

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 Raney

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

College of Education and Professional Studies 2016 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 2015-2016 Alumni Board

Chad Burgett	Sheila Lambert
Lisa DiNaso	Lori Richardson
John Hasten	Scott Smith
Jessica Hogue	LaDonna Talbert

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

Welcome

Dr. Diane Jackman, Dean

**Introduction of Honorees and
Presentation of Awards**

Ms. Mary Bower, Assistant to the Dean
Ms. Lisa DiNaso, President of the CEPS Alumni Board
Dr. Diane Jackman, Dean

Closing Remarks

Mr. John Hasten, CEPS Alumni Board

**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 Wollerrman

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

Marilyn Morrow

Lifetime Achievement



Inspired by her aunt who taught over 40 years, Dr. Marilyn Morrow knew in high school that she wanted to spend her professional life teaching. She chose Eastern Illinois University because of its excellent reputation for teacher education. Graduating in 1974 with a bachelor's degree in Physical Education and a minor in Health Education, Marilyn spent the next six years teaching and coaching in two small schools near her family home.

She found an unexpected opportunity to be part of the first class of students to complete a master's degree in Gerontology at Eastern Illinois University—an interdisciplinary program that was first of its kind in Illinois. Following graduation, she worked for a short time in the Peace Meal Senior Nutrition Program providing nutrition education and home visits to older adults in a four county area in east-central Illinois.

Marilyn was called back to the classroom and taught in the Department of Health Studies at EIU. What was to be a one-semester part time teaching position developed into a nine-year position. During this time, she also

completed her Ph.D. in Health Education at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

Marilyn accepted a position in the Department of Health Sciences at Illinois State University, teaching in the Health Education Program, expanding her research agenda and serving on many university committees. From 1997 until her retirement in 2012, she served as Department Chairperson, providing leadership to five bachelor degree programs, a master's program, and four minors. Enrollment in the department increased significantly and the offering of online education courses became a departmental priority. When she retired in 2012, she spent 22 years as a classroom teacher and 15 years in departmental administration.

She wishes to acknowledge and thank the many faculty members and mentors in Physical Education, Health Studies and Gerontology at Eastern Illinois University who provided an outstanding education as well as many opportunities to grow and develop.

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

Zachary Acton CEPS Rising Star



While earning his bachelor's degree in Recreation Administration, Zach Acton was hired by the University of Illinois (U of I) Division of Intercollegiate Athletics as an intern in the office of Sport Camps & Clinics where he helped facilitate summer sport camps. After graduation in 2007, he became an intern in the office of Event Management before being hired on as a full-time Event Coordinator. In this position—one that is generally held by mid-career professionals—he is responsible for assisting the Director of Event Management in game day operations for all sports under the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics.

As part of his position, Zach is the director of game management specifically for U of I baseball and wrestling teams. In addition, he is also the assistant director of game management for the Illini men's basketball team and football teams and oversees the parking operations for all Illinois home football games. Zach also directs and assists with NCAA, Big Ten and IHSA championships.

In the spring of 2015, Zach Acton was the tournament director for the NCAA baseball regional and super-regional tournaments hosted by the U of I. This was the first time in program history that Illinois hosted any rounds of the NCAA baseball championships—but Zach (and the University) were very successful due to his preparation, leadership, organization, and professionalism. In October of 2015, Zach was named Employee of the Year in the University of Illinois Division of Intercollegiate Athletics.

Zach has served as a professional mentor for many EIU Recreation Administration students. In particular, Zach's work with the department's Rho Phi Lambda professional mentoring program has been very well received by students and he has assisted several students secure internships at various recreation agencies. In addition, Zach has regularly visited the EIU campus to meet with students and share presentations on career tips and strategies.

A graduate of Armstrong Township High School, he currently resides in Collison, IL with his wife, Emily. They will be welcoming their first child in July.



Jim Littleford Lifetime Achievement

Jim Littleford received his bachelor's degree from Greenville College and master's and specialist degrees in education from Eastern Illinois University. He has served as the Charleston CUSD #1 Superintendent of Schools since 2008.

Prior to coming to Charleston CUSD #1, Jim served as the Superintendent of Altamont Community Unit School District No. 10 beginning in 2001. Before that position, he served in a variety of teaching and educational leadership positions around central and southern Illinois.

A big supporter of Eastern Illinois University, he has consistently worked with the university to maintain a good relationship between the Charleston schools and Eastern Illinois University. Under his leadership, EIU teacher education candidates can have clinical experiences and student teach in the Charleston School District. As superintendent, he also hires EIU graduates as teachers in the Charleston schools.

Jim has been on the CEPS Philanthropy Board since 2011, connecting CEPS with the local community and area alumni to help EIU students. Currently, he serves on the boards of Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center, Eastern Illinois Area of Special Education, and EIU Panther Club.

Jim is a member of the Illinois Association of School Administrators, Charleston Area Chamber of Commerce, Coles Together, and Charleston Rotary Club. He is also an active member of the Charleston community and St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church.

Jim's wife, Karen, is a teacher in the Effingham School District. He and Karen have five children— Shae, Sydnie, Reid, James and Jamie. Three of their children currently attend Charleston schools.



Ken Klipp

Lifetime Achievement

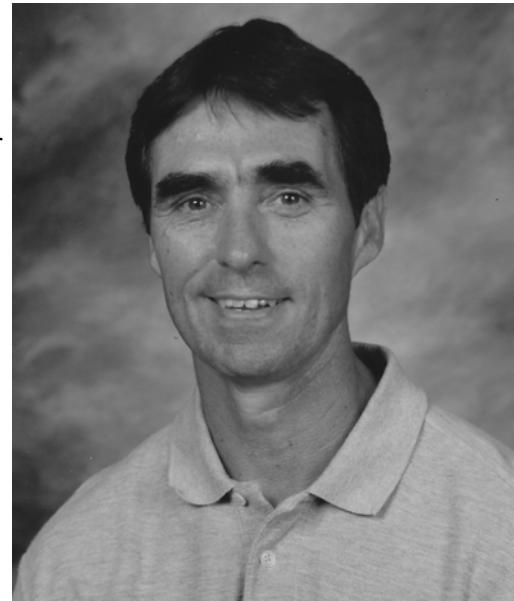
Ken Klipp, a native of Manteno, Illinois, came to EIU in the fall of 1967. While completing his bachelor's degree in Education, Ken competed for the Panthers in cross-country and track. He was part of the Eastern squads who captured the NCAA College Division national championships in cross-country in 1968 and again in 1969. Ken served as captain of both the cross-country and track teams in his senior year, while a member of the Physical Education Honor Society and recipient of the Lantz Scholarship. He remained at EIU to earn his masters degree in Physical Education in the summer of 1972, when he served as a graduate assistant.

Ken began his teaching career in Manteno in the fall of 1972, teaching Biology and coaching cross-country, basketball and track. He coached Manteno's first-ever state qualifying team in any sport. Ken has since been inducted into Manteno High School's Athletic Wall of Fame.

He took a position at Bishop McNamara High School in Kankakee in 1979, teaching Biology and Physiology, while coaching cross-country, basketball, and track. At that time, he earned a master's degree in Education from Nazarene University. His cross-country teams have qualified for the state finals on 24 occasions, with the girl's team winning the 2nd place trophy in 1995. He coached 10 All-State runners while winning 18 Regional and three Sectional titles, and members of his track teams won over 75 state medals. He was inducted into the Illinois Track and Cross-Country Coaches Hall of Fame in 2004.

Ken retired from teaching in 2010, but continues to coach. In 2014, the Irish Alumni Association at McNamara began the Ken Klipp Classic 5K in his honor to raise money for student scholarships at the school. In 2015, Ken was inducted into the Bishop McNamara Hall of Honor for his contributions to the school.

An active runner throughout his life, Ken was a founding member of the Kankakee River Running Club, and has served as race director for various races in the Kankakee Area. He currently serves on the boards of St Martin's Catholic Church, the River Valley Special Recreation Association, and Easy Street Theater (for disabled adults).



Tracy Brogan

CEPS Rising Star

Tracy graduated from Eastern in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. She earned a master's degree in Reading Education and a Reading Specialist endorsement from Concordia University in 2011. A 2005 Golden Apple scholar and Charleston native, she always knew she would become a teacher and attend Eastern Illinois University, or the castle down the street as she referred to it growing up.

After graduation from EIU, she became a teacher in Flossmoor School District 161. During her tenure there, Tracy began teaching 1st grade and then moved to 5th grade. While in the district, she helped to implement the district's iPad program which helped enhance individualized learning and created a collaborative learning environment.

Tracy assisted in creating curriculum aligned with the Math and Reading Common Core and was a member of the school's Building Leadership team. She was involved in the new teacher mentoring program as well as the coordinator of the school's recycling club, outdoor education program and tutoring club. She was also a 4-year Girls on the Run coach which allowed her to connect with students outside the academic environment.

This year, she accepted a position as a 3rd grade teacher in Franklin Park School District 84. At her new district, she is a member of the newly formed technology committee. She works with the afterschool math club and helps students build their math computation and fluency skills. When not in the classroom, she supports the profession by giving professional development presentations and mentoring younger teachers in the field.

She has worked with the Golden Apple scholars program to help bring a Summer Institute program to Eastern. With this program, she has come back home to EIU for the past four summers to mentor pre-service teachers. As a mentor, she observes, advises, and reflects with future teachers as they train in preschool classrooms and summer camps in Coles County.

Tracy and her husband Michael, also an EIU graduate of the College of Education and Professional Studies, reside in Chicago. They enjoy exploring the city and spending time with family and friends. They are avid Chicago Blackhawks, Bears, Bulls, and of course, Cubs fans.



Tony Katzenmeier

CEPS Rising Star

Tony Katzenmeier earned his master's degree at Eastern Illinois University and then became an athletic trainer for EIU men's basketball. He received his bachelor's degree from Kansas State University, where he gained experience working with the Wildcats' athletic teams as a student athletic trainer.

Tony is an National Athletic Trainers' Association—Board of Certification (NATABOC) certified athletic trainer for the Oklahoma City Thunder National Basketball Association team and holds memberships with the National Athletic Trainers' Association, Mid America Athletic Training Association, and Oklahoma Athletic Trainers' Association.

Tony's clinical skills include certifications in Functional Movement Screening and Functional Dry Needling. His work emphasizes evidence-based manual therapy, movement dysfunctions, and functional rehabilitation. He previously was the athletic trainer for the Thunder's minor league affiliate, the Tulsa 66ers.

Tony has also served as an athletic trainer with the NFL's Kansas City Chiefs, the New England Patriots, and USA Basketball. Prior to joining the Thunder, Tony worked at Athletes' Performance in Santa Monica, California as a sports rehabilitation specialist with high performance individuals, including professional athletes.

Tony and his wife Heather have one son, Kai and a daughter on the way. They currently reside in Edmond, Oklahoma.



Meryl Klages

Lifetime Achievement

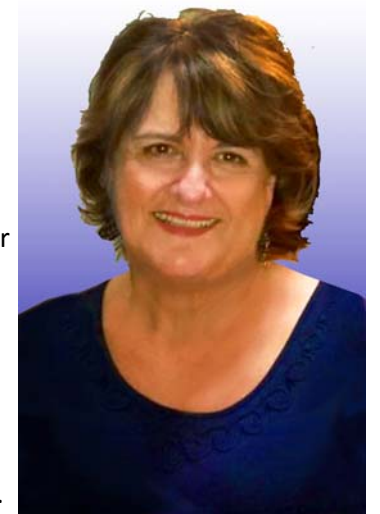
Meryl (Balling) Klages is a professional educator who currently teaches first grade students at Pelican Elementary School in Cape Coral, Florida. She teaches emergent readers with the same passion that she had when she began her teaching career over 40 years ago. One of eight children, Meryl grew up in Chicago, Illinois .

Her desire to teach children to read came from her experiences during her grade school years. As an elementary school student, she saw that some children who could not read were ridiculed. It was then that she decided to be a teacher and guide young learners as they developed reading skills. This strong desire to teach children to read led Meryl to Eastern Illinois University.

In the fall of 1971 Meryl enrolled in a special education class taught by Dr. William Zbinden. He inspired and encouraged her to continue her degree in Special Education. Meryl graduated from Eastern Illinois University in 1972 with a double major in Elementary Education and Special Education. Meryl began her teaching career in Lombard, Illinois as teacher for children with specific learning disabilities. She later moved to Michigan where she taught for 16 years and served on many district committees promoting language development and reading.

She took graduate classes in Special Education at both Michigan State and the University of Michigan. In 1989 Meryl and her husband and three children moved to Cape Coral, Florida. During her 23 years as a teacher in Lee County, Florida, Meryl served on many district committees, served as president of the Lee County Reading Council, presented workshops on language development and reading, and mentored other teachers. For over nine years Meryl also worked with families of infants and toddlers with special needs as an Infant Toddler Developmental Specialist with the Early Steps Program of Florida. In this role she would help support and guide families of children with developmental delays.

She was a finalist in the Golden Apple Outstanding Educator Program in Lee County. At her current school, Pelican Elementary, she was named Teacher of the Year in 2011 and again this year. Meryl is married to Ron Klages who was also a teacher at Pelican Elementary School. Their three children Kara, Ross and Laura are now grown and married. A grandmother of six, Meryl continues to be passionate about the positive and developmentally appropriate education of young children. Her work with young readers continues daily.



Mary Lynn Byers

Lifetime Achievement



Mary Lynn (Unkraut) Byers graduated from Eastern Illinois University with bachelor's degree in History 1971, including teaching certification for grades 6–12. In 1973 she returned to Eastern to earn an elementary certification. Of her forty plus years in education, 38 were spent at St. Anthony Grade School in Effingham Illinois.

Two years after earning her master's degree in Educational Administration, she became principal of St. Anthony Grade School in 1987, where she spent 25 years. She was the first layperson to hold this position as it always been filled until then by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Besides the usual administrative duties, she mentored several aspiring principals and many first year principals.

In 1989, she was named the Effingham Educator of the Year. She was inducted into the St. Anthony Hall of Fame as a Distinguished Alumni in 2011. Mary Lynn considers one of the greater achievements in her career to be the construction of a new St. Anthony Grade School building during 2008-2009. The new building allowed the addition of the first kindergarten classes in 2009 and

pre-school in 2010. She is most proud of St. Anthony's good educational reputation.

During her career in education she was a member of the following professional organizations: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; Illinois Principals Association; Illinois Women Administrators; National Catholic Education Association; and Phi Delta Kappa.

Once she decided to retire in May 2012 she was asked to stay an extra year to mentor the new principal, allowing for a smooth transition in leadership. Since then she has continued in her educational career as a substitute teacher in the area parochial schools. She also volunteers, in particular at HSHS St. Anthony Memorial Hospital in Effingham, where she serves as a member of the Foundation Leadership Council.

Mary Lynn considers her greatest achievement to be her family. She and her husband Larry have been married for 44 years and are the parents of three children and have a son-in-law and two granddaughters.



Joseph King

CEPS Rising Star

Before becoming a National Board Certified Counselor and a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, Joey graduated from Eastern Illinois University with a bachelor's degree in Sociology in 2003. In 2006, he earned a master's degree from Eastern Illinois University in Community Counseling.

Joey has worked in the Human Services field for 17 years. Starting out with the intellectually disabled population, he switched to working in the mental health field. During his master's degree work, Joey began working with Cumberland Associates as a Clinical Case Manager with the adult population.

Several years later, Joey started working with LifeLinks in the Regional Behavioral Health Network in Mattoon, Illinois. He was promoted to Program Coordinator where Joey supervised Screening Assessment and Support Services for the Illinois counties of Clark, Douglas, Edgar, Coles, Cumberland, Shelby, and Moultrie Counties. In addition, he was responsible for surprising all crisis services for Edgar, Clark, and Coles Counties.



In 2012, Joey accepted a position as the Executive Director of Residential Services for The Pavilion Behavioral Health System in Champaign, Illinois. The Residential Treatment Center (RTC) accepts children who have been diagnosed with a severe mental illness who need long term treatment with an average length of stay of twelve months. The Pavilion's Residential Treatment Center program is licensed for youths from ages 10 to 18.

Since he accepted the position as the Director of Residential Services at The Pavilion, the program has earned the status of a Level One Facility from the state of Illinois. During his tenure, Illinois has also certified The Pavilion as a Medicaid-approved site. While at The Pavilion, Joey has also implemented a travel basketball league for the students in the RTC program. This program serves as an incentive program for the students and helps to reinforce sportsmanship and team work with the kids.

He and his wife Angie reside in Charleston and are raising their two children here. Joey has been active in coaching his children's T-ball, baseball, football, and basketball teams through the Charleston Recreation Department.

Jaylyn Nassiri

CEPS Rising Star



Jaylyn, a native of Charleston, Illinois, earned her bachelor's degree in Health Studies from Eastern Illinois University in 2006. After graduating, she moved to Houston, Texas to pursue a career in health and wellness promotion. Jaylyn quickly began building a comprehensive knowledge base in Health Promotion.

She completed post-graduate coursework in Nutrition Studies at The University of Houston, became a Certified Wellness Coach and Personal Trainer through the American College of Sports Medicine and Wellcoaches. She is certified by National Commission on Health Education Credentialing as a Health Education Specialist.

Jaylyn soon found a passion for prevention by helping others through health and wellness education. In the last 5 years, she found a home at Houston Methodist, a non-profit hospital located in The Texas Medical Center.

Houston Methodist is a nationally ranked, 839-bed

general medical and surgical facility with 35,542 admissions in the most recent year reported. An integral part of success of the hospital is the health and well-being of their 17,000 employees. Jaylyn is responsible for collaborating with a team of 85 wellness professionals to provide Methodist Employees and over 450 companies world-wide with innovative wellness programming.

Through her job at Houston Methodist, Jaylyn is able to share her passion for health and wellness with others on a daily basis. She enjoys teaching stress management classes to hospital employees and counseling individuals on weight loss, diabetes management, and overall better health. Jaylyn loves incorporating health and wellness into her own life. She enjoys practicing and teaching yoga and meditation, is an avid marathon runner and CrossFit enthusiast.

Kelly Hussey

Leadership & Service

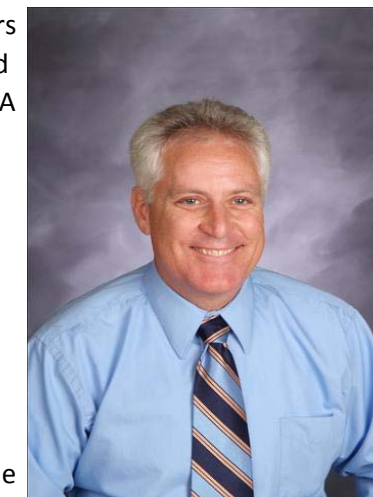
Growing up as a resident of Charleston, Kelly Hussey attended the Buzzard Laboratory School Pre-K through ninth grade before entering and graduating from Charleston High School. With a lifelong passion for music he performed with the Charleston High School and EIU Concert Choir before bringing his music along the ride as an often-used extra in his teaching career.

He learned square, folk, and ballroom dance from his father and others at EIU, he played football, basketball, and wrestling in high school, and badminton all his life. His college career included highlights from USBA Badminton competitions across the country, and appearances at two NCAA Collegiate Badminton Nationals.

Kelly earned a bachelor's degree in Physical Education with a minor in Speech Communications from EIU in 1979. He began his teaching career in Sparland, Illinois as an Elementary and High School level teacher where he spent his first two years before moving onto Morris Community High School (MCHS) in 1981. Inspired by many including his mother and his six siblings, his father's love of teaching is what led him to select his initial pathway into education with a "teach the whole child" philosophy.

He met and married his wife, Gail, and together they added four wonderful children to their lives. Next, Kelly commuted for several years to earn his master's degree in School Counseling from Illinois State University and became a Guidance Counselor at MCHS. With a growing passion for collegial work with peers, he earned a master's degree in Educational Administration from Governor's State University and was offered a position as the Assistant Principal in what had now become his home — Morris Community High School. His administrative career has included roles as the Assistant Principal, Athletic Director, and for the past ten years as MCHS' Principal—the position in which he will complete his career. Kelly has been instrumental in leading the school's improvement team, and creating the MCHS Daily Vision Statement; "Create More and Do Better Everyday."

His most treasured memories come from his wife and family, the hundreds of students he has taught and worked for over the years, and the countless number of great educators with whom he has been able to rub shoulders. For Kelly Hussey, education is truly a labor of love, and has always been the best job in the world!



Jamie Gower

Leadership & Service

Jamie Gower, MS, CPRP is the Director of Recreation & Facilities for the Decatur Illinois Park District. Formerly Risk Manager for the Park District, Jamie was also previously the manager of the Decatur Indoor Sports Center, athletics supervisor at Decatur Park District, and recreation supervisor at Wood Dale Park District. He earned a bachelor's degree in Recreation Administration (1997) and master's degree in Physical Education (Sports Management - 2009) from Eastern Illinois University.



He received his CPRP (Certified Park and Recreation Professional) designation in 1999. Jamie is a member of Illinois Park and Recreation Association, National Recreation and Park Association, Central Illinois Council for Leisure Experiences, He serves on the EIU Recreation Administration Advisory Council and EIU Recreation Alumni Association Committee. As Director of Recreation & Facilities, Jamie is responsible for the overall operation of recreation, fitness, and sports facilities, including the Decatur Indoor Sports Center, Overlook Adventure Mini Golf, Decatur Soccer Complex, Rotary Park Softball Complex, Fairview Park Tennis Facility, Fairview Aquatics Facility, Johns Hill Senior Center, Arts & Recreation Center and Scovill Zoo.

Jamie supervises a team of professionals who provide cultural arts, sports lessons and leagues, camps, fitness, special events, aquatics, senior, and therapeutic recreation programming for the greater Decatur area. During his time with the Decatur Park District, Jamie has helped bring various state and national softball tournaments to Decatur, and assisted with the start-up of the Rotary Park softball complex, and outdoor soccer complex. His work was instrumental in helping maintain the highest level of accreditation with Park District Risk Management Agency.

He served on the first advisory committee for the Decatur 501 Club for young professionals, and was a speaker at the Illinois Youth Sports Summit. Named by the local business journal as one of Decatur's '20 under 40' professionals in 2008, he is an alumni of the Decatur Leadership Institute. He currently serves on the 'Grow Decatur' health and wellness committee, United Way fund distribution committee, Youth Leadership Institute selection committee, and volunteers as a coach for youth basketball.

Daniel Alemu

Leadership & Service

After several years as an elementary teacher and a junior high principal in his native Ethiopia, Daniel came to the U.S. to further his studies. In his words, Daniel describes his EIU experience: "I arrived at Eastern on a cold winter day in January 2003 to pursue my master's in Educational Leadership. The unbearably freezing winter had little impact on the subSaharan African who was received by not just a friendly campus but a warm community that made me feel at home right from day one. While at EIU, I was actively involved in International education issues including the opportunity to serve as a treasurer and vice president of the African Student Association."



After graduation from EIU in 2004, he earned a Ph.D. from Illinois State University in 2008. Since then he has taught at The Sage Colleges in upstate New York where he is an associate professor.

At Sage, Daniel serves as the director of doctoral research while teaching in the Department of Educational Leadership as a tenured professor. As part of his professional contribution, Daniel has published articles in peer-reviewed journals such as International Review of Education, Planning and Changing Journal, Kappa Delta Pi Record, and Journal for Effective Schools. He presented his research work at American Educational Research Association, University Council for Educational Administration, and at National Council of Professors of Educational Administration professional conferences. Daniel has also contributed, in a small way, to his other alma mater, Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, where he helps in advising doctoral students and serving as external examiner of Ph.D. candidates.

"The experience and world class education I received at EIU has undoubtedly been instrumental for my continued success in my career life. Better yet, EIU's philosophy of investing in human capital through its generous international scholarship, has enabled me and many others to materialize our dreams and to contribute our share in making this world a better place." Daniel received a 2014 Global Ambassador award from the EIU Graduate School.

Angela Armour Leadership & Service

Angela Armour graduated from the Departmental Honors Program at EIU in 1989 with a dual major in Elementary and Special Education. After teaching at Auburn High School and Carlinville South School, she wanted to impact more than just the 10-15 students she taught each year.

She returned to Eastern full-time and obtained her master's degree in Special Education Supervision. While starting her administrative career, Angie completed additional coursework at the University of Illinois-Springfield in order to obtain her General Administrative and Director of Special Education endorsements.

Throughout her career, Angie has dedicated her life's work to children with disabilities in central Illinois. Employed for 24 years with Mid-State Special Education, she has served as a teacher, program coordinator in both the Christian County and Montgomery County/Carlinville Regions, and as an assistant director in the Montgomery County/Carlinville and Fayette County Regions.

Angie currently oversees the special education services and programming provided to nearly 1,400 students with identified disabilities each year in eight of the sixteen school districts served by Mid-State. She places a high priority on providing quality educational services for children with disabilities in their home school alongside their peers.

Recruiting high-quality teachers, therapists, psychologists, social workers, and support staff to work in our rural schools continues to be a challenge but is a passion for Angie. She knows these professionals—who work directly with students—have a profound positive impact on their lives and the lives of their families.

Angie belongs to the following professional organizations: Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, Illinois Principals Association, and the Council for Exceptional Children.

Along with her children, she enjoys volunteering for the Montgomery County Cancer Association, Montgomery County Breast Cancer Support Group, and most recently on behalf of her niece, Grace, for research into the treatment and cure of Infantile Neuroaxonal Dystrophy (INAD). Angela resides in Raymond, Illinois with her husband, Patrick, and their four children Landin, Kayley, Kensey, and Katelyn.



John Biernbaum Leadership & Service

John Biernbaum graduated from Eastern Illinois University with a bachelor's degree in Political Science in 1992 and a master's degree in College Student Affairs in 1994. While completing his master's degree, he worked as an Assistant Hall Counselor in Carman Hall. After graduation, he was hired as a full-time Residence Hall Director at Western Illinois University (WIU). Since then, John has received a number of promotions in the WIU's Student Services. He is currently the Associate Vice-President of Student Services.

John has been active professionally, serving as the co-chair for the 2014 Great Lakes Association of College and University Housing Officers (GLACUHO) Annual Conference, in addition to a variety of roles for GLACUHO. Most recently, John served on the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International Foundation Board as a regional representative and in 2012 was invited to participate as a faculty member for the National Housing Training Institute at the University of Georgia.

During his time at WIU, he presented at many professional conferences locally, regionally, and nationally. John has received several accolades throughout his career, but the Western Illinois University Honorary Alumni and the GLACUHO Distinguished Service Award are two of his most treasured.



John had the opportunity to coordinate the Summer Training Camp for the St. Louis Rams 1996—2004, and he worked operations for the team in both Super Bowl XXXIV and XXXVI. He is involved in the local and campus community, having served as a coach for both Little League and Pony League Baseball and a Cub Scout 300 Pack Master. He currently serves on the Executive Board for the Humane Society of McDonough County, and the Macomb Chamber of Commerce; and participates in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program of McDonough County. At WIU, John is a member of the Leatherneck Athletic Club Advisory Board and is the co-chair for the annual Purple and Gold Gala and Auction.

John has three dogs, Max, Maddie, and Charlie. He is also an unapologetic St. Louis Cardinals Baseball fan who loves to return to the EIU campus.