held a badminton tournament and dance workshop (hosted by a fellow teacher who is also a dance instructor in Urbana, Illinois.) At the end of the grant program, the male and female students with the greatest improvement in their BMI received an incentive.

In addition to being a Mattoon assistant coach for various sports including soccer, track, and golf, Angie is currently a part of the MHS BIONIC (Believe it or not I care) transfer team which helps students that transfer to MHS from other districts get acclimated to the school. She is also part of the grief team at Mattoon High School, helping students during difficult times.

Her hobbies including reading, exercise/sports, spending time with her dogs Laddie and Leia, and being obsessed with The Walking Dead—both the TV show and graphic novel.

Paula Dowling

Leadership & Service

Paula Dowling began her career in education in 1990 as a paraeducator for the Treatment and Learning Center, then located in Mattoon Illinois. It was at this position that she discovered her passion for the field of special education. She became a nontraditional student and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Education in Special Education from Eastern Illinois University in 2006.

At Mattoon High School, Paula obtained a position as a self-contained teacher of learners identified as having behavior disorders after her graduation from EIU. In this position, she developed and implemented the high school self-contained program for behavior disorders. Across her eight years in this position, she was very involved with the school's development and implementation of a "Positive Behavior Intervention Support" system. She managed data, co-facilitated "tier one universal supports," and planned a "PBIS" fundraiser.

Paula graduated with her Master's degree in Educational Leadership in 2010, also from Eastern. She became a behavioral consultant across Urbana school settings and served as case manager for Circle Academy Alternative School.

In July 2013, Paula accepted the Assistant Principal position for Circle Academy—Vermilion in Rossville Illinois. This school had just been opened by Cunningham Children's Home to serve the school districts in Vermilion County (Illinois). Now that the school has been open for four years, Paula is still passionate about her work there every day, dedicating herself to enhancing the life of learners with disabilities. Paula believes that this is the way she can make a difference and that this is not just her job but her calling.



Anne Giarrante

Leadership & Service

Anne Giarrante graduated with a bachelor's degree in both Elementary Education and Special Education in 1998. Since then, she earned two master's degrees, one in Curriculum and Instruction, and one in Educational Leadership.

Anne began her career in 1998 in an intermediate grade self-contained classroom in the Grundy County Special Education Cooperative. In August 2001, she became a resource teacher in the Oswego School District 308 and her career has been on an upward trajectory since she accepted her first administrative position as an assistant principal in that district in August of 2004.

Anne served as a principal and then director of special education in West Aurora, and is currently director of student services in Geneva Community Unit School District 304. In each role, she has provided leadership for educational initiatives in the given districts.

As a director, Anne created new programs and refined existing ones to support student needs including: Alternative Learning Opportunities Program, Functional Academic Skills Training, Structured Learning Classrooms, and instructional level classes. She has led, supported, and trained staff on a variety of new initiatives including: Writing Effective Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans, Individualized Education Plan Facilitation, Assessment for Instruction, Specialized Instruction in Core Subject Area, and Social Emotional Programming and Supports. Each of these has resulted in enhancing the education of students and staff across the districts she serves.

Anne is dedicated to supporting students, staff, and families, focusing her administrative career on working with teams of educators and others to develop innovative new programs. She strives to develop leaders because she believes that every person has a unique strength. Anne also believes that "building people" is the greatest contribution an administrator can make to the district, to its students and to the community.

Involved in many professional organizations that sustain her national and local connections, Anne has presented at numerous seminars on a variety of topics related to special education. She is grateful to be a member of the Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education as well as the Council for Exceptional Children.



Amy Loy

Leadership & Service



Amy (Martins) Loy earned two degrees in Special Education at EIU. While completing her master's degree, Amy also worked as a Graduate Assistant in the Department of Special Education. Across her 14-year professional career, she taught middle school and high school learners with special needs in the Manteno and Palos Hills, Illinois public school communities.

In her role as special educator, at Manteno High School she created and implemented the "High School PRIDE" Program for individuals with mild, moderate, and severe developmental disabilities. This program has made a significant difference for the high school learners with disabilities and was instrumental in creating vocational and community-based learning opportunities for her students.

Amy became a vocational coordinator at the Camelot Therapeutic Day School in Bourbonnais in 2013. In this role she implemented and coordinated vocational placements and programming for students with developmental needs, social emotional disorders, and autism. In 2014, she became the assistant principal and education director at the Camelot Therapeutic Day School. In this role she coordinated all the PARCC, Illinois Science, DLM-MAP, and NWEA-MAP assessments for the students with disabilities and their teachers. In this role, she was also responsible for evaluations and remediation plans for certified staff members and teachers. In 2016, Amy completed a second master's degree— in Educational Administration, earning both principal and director of special education endorsements.

At the beginning of 2016-2017 academic year, Amy became the director of special education for the Peotone School District 207U. This new role reflects her enthusiasm to continue to enhance the lives of learners with disabilities, their families, and teachers. In her new role she also serves as the "Homeless Liaison" for the Peotone District. She coordinates all homebound and hospital services for all students as well as directing the services for English Language Learners and assessments. Amy is also responsible for all direction, planning, coordination, and supervision of the district's special education services, programming and staff.

Amy resides in Bourbonnais, Illinois with her husband Harold. They have one son, Bennett, age 2, and another baby on the way, due in March 2018.