

Graduate Alumnus

Outstanding Graduate Alumni Awards
Class of 2019



Dan Stephenson, '77, '79

The Graduate School



EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY™

April 2019

Eastern Illinois University

Outstanding Graduate Alumni Awards



Since 1951 Eastern has offered advanced study with master's programming. Since that first offering thousands of students have earned graduate degrees, and EIU graduate alumni have changed the world we live in. In 2005 EIU celebrated more than 50 years of graduate education by honoring 50 graduate alumni as Outstanding Graduate Alumni. That same year the Graduate Alumni Advisory Board was created and met for the first time. Since those initial 50 honorees, the Graduate Alumni Advisory Board, the Graduate School, and EIU's graduate programs have continued to honor the achievements and accomplishments of our graduate alumni every year.

Center photo: The first three master's degree students at Eastern Illinois State Teachers College in 1952. Pictured left to right- Dwight Baptist, Anna Butler Brown, and Don Luallen. Dwight Baptist was honored as one of the original 50 Outstanding Graduate Alumni in 2005 and served on the Graduate Alumni Advisory Board from 2005 to 2019.

alumni from the
college of liberal arts and sciences

graduate programs offered in the college

Department of Art

Master of Arts in Art

Online option in Art Education & Community Art

Department of Biological Sciences

Master of Science in Biological Sciences

Department of Chemistry

Master of Science in Chemistry

Master of Science in Biochem/Biotech

Department of Communication Studies

Master of Arts in Communication Studies

Option in Communication Pedagogy

Online option in Communication & Leadership

Department of Economics

Master of Arts in Economics

Department of English

Master of Arts in English

Online certificate in the Teaching of Writing

Department of Geology/Geography

Professional Science Master's in

Geographic Information Sciences

Certificate in Geographic Information Sciences

Department of History

Master of Arts in History

Online option in History for Teachers

Department of Mathematics and Computer Science

Master of Arts in Mathematics

Option Elementary/Middle School Math Education

Option Secondary Mathematics Education

Department of Music

Master of Arts in Music

Online concentration in Music Education

Department of Political Science

Master of Arts in Political Science

Online option in Public Administration/
Public Planning

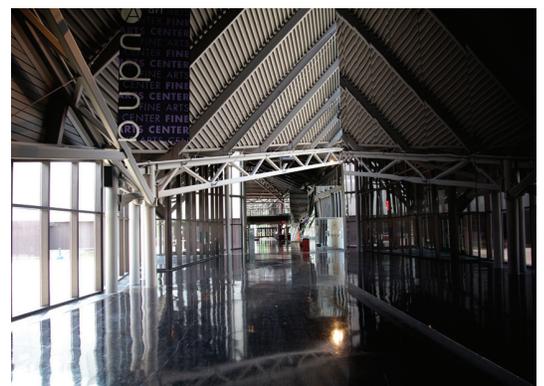
Certificate in Public Planning

Department of Psychology

Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology

Master of Science in School Psychology

Specialist in School Psychology





Sebastian Huluban, Ph.D., '03

Nominated by the graduate program in Political Science

Growing up in the '80s in Romania, in the former communist part of Europe,

for Sebastian, as for all children in his generation, the United States of America was both the symbol of the West and the far-away dream and personification of freedom and democracy.

Once the Iron Curtain fell when he was a senior in high school, Sebastian chose to study political science in order to pursue his curiosity and desire to understand how the free world functions and how his part of the world could more quickly connect to the values lost during the communist decades.

After graduating in his native Romania with a thesis about civil disobedience, Sebastian applied and enrolled in a post-graduate program in political science at the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. The University was sponsored by the Foundation of the American philanthropist George Soros and accredited by the Board of Governors of the New York University.

During this program, Sebastian focused his interests on comparative foreign and security policy analysis, a topic he deepened the following year as a post-graduate student at EIU, when his research interests were the civil-military relations and the security

sector reform in Latin America and Eastern Europe. It was at EIU where he consolidated a wonderful friendship with his current spouse, Raluca-Viviana, and it was in the great old Charleston, Ill., when they dedicated more time for discussion about establishing a family upon graduation and the return back to Romania.

In 2002, after returning, Sebastian joined as a civilian with the Ministry of Defence where he largely contributed to the process of his country's accession to NATO and to the transformation process of the Romanian Armed Forces that accompanied this shift.

After a seven-year career as a civil servant, Sebastian was politically appointed as state secretary for defence policy and planning (acting Deputy Defence Minister), and in this capacity he contributed to one of the most important American defence projects in Europe - the Ballistic Missile Defence, part of the European Phased Adaptive Approach, located on the Romanian territory, only a few hundred miles away from the Eastern frontier of the European Union.

In 2015, Sebastian joined the team of the newly elected Romanian president and was appointed by the President as an Adviser on defence & strategic matters, being in charge with drafting the National Defence

Strategy, a constitutionally mandatory document to be presented by every new Romanian President in the first six months of his mandate.



Patty Poulter, Ed.D., '82, '83

Nominated by the graduate program in Music

Dr. Patty Poulter is provost and executive vice president of the University of Central Arkansas. Before joining UCA, Dr. Poulter served as dean of the College of the Arts at Kennesaw State University, one of the largest schools of the arts in Georgia at one of the 50 largest universities in the United States.

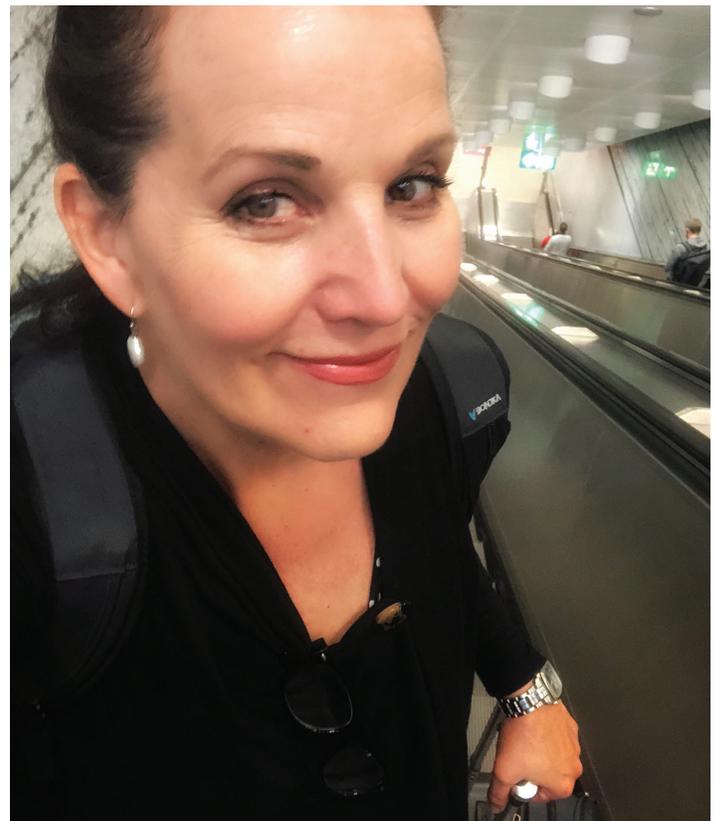
Patty has served on the Executive Board of the International Council of Fine Arts Deans. She was the Council's representative to the Americans for the Arts, a national legislative advocacy organization. In that capacity, she assisted in writing the official Call to Action position paper regarding funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and artists. The document urged Congress to support the NEA budget requests, thereby preserving citizen access to the cultural, educational, and economic benefits of the arts and advancing creativity and innovation in communities across the United States. She is frequently invited to speak on the topics of Higher Education Leadership, Arts Advocacy, Women in Leadership, and the role of the arts in community. She has given numerous presentations at national conferences and international conferences on the topics of disruptive leadership, incorporating high impact practices into curriculum for student success, dealing with controversial issues in the arts on a university campus, and making your campus a cultural center.

Patty also has a long career as a church musician, serving as conductor of choirs and chamber orchestras. As a member of the seven-member vocal ensemble "Choragos," she toured frequently throughout Europe performing music of the Renaissance, specifically from the manuscripts of Petrus Alamire.

Patty earned the doctoral degree in education in music from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In addition, she holds a bachelor of music in music education, and a master of arts in music with a concentration in choral

conducting, both from Eastern Illinois University. She has taught public school music, primarily at the Middle and High School level, in both Illinois and Minnesota.

In addition, she is a bluegrass musician, blogger, world traveler, art collector, (with a special interest in outsider artists), and an intrepid explorer and photographer of abandoned spaces and buildings. She has two daughters and three grandsons who bring her great joy.





Dan Stephenson, '77, '79

Nominated by the graduate program in Biological Sciences

Dan Stephenson began his career at EIU in the fall of 1972 very much undecided about his future. After his freshman year he decided to lay out of school and work to earn money for the completion of his education. A true learning experience, he worked concrete construction in Denver and then in Chicago during a fifteen-month period and knew what he didn't want to do for the rest of his life. He returned to EIU where he declared his major in zoology and graduated with his bachelor's in the spring of 1977. Accepted at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale for a graduate degree in wildlife or fisheries management, Dan instead chose EIU to study with professors he had gotten to know and continue in a learning environment he appreciated. He began graduate work in the fall of 1977 and worked for Dr. Frederick R. Schram (noted fossil crustacean and systematic biology scholar currently at the University of Washington) working on a National Science Foundation grant. The following year he received an excellent graduate assistantship under Dr. Steven Whitley and finished his master's degree in zoology in December 1979. While a student, he was a member of the Beta Beta Beta and Phi Sigma biological honor societies.

Dan fell into the fisheries management profession by chance. Shortly after finishing his course work in the spring of 1979, Dan met the Department of Natural Resources fisheries biologist responsible for management of the lakes and rivers in a ten-county area headquartered in Charleston. Short-handed and looking for help, he offered Dan a short 3-month contract with the Department in August of 1979. Dan applied and

interviewed for a job with the Department at his first opportunity but didn't get that position. In the interim between applying for jobs and being hired by the IDNR he worked as a researcher in renal pharmacology for the SIU-School of Medicine in Springfield. In August of 1980 Dan was hired full-time as a fisheries technician in southern Illinois and in February of 1982 was promoted to the position of district fisheries biologist, a field position, in Petersburg, Illinois near Springfield. Dan spent the next 30 years as a field biologist, managing the sport fisheries in lakes and rivers in much of the south western part of the state and, in particular, his seven-county district, an incredibly challenging and rewarding job. In 2012 Dan left the field to become the Assistant Chief of Fisheries, then moved to the peak of the fisheries profession, Chief of Fisheries, in 2016. Retirement caught him by surprise in July 2018 but he continues with the Division working on contract. Dan notes that he was incredibly fortunate to have had his dream job, loving to go to work every day of his 38



plus year career. Not many can say that. Dan uses the word "fortunate" but it was the education he received at Eastern Illinois University that gave him the opportunity and put him in the position to be "fortunate." Dan and his wife Jane have two sons, Ethan and Zachary, all of whom are also EIU alumni.

Amanda McKay Williamson, '01, '02

Nominated by the graduate program in English

Amanda McKay Williamson has worked in the library profession for 15 years. She began her career as a library consultant, working with the regional multitype library systems in Illinois. Her focus was primarily on marketing and helping libraries serve their communities. She worked with the library systems during a time of transition as they moved from nine systems serving the entire state to just two. Amanda worked on projects to help facilitate a smooth transition. In 2011, she was named the director of the Effingham Public Library. She came during a time of transition for that organization as well as they were about to embark on a campaign to raise funds for a new facility. Amanda successfully led the \$3.5 million campaign as well as the subsequent construction project. The community now enjoys a modern 27,000 square foot facility, and in less than 10 years, circulation has doubled.

Amanda received an MLS from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in Library and Information Sciences. She also holds a master's and bachelor's from Eastern Illinois University, both in English. Amanda is a member of the American Library Association and the Illinois Library Association, serving on the latter's board for three years. She was named Librarian of the Year in 2015 by the Illinois Library Association.

Amanda finds a lot of joy in working at a public library and helping people find the resources they need to live more meaningful and full lives. She also loves working as an

administrator and putting in place the resources to ensure that her staff can do amazing things for our community.

Amanda credits her time at Eastern as the foundation for all of her current work. While at EIU, she discovered her love of libraries and helping people connect with resources. She also developed the tools she needs to work as an administrator--balancing differing ideas, thinking strategically, and connecting in meaningful ways with staff, patrons, and donors.

Amanda resides in Effingham with her husband, Michael Williamson, son, Evan, and daughter, Emma. They all enjoy spending time on Lake Sara and traveling.



alumni from the
**lumpkin college of business
and technology**

graduate programs offered in the college

School of Business

Master of Business Administration

Online Master of Business Administration

School of Technology

Master of Science in Sustainable Energy

Master of Science in Cybersecurity

Master of Science in Talent Development

Master of Science in Technology

Certificate Programs in:

Computer Technology

Cybersecurity

Training and Development

Quality Systems

Work Performance Improvement



Charity Bohnhoff, '08

Nominated by the graduate program in Business Administration

Upon completing her undergraduate degree at Millikin University, Charity Bohnhoff worked as a senior market research analyst for the Carle Clinic Association and distinguished herself in the coordination of survey-based data and evaluation of shifts in environmental and socio-economic factors. Her desire to understand this intersection of customer satisfaction and strategic success on an even deeper level led her back to the classroom and the professorial expertise that she found in EIU's MBA program. By studying at EIU, Charity was able to take classes near her home in Champaign and continue to work full time while she and her husband



Brent enjoyed the addition of their two sons, Bryce and Chase, and their daughter, Reese. At work, she saw how the theories she learned in class could be applied to real-world situations. In particular, Charity recalls that, "Dr. Willems' course on Quantitative Modeling exposed me to a deeper, more complex approach to solving problems. I was challenged to think unconventionally and expand my methods for evaluating both the problem itself and the tools at my disposal for solving it." Consequently, she decided to challenge herself further with a move to Effingham, Illinois and the marketing department of Heartland Dental.

Charity began this stage of her career at Heartland

as a Regional Marketing Strategist, working directly with dental offices to help them expand both



their patient base and ability to deliver the highest quality of care. "The Dental industry truly helps people, yet it is undervalued in our society," she says, "and we have the opportunity to change that." Charity appreciated Heartland's emphasis on developing leadership skills and as she advanced from RMS to Market Manager, Market Analyst, and Director of Marketing to her current position as Vice President of Marketing, she continued to embrace new opportunities to help her colleagues develop their own particular talents and realize their potential in new and different ways.

Charity's gratitude for her experience at EIU underpins her desire to help others benefit from a quality education and the opportunities it can afford. She currently serves on the EIU Advisory Board for the School of Business in order to help guide the program toward meeting the needs of current and future employers. She also notes that, "sitting in the classroom and talking to students is especially rewarding and gives me a chance to contribute in a direct way to the University that has given me so much." Closer to home, Charity is also a School Board member for Dieterich Unit 30 and joins her husband in working to promote the growth of surrounding communities and the positive development of local K-12 educational facilities. Charity's debt of gratitude for her education is expressed in her belief that "if you have a skill that will help others, then your duty as a citizen is to share that skill and leave your community stronger than before."



Jacqueline Joines, '88, '96

Nominated by the graduate program in Technology

Jackie Joines serves as the executive director for College Advancement at Lake Land College where she oversees foundation operations and alumni services. During her tenure, she has been instrumental in the integration of technology to improve the capabilities and efficiencies of the office in serving donors and alumni. She has led efforts that have grown Foundation assets from \$8 million to \$12.8 million, employee participation rates from 17% to 66%, implemented an annual giving program, and the college's annual homecoming event.

Jackie received both her bachelor's and master's degree in technology from Eastern Illinois University. She is also a 1997 graduate of the Illinois Lincoln Excellence in Public Service Series fellowship, and a 1998 graduate of the former National Planned Giving Institute at the College of William and Mary. She has carried the distinction as a certified fundraising executive since 2002 and was the first certified fundraising executive practicing in Coles County. She has served as a CFRE Review Course faculty member in 2014 and Fundraising Fundamentals course in 2016 for the East Central Illinois Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Jackie came to Lake Land College from Eastern Illinois University where she served as Director of Development for 17 years. During her tenure she represented the needs of the Lumpkin College of Business and Applied

Sciences, The College of Education and Professional Studies and the Honors College with alumni and friends of those areas raising over \$13.3 million in current and planned gifts, and helped to establish 59 new endowments. From 1993 until 1998, she served as Director of Volunteer Services at Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center coordinating the volunteer efforts of approximately 300 volunteers contributing 20,000 service hours annually, while overseeing the operations of the hospital gift shop with gross revenue of \$150,000 per year. From 1984 – 1993, she served as District Office Manager and Legislative Aide to a former state representative. She also served as campaign manager during election years capturing over 68% of the vote in several elections.

Jackie holds memberships in AFP, CASE, and in other community organizations. She served six years on the EIU Alumni Association Board of Directors and served as president during the University's Centennial in 1995. She is one of the first recipients of the Superior Performance Award, and was awarded the Career Occupations Alumni Service Award both from EIU. She is past president of the East



Central Illinois Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals and the Planned Giving Consortium of East Central Illinois, is a past member of the Hospital and Medical Foundation of Paris, Inc. board of directors, and many other community organizations. Jackie served as the Family Readiness Coordinator for her husband's Army Reserve Unit deployed in 2006 – 2007. Often described as a "connector", Jackie is a partner with her husband's auction business, and enjoys spending time with her family, including four grandchildren.

college of education

graduate programs offered in the college

Department of Educational Leadership

Master of Science in Education in Educational Leadership

Specialist in Education in Educational Leadership

Department of Teaching, Learning, and Foundations

Master of Science in Education in Curriculum and Instruction

Online Certificate Program in Reading Instruction

Certificate Program in English as a Second Language Instruction

Department of Counseling and Higher Education

Master of Science in College Student Affairs

Online option in Community College and Higher Ed

Master of Science in Counseling

Concentration in Clinical Counseling

Concentration in School Counseling

Department of Special Education

Master of Science in Education in Special Education





Jim Acklin, '79, '87, '98

Nominated by the graduate program in Educational Leadership

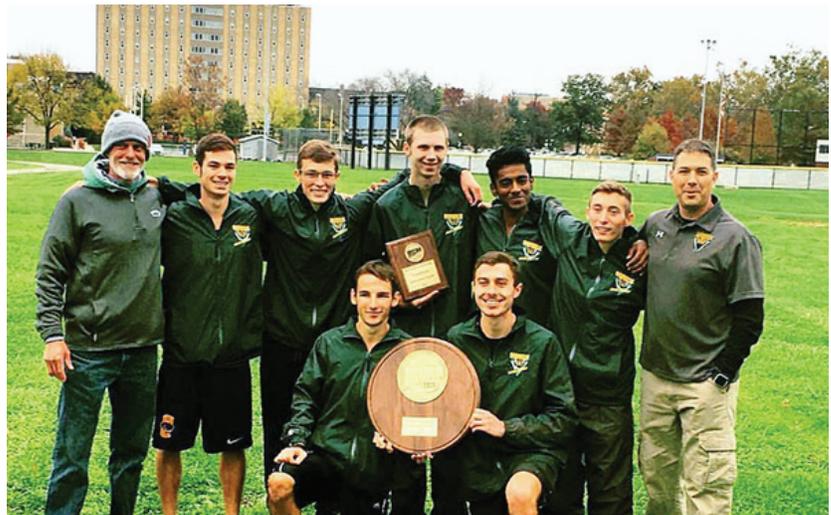
Jim Acklin is entering his thirtieth year of coaching track and cross country, after serving as a teacher, coach, and school administrator in Illinois public schools for 38 years. A lifelong runner, he has logged over 83,000 career miles and has competed in over 500 races, taking overall winner in over 125 of those races. His cross country teams at St. Joseph High School finished in the top four at the state meet seven times and won three state championships. He was named Illinois Track and Cross Country Association State Coach of the Year in 1991, 1992, 1998, and 2000, Illinois Girls Coaches Association State Coach of the Year in 1990, and was inducted into the Illinois Track and Cross Country Coaches Hall of Fame in 2011. He is currently coaching cross country at Danville Area Community College.

After years of teaching, Jim served as superintendent of Shiloh Schools, retired as superintendent of St. Joseph-Ogden Schools, and is currently filling the role of interim superintendent for Chrisman Schools. In his career he has successfully secured numerous grants for his schools and served on the boards of education for Ogden Elementary and Prairieview-Ogden Elementary schools. He ran for Illinois State representative for District 102 in 2016 and was appointed to the Ogden Village Board in 2018.

A motorcycling enthusiast, Jim teaches motorcycle safety for the Motorcycle Safety Foundation and participates in one or two track days per year.

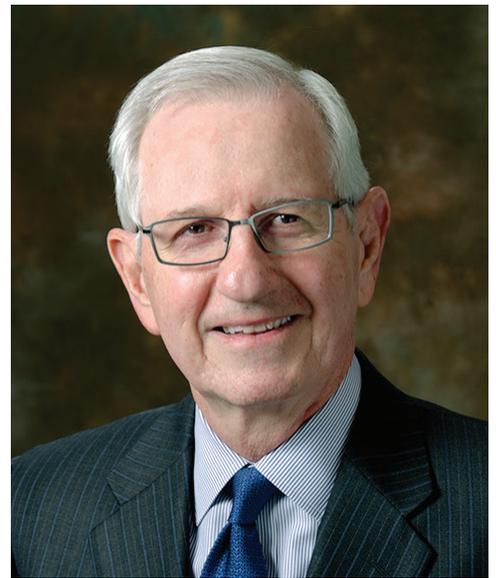
Jim holds a bachelor's degree in zoology, a master's in biological sciences, a Type 75 certificate, and a specialist in educational administration all from EIU. He credits mentors Tom Woodall, Mike Goodrich, Richard Funk, and David Bartz with laying a foundation for success by demanding excellence.

Jim's wife Cindy of 37 years works as an aide in the special education department at St. Joseph-Ogden High School. They have three children, Louis, John, and Sarah.



Tim Burke, '71, '72

Nominated by the graduate program in College Student Affairs



Timothy Burke earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at Eastern Illinois University in 1971 and 1972. After three years as a residence hall counselor at Eastern, Tim joined Arthur Andersen where he spent 22 years in the Chicago office's Financial Services practice. He led the firm's Financial Markets practice in the Central Region. In addition to his audit and risk management responsibilities, Tim led several regulatory consulting projects including a World Bank project in Indonesia to reform the nation's securities markets.

In 1997, Tim joined William Blair & Company, the Chicago based international investment bank. He was the firm's CFO and managed its administrative, finance and operations activities. He retired from Blair in 2017. Tim is a member of the Eastern Illinois University Board of Trustees and currently serves as its Chair. He is on the Boards of Directors of Health Care Service Corporation, the holding company for Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans in Illinois, Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Montana, and the Mather Foundation. From 2008 to 2014, he was on the Board of the Eastern Illinois University Foundation and served as its President in 2012 and 2013.

Tim and his wife Vickie, an Eastern Illinois alumna with bachelor's and master's degrees in 1972 and 1975, reside in Evanston, Illinois.





Lynn Holdheide, '06

Nominated by the graduate program in Special Education

Lynn Holdheide, is the director for the Center on Great Teacher and Leaders and a managing technical assistance consultant for American Institutes for Research with more than ten years of experience in providing responsive technical assistance of the highest quality to SEAs, Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) and regional comprehensive centers. She also serves as the director of strategy and operations to the Collaborating for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR Center) supported by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs and led by the University of Florida. Lynn provides technical assistance, analysis, and product development for states and regional comprehensive centers (RCCs) related to efforts to support teacher preparation, quality, effectiveness, and equitable distribution and has spearheaded efforts to address the pressing challenges in evaluating teachers of students with special needs and served as a reviewer of the U.S. Department of Education's ESEA Flexibility Waiver applications in 2012 and the Every Student Succeed Act state plans in

2017. Lynn is a veteran in providing technical assistance through in-depth, face-to-face collaboration, as well as through online platforms and the development of customized resources that are directly responsive to state needs. With experience as a special education teacher and project coordinator and education consultant for nine years at the Indiana Department of Education, Division of Exceptional Learners, she is sensitive to the needs of teachers of students with disabilities and has a deep understanding of evidence-based practices for students with disabilities and the challenges that educators face in ensuring closing the achievement gap for students



with disabilities. She is also well-positioned to advance coherence and alignment in instructional expectations across general and special education so that all teachers are prepared to support the learning of students with disabilities. Lynn holds an undergraduate degree

in special education from the Ohio State University and her master's degree from Eastern Illinois University. She and her husband, Rob, reside in Nashville and have three children.

alumni from the
college of health and human services

graduate programs offered in the college

Department of Communication Disorders and Sciences

Master of Science in

Communication Disorders & Sciences

Department of Kinesiology Sport, and Recreation

Master of Science in Kinesiology and Sports Studies

Department of Health Promotion

Master of Science in Health Promotion and Leadership

Department of Human Services and Community Leadership

Master of Science in Family & Consumer Sciences

Master of Arts in Aging Studies

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics





Lyza Shaw, '98, '99

Nominated by the graduate program in Nutrition and Dietetics

Lyza found her way to the field of nutrition when she took a basic course at EIU as a science elective and soon changed her major to dietetics. With support and encouragement from EIU mentors, especially Dr. Melanie Burns, she continued her EIU experience by becoming a graduate assistant during her master's program in dietetics. She assisted instructors with lessons and led the Student Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. After graduating, she ventured out to Colorado and worked as a first year instructor at Metropolitan State University of Denver and as a substitute teacher for Denver Public Schools. A few years after her move, she was approached to apply for the position of school nutrition services director in Breckenridge, Colorado. This position led her to discover all the intricacies of Federal Child Nutrition Programs. With this experience and newfound appreciation for the field, she advanced in her career by becoming a district manager for Chartwells - Compass Group, a foodservice management company. In this position, she supervised multiple school nutrition programs across four states, mentored school nutrition service directors, analyzed data, and consistently reached and exceeded financial benchmarks. While working for Chartwells, and "hungry" to make a larger impact, she realized her passion would be better served in a capacity that would positively affect all students within the state of Colorado. Lyza took a position with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) as a Business Operations Supervisor for the School Nutrition Unit. This

position gave her the ability to work with all participating schools offering school nutrition programs in Colorado by specializing in the Free and Reduced-Price lunch program, Community Eligibility Provision, Procurement, and Financial Management. She and her team work tirelessly to bridge the gap between child hunger and pioneering ways to alleviate the administrative burden of the programs to school officials. She collaborates with many local, state, and federal organizations to advance the understanding of the many state and federal regulations that come along with Child Nutrition Programs. She is often requested by the USDA to work on special task force groups and speak at national conferences to share her expertise, experiences, and points of view. She has been involved in working with accomplished projects such as the Colorado Universal Application, an initiative that easily connects Coloradans to Federal and State assistance programs. Additionally, CDE School Nutrition Unit was recognized as the first state agency to certify all schools for the new federal meal patterns requirements. Currently, Lyza and colleagues are championing the Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger. If successful, this five-part plan will significantly reduce hunger across the state of Colorado.



Her love for food doesn't end at her paycheck. She and her husband, Rob, love to travel and "taste" the world. They have had the opportunity to indulge in incredible entrees at some of the top restaurants around the globe. They currently reside in Aurora, Colorado, overlooking the Front Range. She has two beautiful step-daughters, Sarah and Carrie. Lyza finds herself traveling back to Illinois quite frequently as her sister,

Becca, and family still reside in central Illinois. Becca is also an alumna of EIU. EIU hasn't only prepared Lyza for a successful career in nutrition, but it has given her remarkable experiences and friendships for life. EIU will always hold a special place in Lyza's heart.

Graduate Alumni Advisory Board

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