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## Challenging Gifted Learners

## Through Engineering



**Dr. Debbie Dailey**  
University of Central Arkansas

Multiple states have recently adopted or revised their science standards. Many of these states are using the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) or a revised form of the NGSS. When compared to the former National Science Education Standards and many other state standards, the goals of the NGSS are to engage students in deeper, more meaningful learning with a focus on core ideas and practices of science and not just a shallow review of factual knowledge. While emphasizing conceptual learning over factual learning, NGSS encourages a systematic approach to learning where students continually develop and refine their knowledge across multiple years. Throughout the years, students should have multiple opportunities to engage in the practices of scientists and engineers. Through this process, the overarching goal of the NGSS (National Research Council, 2012) is to educate all students in science and engineering and to provide foundational knowledge for those who wish to pursue a science or engineering career option.

One key difference in NGSS and other science standards is the emphasis on engineering. In addition to physical science, life science, and earth and space science, engineering is a disciplinary core idea. Additionally, the practices of engineering are integrated into the practices of science and these

progress across grade levels from solving simple problems and designing best-fit solutions in early elementary classrooms to solving complex problems involving issues of social and global significance in secondary classrooms (NGSS Lead States, 2013). The exciting part about the standards for gifted learners is the suggested progression of content, concepts, and practices. These progressions can be a road map to accelerating the curriculum for gifted learners (Adams, Cotabish, & Dailey, 2015; Adams, Cotabish, & Ricci, 2014). For example, in Grades K-2 engineering is focused on solving simple problems, developing solutions, and evaluating the best solutions, whereas, in Grades 3-5 the engineering problem adds specific criteria and students improve solutions based on testing. In a study

Throughout the years, students should have multiple opportunities to engage in the practices of scientists and engineers.

## Letter From the President



*Dear Members of The Association for the Gifted (TAG),*

I am writing on the heels of the 2017 CEC Convention held in Boston, where TAG offered numerous informative and interesting sessions. Presenters came from across the USA to provide up-to-date information about best practices and research in gifted education. It was a very exciting week!

Mark your calendar for the 2018 CEC Convention, which will be held in Tampa, Florida from February 7 to 10. I am confident that it will be another wonderful opportunity for professional development and renewing friendships.

On a personal note, it is an honor to have this chance to serve a second time as President of TAG. My first stint was 15 years ago. As in 2002, the current TAG Board is replete with highly capable, dedicated, and generous professionals who commit considerable, time, energy, and personal resources to improve the lives of students with gifts and talents. Among them are professional educators, college professors, gifted education coordinators, curriculum developers, administrators, and researchers. We all also wear multiple other hats like parents and grandparents, graduate students, and many more. In short, TAG and its Board members are active, caring people who are dedicated to improving the lives of others. I invite you to join TAG and help make the world a better place.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracy L. Cross". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Tracy L. Cross, Ph.D.  
President, TAG

### Dear TAG Members,

In this issue of *The Update*, please find the lead article titled "Challenging Gifted Learners Through Engineering," written by Dr. Debbie Dailey, an Assistant Professor at the University of Central Arkansas.

Dr. Julia Roberts, "Speaking Out" columnist, has written an article about the importance of educational policies. You will also find abstracts from the articles published in the most recent edition of *Journal for the Education of the Gifted (JEG)*. Remember that your membership entitles you to online access to the journal.

The 2017 Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) conference was held in Boston, Massachusetts, from April 19 to 22. See pictures from the convention and information about the presentation of the *JEG* Paper of the Year Award at the TAG business meeting.

*Happy spring!!*

Best regards,  
**Kimberley L. Chandler**  
TAG *Update* Editor

## Letter From the Editor





## Speaking Out: Policies Matter

Julia Link Roberts

Many parents and educators garner their interest in gifted education from children they know well. Usually, the child or children have needs that are created by their strengths, resulting in a situation that is often misunderstood by educators and parents alike. Often, the mismatch of learning opportunities and needs of advanced students results in students acting out, underachieving, or basically losing their interest in school. Often, the recommendations for gifted children to receive an appropriate level of challenge are made on a case-by-case basis as no policy is in place. A policy provides guidance on what to do that would be in the best interest of the child or children.

Policies can facilitate children making continuous progress. For example, an acceleration policy can put in place the procedure for skipping a grade or for subject matter acceleration. Policies can detail a waiver for a child who is ready to start school but has a birthday that falls beyond the deadline. Policies can open up Advanced Placement courses to students who are ready to take them, no matter what grade in which they are enrolled.

Policies can also create barriers for advanced students. All of the previously described policies can stipulate limitations, either intentionally or unintentionally. Gifted advocates must examine policies as they are being considered, looking for restrictions to continuous progress or talent development. Jonathan Plucker and his colleagues (2010) suggest two questions to be asked routinely when policies are being discussed.

- How will this policy affect our brightest students?
  - How will this policy help other students begin to achieve at higher levels?
- (p. 30)

Asking these two questions could redirect attention to all children, and all children would include those who are gifted and advanced.

“...Leaders in the field have advocated for and strongly supported the importance of state policy” (Lord and Swanson, 2016, p. 5). There are resources that focus on policies in gifted education at the state level that can guide advocates for gifted learners. Lord and Swanson edited *A Guide to State Policies in Gifted Education* (2016) which provides ample information about policies that support gifted education. It is important to know where to locate information on policies in gifted education as it can guide the development of policy and direct decisions that will impact the lives of children and young people who are gifted and talented.

### References

- Lord, E. W., & Swanson, J. D. (2016). *A guide to state policies in gifted education* (2nd ed.). Washington, D.C.: National Association for Gifted Education.
- Plucker, J. A., Burroughs, N., & Song, R. (2010). *Mind the (other) gap! The growing excellence gap in K-12 education*. Bloomington, IN: Center for Evaluation & Education Policy.

**Gifted advocates must examine policies as they are being considered, looking for restrictions to continuous progress or talent development.**

**REMEMBER – IF NOT YOU, THEN WHO?**

## ***Journal for the Education of the Gifted***

The *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* (JEG), the official journal of CEC-TAG, offers information and research on the educational and psychological needs of gifted and talented children. Devoted to excellence in educational research and scholarship, the journal acts as a forum for diverse ideas and points of view on gifted education, counseling, and parenting. The March 2017 issue of JEG will be arriving in your mailbox soon. The article abstracts are shared below. Should you be interested in submitting a proposal to the journal, please visit <http://jeg.sagepub.com>. In addition, Dr. Tracy L. Cross, Editor-in-Chief, is always looking for reviewers. Please e-mail the journal at [cfgejeg@wm.edu](mailto:cfgejeg@wm.edu) if you would like to be added to the reviewer list.

### **ABSTRACTS FOR JEG, MARCH 2017, 40(1)**

**Advanced Academic Participation: A Longitudinal Analysis of Ethnicity Gaps in Suburban Schools, Todd Kettler and Luke T. Hurst** - Participation in advanced academic programs such as Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) has been associated with higher student achievement and college readiness. In addition, AP and IB are widely recommended and implemented as services for gifted and talented students. Students who participate in these programs tend to be more successful in college admissions, scholarships, college grade point averages, and college completion rates. Black and Hispanic students do not generally participate in AP and IB programs at the same rate as same-school White students, leaving White students to benefit disproportionately in the transition from high school to college. This study analyzed ethnicity gaps in AP and IB programs longitudinally from 2001 to 2011 in 117 suburban high schools. Results indicated that AP/IB participation increased for all students over time ( $d = 0.74$ ). There were ethnicity gaps in 2001 and again in 2011 between Black and Hispanic student AP/IB participation and White student AP/IB participation, and the gaps neither increased nor decreased substantially over time. This study also examined school factors associated with AP/IB ethnicity gaps and found that overall schoolwide college readiness and the proportion of minority faculty at each school were moderately associated with changes in the magnitude of the gaps. Teacher experience and changing student demographics in schools showed little to no association with changes in the magnitude of the ethnicity gaps.

**Describing the Status of Programs for the Gifted: A Call for Action, Carolyn M. Callahan, Tonya R. Moon, and Sarah Oh** - Using three leveled surveys of school district personnel (elementary, middle, and high school), we collected data on the current status of practices and procedures in gifted education across the nation. Results from 1,566 respondents in separate school districts to questions relating to administration (staffing), identification of gifted students, curriculum and instruction, program delivery models, financing, program evaluation, teacher qualification requirements, and professional development document a national picture of current practice. In addition, we structured data collection procedures to assess the degree to which the Pre-K–Grade 12 Gifted Education Programming Standards are used to guide programming. The resulting picture of current practices was often a mirror of practices from 20 or more years ago, suggesting a need for a national dialogue focused on reshaping gifted education for the 21st century.

**Occupational/Career Decision-Making Thought Processes of Adolescents of High Intellectual Ability, Jae Yup Jung** - Three competing models of the career decision-making thought processes of adolescents of high intellectual ability were tested in this study. Survey data were collected from 664 intellectually gifted Australian adolescents and analyzed using structural equation modeling procedures. The finally accepted, optimal model suggested that, regardless of cultural orientation, highly able adolescents may place importance on whether a future career will be interesting or enjoyable, which is a probable predictor of their attitudes toward careers, and their eventual intentions to pursue particular careers. In addition, the model indicated that those careers considered interesting or enjoyable by intellectually gifted adolescents may also be intellectually stimulating.

**Enhancing Gifted Education for Underrepresented Students: Promising Recruitment and Programming Strategies Meghan Ecker-Lyster and Christopher Niileksela** - For decades, our educational system has been criticized for the limited recruitment and retention of minority students in gifted education programs. Unfortunately, relatively little progress has been made to alleviate these concerns. An examination of the literature on gifted education for underrepresented students reveals a dearth of information regarding effective programming practices. This article seeks to fill this void by exploring promising best practices for recruitment and retention of underrepresented students in gifted education. Multicultural education, mentoring, and noncognitive skill development are three promising areas that gifted educators can use to enhance programming.



## 2016 *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* Paper of the Year

The Association for the Gifted (TAG) is pleased to announce the winners of the second annual *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* Paper of the Year. Dr. Mary Ruth Coleman and Ms. Sneha Shah-Coltrane, who coauthored “Children of Promise: Dr. James Gallagher’s Thoughts on Underrepresentation Within Gifted Education” (Volume 38, Issue 1), are the recipients of this year’s award.

The *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* (JEG) has published high-quality manuscripts for four decades. It is produced in a partnership between The Association for the Gifted (TAG) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and SAGE Publications. In 2014, the TAG Board of Directors voted to award a JEG Paper of the Year.

The JEG Paper of the Year was selected from the previous year’s published manuscripts (within the same volume). TAG Board members provided nominations for consideration for the JEG Paper of the Year. After receiving the nominations, the JEG Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor selected the top nomination. The JEG Paper of the Year was selected based on three criteria: relevance and contribution to the literature, timeliness and innovation, and research methodology.

The authors received plaques and a check for \$500. The plaques and the monetary award are sponsored by the Center for Gifted Education at William & Mary. Dr. Coleman accepted the award on behalf of Ms. Shah-Coltrane and herself during the TAG business meeting at the CEC conference in Boston in April.



From left to right: JEG editor Tracy L. Cross; Paper of the Year co-author Mary Ruth Coleman; and JEG Managing Editor Jennifer H. Robins

### Society Member Activation Instructions for your SAGE Journals Online (SJO) Account

The electronic version of the *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* (JEG) is available through SAGE Journals Online (SJO). To activate your account please follow these steps:

1. Go to the SAGE Journals Online site: <https://online.sagepub.com/cgi/activate/basic>.
2. Where it says “Activate Your Online Subscription:” enter your Member ID then select The Association for the Gifted-CEC (TAG-CEC) from the Society drop down menu and click “Submit.”
3. On the “Instructions” page be sure to check your personal data. Enter a username and password and click submit to confirm activation. Do not click the Journal Title link until the confirmation process is complete.
4. Once complete, return to the electronic Journal homepage and select the Journal cover for access to the current issue or click “Current Issue.”
5. To select an issue from the archive, click “All Issues”.
6. To search for articles either click “Search this journal” or use the “Advance Journal Search”.

The username and password you create you will use when returning to the site <http://jeg.sagepub.com/>. If you forget your username or password, go to the “Subscribe” tab and look for the link “What to do if you forget your User Name and/or Password” under “Managing your Subscription to *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*” which will take you to the following link <http://online.sagepub.com/cgi/recnamepwd>. You will be asked to provide some information about yourself. Upon confirmation of the information your username and/or password will be emailed to you.

If you require further assistance, please contact your Society’s Member Services Dept. or contact SAGE directly at [societymember@sagepub.com](mailto:societymember@sagepub.com).

# CEC Boston April 2017



## Fall TAG Symposium

Please plan to join The Association for the Gifted on Friday, October 13, for a symposium hosted by The Center for Gifted Studies at Western Kentucky University. The topic will be how to serve underrepresented children with gifts and talents. For more information, contact Dr. Julia Roberts at [julia.roberts@wku.edu](mailto:julia.roberts@wku.edu).

*Engineering continued from page 1*

of motion, Grades K-2 students could design a track to change the speed of a toy car. To challenge gifted or advanced students, teachers could include specific criteria such as designing a track that would work best in winter weather by investigating different materials that affect the speed of the car.

It is important not to omit the content from engineering activities. In the scenario above, students can be introduced to concepts related to Newton's Laws of Motion, such as speed/velocity, acceleration, inertia, forces, and friction. Even at an early age, the understanding of complex concepts and advanced content can be achieved if students are engaged in meaningful and real-world problem solving activities such as the one described above. Additionally, these types of activities and academic experiences allow students from underrepresented groups and diverse populations to build their background and experiential knowledge needed for conceptual understanding.

**To challenge gifted or advanced students, teachers could include specific criteria such as designing a track that would work best in winter weather by investigating different materials that affect the speed of the car.**

In summary, the inclusion of engineering practices in the science standards is beneficial to gifted learners, including those from traditionally underrepresented populations and it promotes 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, problem solving, and information literacy (Dailey & Cotabish, 2016). These types of activities are not uncommon in a gifted

classroom but they are not always embedded in science content as recommended. Since many gifted educators are not science educators, a barrier for teachers may include their understanding of the science that supports the engineering activity. Therefore, it is recommended that gifted education teachers seek resources and professional development that can help them with their science content knowledge and pedagogy.

### *References*

- Adams, A., Cotabish, A., & Dailey, D. (2015). *A teacher's guide to using the Next Generation Science Standards with gifted and advanced learners*. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.
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- National Research Council. (2012). *A framework for K-12 science education: Practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas*. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press.
- NGSS Lead States. (2013). *Next Generation Science Standards: For states, by states*. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press.



## IN MEMORIAM

### TAG Past President Tribute *Dr. Alexinia (Alex) Young Baldwin*



TAG takes great pride in paying tribute to Dr. Alexinia (Alex) Young Baldwin. Dr. Baldwin died on January 21, 2017. She served as TAG's President from 1978 to 1979, treasurer from 1975 to 1978, and Governor-at-Large from 1980 to 1981.

In addition to her service to the TAG Board, Dr. Baldwin was Professor Emerita at the University of Connecticut (UConn) where she also obtained her doctorate. Dr. Baldwin was one of the true pioneers in the field of equity and excellence in education and was a pillar in gifted education.

It was at UConn where she began her path to a long and distinguished career that resulted in significant contributions and innovations in both the field of gifted education and education in general. Her research focused on the education of gifted students, specifically on the recognition and development of the academic talents of children from low income and minority groups.

Upon graduation from UConn, she was recruited to the faculty of the State University of New York in Albany, where she continued her research and developed one of the first gifted education teacher training programs in New York State. Dr. Baldwin returned to UConn in 1988 as a professor and head of the Curriculum Department where she remained until her retirement in 2003.

In her commitment to gifted education, Dr. Baldwin chose to challenge the compelling issues associated with underrepresentation. In that regard, Dr. Baldwin started the first gifted program in the nation for African American students in the then-segregated schools in Alabama. Her experience in this ground-breaking program was the basis of her research that produced related seminal tools and the development of the 1980's Baldwin Identification Matrix, an instrument that provided a much broader set of identification criteria for examining the many areas of talent potential in young people and was designed to seek equity in identifying Black children for advanced curriculum and instruction.

Dr. Baldwin urged gifted education to take more comprehensive approaches to identify giftedness in Black children. Her timeless concepts will continue to influence the field.

Dr. Baldwin's works significantly influenced the perspectives of many gifted education stakeholders in terms of their professional thinking and practices. Her many works included numerous articles and books advocating for,

defending, supporting educational equity, equality, social justice, and multicultural gifted education. Her works focused on advocacy for children with gifts and talents, and children with potential, but who are invisible, overlooked and misunderstood by the masses.

Dr. Baldwin demonstrated particular interest in Black youth, as vividly evidenced in all her writings, but definitely in her influential and seminal 1987 article in *Gifted Child Quarterly*: "I'm Black But Look At Me, I Am Also Gifted."

Dr. Baldwin was an enthusiastic professor who loved teaching. She devoted her life to working with students, conducting research, and contributing to the education profession in ways that always focused on equity and social progress. Her colleagues considered her a role model, a leader, and a pioneer in her field. Always a woman of style and grace, she was valued for her mentorship, sense of humor, and willingness to always give her time and talent to anyone seeking her assistance.

Dr. Baldwin was the recipient of numerous awards and recognitions. In 2011, she was featured in the National Association for Gifted Children's Conceptual Foundations Division Legacy Series.

Dr. Baldwin exuded dignity, sophistication, intelligence, wit and charm, and impeccable high expectations of herself; and all with whom she interacted. She will be missed, but through her works and reflections of all who loved and respected her, she will continue to contribute to gifted educators' professional growth, understanding, actions, and advocacy.

*Contributed by Ken Dickson, TAG Board Member, April 2017, with excerpts from a tribute delivered by Dr. Joe Renzulli at the University of Connecticut.*



## Join CEC-TAG, the nation's most dynamic professional association devoted to twice-exceptional children, educational excellence, and diversity.

### MEMBER BENEFITS

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the leading voice for special and gifted education. CEC-TAG establishes professional standards for teacher preparation for the field, develops initiatives to improve gifted education practice, and ensures that the needs of children and youth with exceptionalities are met in educational legislation.

Become a member of a team of professionals devoted to (a) improving educational opportunities for individuals from all diverse groups with gifts, talents, and/or high potential; (b) sponsoring and fostering activities to develop the field of gifted education; (c) supporting and encouraging specialized professional preparation for educators; and (d) working with organizations, agencies, families, or individuals who are interested in promoting the welfare and education of children and youth.

Member benefits include:

- Four issues of the *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* (JEG) per year (includes online access to current and past issues)
- Six issues of *Teaching Exceptional Children* per year
- Two issues of the online journal *Excellence and Diversity in Gifted Education* (EDGE) per year
- Four issues of *Exceptional Children* per year
- Quarterly newsletters from CEC and from CEC-TAG
- A discounted member rate for all meetings of CEC and TAG
- 30% discount on all CEC products
- 10% discount on Prufrock Press products
- Peer-to-peer support
- A network of colleagues who are leaders in the field of gifted education

To join CEC-TAG, go to <http://cectag.com/membership/> or contact Yara Farah, Membership Chair, at [ynfarah@wm.edu](mailto:ynfarah@wm.edu).

**Find CEC-TAG at:**



**CEC TAG**

**The Association for Gifted**

*website:*

**[cectag.com](http://cectag.com)**

## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

### **KIMBERLEY CHANDLER** - [klchan@wm.edu](mailto:klchan@wm.edu)

Dr. Kimberley Chandler is the Curriculum Director at the Center for Gifted Education at the College of William and Mary and a Clinical Assistant Professor. Her professional background includes teaching gifted students in a variety of settings, serving as an administrator of a school district gifted program, and providing professional development for teachers and administrators nationally and internationally. Kimberley has served as the editor and contributing author of numerous curriculum materials from the Center for Gifted Education. She co-authored a CEC-TAG Educational Resource (with Dr. Tamra Stambaugh) titled *Effective Curriculum for Underserved Gifted Students* and is the co-editor (with Cheryll Adams) of the CEC-TAG Educational Resource *Effective Program Models for Gifted Students From Underserved Populations*. Currently Kimberley is the Network Representative on the NAGC Board of Directors, and the editor of the CEC-TAG newsletter *The Update*.

### **DEBBIE DAILEY** - [ddailey@uca.edu](mailto:ddailey@uca.edu)

Dr. Debbie Dailey is an assistant professor of teaching and learning at the University of Central Arkansas where she is the coordinator for the Gifted and Talented Program. Debbie has written multiple publications and provided numerous presentations and workshops focused on STEM and gifted education. Most recently, Debbie coedited a new book: *Engineering Instruction for High-Ability Learners in K-8 Classroom*.

### **JULIA LINK ROBERTS** - [julia.roberts@wku.edu](mailto:julia.roberts@wku.edu)

Dr. Julia Link Roberts, Mahurin Professor of Gifted Studies at Western Kentucky University, is Executive Director of the Carol Martin Gatton Academy of Mathematics and Science in Kentucky and The Center for Gifted Studies. Dr. Roberts is on the Executive Committee of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children and is past-president of The Association for the Gifted. Her writing focuses on differentiation, gifted education, and advocacy. She received the 2011 Acorn Award as the outstanding professor at a Kentucky four-year university, the first NAGC David Belin Advocacy Award, the 2012 NAGC Distinguished Service Award, and the 2011 William T. Nallia Award for innovative leadership from the Kentucky Association for School Administrators.