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## What a Child Doesn't Learn...

By Tracy Inman, Ed.D.



**Sometimes simple questions provoke profound answers.** These questions solicit your immediate responses, and those responses multiply when several people are involved in the discussion, expanding on each other's thoughts. Some of these questions will also stick with you, and you find yourself coming up with additional answers hours, even days, after the discussion. This one will:

*If during the first five or six years of school, a child earns good grades and high praise without having to make much effort, what are all the things he doesn't learn that most children learn by third grade?*

This question has been discussed with groups of parents, in gatherings of educators, with students in summer programming, in meetings of superintendents and administrators, and in statewide symposia with key decision makers. The immediate answers are almost always the same. Those responses develop throughout the discussion, and participants leave a bit overwhelmed by the ramifications of the answers. It turns out that what a student doesn't learn can adversely affect them their entire lives!

Take a moment to answer this question yourself. Or have your child's educators and administrators answer it. What isn't learned? As you skim over your answers, you may be surprised at the sheer volume. But look closer and you may be astounded by the depth and weight of those answers – and the impact they make on a child's life.

### WHAT ISN'T LEARNED?

#### *Work Ethic*

Books such as *That Used to Be Us: How America Fell Behind in the World It Invented and How We Can Come Back* (Friedman & Mandelbaum, 2012) remind us how readily Asian countries are bypassing us technologically, educationally, and economically. One main reason for this, according to Friedman and Mandelbaum, is their work ethic. They know that education and sacrifice are the paths for reaching a middle class lifestyle. They look at education as a privilege – and it is.

Everyone in America has the right to an education. Sometimes it seems, though, that our young people would argue that everyone has the right to a PlayStation®4 with unlimited playing time, a cell phone by 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and a car by 16. They may also argue they are

**Our children must understand that without effort, success is fleeting.**

## Letter From the President



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

Make plans to attend the CEC annual Conference in St. Louis, Missouri April 13-17. Your TAG division offers multiple sessions that focus on the twice-exceptional learner. See the detailed information about conference sessions in this newsletter.

### **Still A Request:**

Do you have a story to tell about a gifted student? Do you have a strategy that worked especially well with a twice-exceptional or diverse gifted learner? Would you be willing to write about your experience?

The TAG division leadership plans to submit articles that offer insight into diverse and twice-exceptional gifted learners to state and national newsletters and journals. Please write your stories, your thoughts, and your insights to submit for a local web page, a statewide newsletter or journal, or national journals in your area of expertise. We often write for our G/T audience, but do not submit articles to our content area groups. If you do not feel that you can write for a newsletter or journal, submit your ideas or stories to one of the TAG Board members. We will make suggestions for preparing the article for publication. (If you do not know how to contact a board member, send your information to me, Dr. Cecelia Boswell at [cab@cctc.net](mailto:cab@cctc.net).)

Thank you for being or becoming an advocate for gifted children and young adults.

Sincerely,  
*Cecelia Boswell*  
President, TAG

**Dear TAG Members,**

In this issue of *The Update*, you will find the lead article titled "What a Child Doesn't Learn," written by Dr. Tracy Inman of Western Kentucky University.

Teachers from the Greenfield School in Jacksonville, Florida, have written an article about the way in which their school serves twice-exceptional students.

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.

You will find three regular columns that relate to issues confronting teachers, parents, administrators, and others advocating for and working with gifted students from diverse populations. Dr. Julia Roberts, "Speaking Out" columnist, has written an article about the Every Student Succeeds Act. Melanie Lichtenstein addresses ways to foster a college-going culture for first-generation gifted middle school students in "Gifted Tips and Teacher Tricks." Claire Hughes discusses movies that portray twice-exceptional individuals in her column "Double Lines."

Please plan to join us in St. Louis from April 13 to 16 for the CEC annual conference. The sessions sponsored by TAG are listed in the newsletter on page 13-14.

We hope that this newsletter will provide you with some useful suggestions for working with your students.

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





## Speaking Out: **Advocacy**

Julia Link Roberts

### **The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed and signed in December, 2015; this legislation offers opportunities for gifted children that have not previously been available. Advocates need to get “up to speed” on the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the name of the ESEA to replace No Child Left Behind, and what needs to happen in order to take full advantage of opportunities the legislation includes. Provisions for Title I, Title II, the reporting of assessment scores, and the Javits program are included in ways that open opportunities and additional resources for gifted children. Whether or not these opportunities materialize in your state and district will depend upon advocates speaking out.

The reauthorization of ESEA was long overdue. In fact, I remember visiting with a staff member of Senator Ted Kennedy on the reauthorization, and that has been quite a while ago. The Council for Exceptional Children and the National Association for Gifted Children have partnered to advocate for the TALENT Act, especially to have components of that proposed legislation incorporated into the reauthorization. The ESSA includes the fruits of that collaboration and advocacy.

The ESSA allocates responsibilities for decisions about Title I and Title II to the states. The legislation includes gifted children as a category of young people who can be serviced in Title I schools, an opportunity that has not explicitly been the case previously. The same is true for Title II, and gifted children have not been specifically included in that title program in the past.

The ESSA offers opportunities about which advocates for gifted child education must be prepared to speak out. Each state will have the responsibility to write a plan for Title II. It will be important to be “in the room” when the plan in your state is discussed and written. Others may not notice the opportunity to include gifted children in the state plan for Title II, even though ESSA provides the language to do so. States will be required to provide information on how they will improve educators’ skills to enable them to identify students with gifts and talents as well as strategies to address their needs.

Advocates need to figure out if specific schools in their district receive Title II professional development funds. If they do, it is an opportunity for advocates to inform educators at those schools that those funds can be used to provide professional development on gifted education and specific strategies to address the needs of gifted children. That is a wonderful opportunity, but one that educators at the school may not know about unless you share that information.

Title I funds are distributed to schools with a certain percentage of children from lower income families. ESSA has a provision that Title I funds can be used to identify and provide services for gifted and talented children.

Another state requirement in ESSA is that all levels of the state assessment will be reported. Previously, the law required reporting of scores at the proficient level and below. It will be informative to decision-makers and citizens to have reporting on all levels on state assessments.

The ESSA also includes the Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program. This program was previously part of the ESEA. It is important to remember that inclusion does not mean that a component is funded. It may or may not be. For the current year, the Javits Act is funded for \$12 million, the highest amount in its history.

Gather other advocates for gifted education and discuss your plan for making sure that your school, school district, and state take full advantage of opportunities offered by the newly reauthorized ESEA, known as ESSA. It is your opportunity to speak out and make a difference for gifted children and young people.

**The ESSA offers opportunities about which advocates for gifted child education must be prepared to speak out.**

**REMEMBER – IF NOT YOU, THEN WHO?**

## Double Lines by Claire E. Hughes

### Double Awards: And the Oscar Goes to...



Movies are wonderful, visual means of story-telling. Recently, I saw several movies about twice-exceptional people, and I began to ponder the tension between disability and giftedness that drives a narrative of a story. I had the opportunity to watch Tom Ropelewski's film, "2e: Twice-Exceptional" and was so impressed with how he captured the voices of the children, the parents, and the teachers. To verbalize the experiences of twice-exceptional children, their humor, and their frustrations visually was a powerful statement of support and experience. I only wish that it had been nominated for an Academy Award as a documentary. The tension between what these individuals can (or should) be able to do, and what they experience as difficulties captures the human drama that makes for good storytelling. After I showed the movie to my class, I began to think about other movies with twice-exceptional characters, and how often that tension is at the heart of an award-winning story. Twice-exceptionality is often portrayed either as a battle between the talent and the disability, disability as an obstacle to the development of the talent, or the disability BECOMES the talent itself in some films.

The struggles between the light of the gift and the darkness of the disability can be found in various films. One example is "The Theory of Everything" where the physical disabilities of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) do not defeat the internal drive of Steven Hawkin's talents. "Still Alice," where Alzheimer's defeats the abilities of Alice, but not her humanity is another example. This dance between the ability and the disability is gorgeously captured in the videography of "A Beautiful Mind." Who can forget the scene where John Nash sees the beauty of the mathematics in the flight of pigeons? The story about the brilliant mathematician with schizophrenia who finds patterns in numbers, codes, and birds is driven by his gradual descent into madness. In the movie, "The King's Speech," the battle plan to overcome stammering is the crux of the entire movie. In all of these movies the changing battle lines between the gift and the disability provide the arc of the story line, and there is a clear winner in this zero sum game where there is only room for one or the other, but not both.

In contrast to the use of disability as the active antagonist, the movies "My Left Foot" and "Ray" portray disability as an obstacle that provokes creative outlet. The disability becomes not a "battle" between gift and darkness with a winner and a loser, but a struggle that allows the main character to become stronger creatively. Ray Charles'

blindness and Christy Brown's cerebral palsy represent challenges to communicate in meaningful ways that viewers can understand. Ability becomes the creative expression of communication and connection with others; the story is driven by this story arc of overcoming obstacles. Even in movies such as "X-Men," Professor X, who is in a wheelchair, sets up a school for "mutants" who use the strength they learn because of their differences. The person wins because they have not let the obstacle stop them, but the disabling condition remains. The strength is learned rather than won in battle.

In yet other movies, the disability itself becomes the gift. A recent movie nominated for an Academy Award is "The Big Short," based on the non-fiction book by Michael Lewis. One of the main characters is Dr. Michael Burry, a real-life man with Asperger's on the higher functioning end of the autism spectrum who is clearly twice-exceptional. It is his passion in understanding a concept that led him to read thousands and thousands of sheets of information on sub-prime mortgages. He is played brilliantly by Christian Bale who does not ever state that he has autism, but suggests it in lines that describe his awareness of his own social difficulties and his brutal honesty. Michael Lewis states in his book, "They had proven far less capable of grasping basic truths in the heart of the U.S. financial system than a one-eyed money manager with Asperger's syndrome" (2011). As movie-watchers, we understand that he is able to see these financial patterns of money mismanagement because of his Asperger's. The audience understands that "typical" people would not have the patience or the ability to look at financial spreadsheets from a unique perspective and "see" the underlying problems. This creative way of thinking is highlighted in "The Social Network" where it is implied that Mark Zuckerberg had social issues and communication challenges that led him to developing Facebook as a means of connecting with people. Even in movies such as "Rainman," where the disability of severe autism is not one that allows the person to live independently, the disability becomes the gift that allows him to see patterns and communicate with others. Further, in the film "Forrest Gump," Forrest's insights and love for others is a direct result of his non-specific cognitive impairment.

It is tempting to find patterns in these portrayals. Often, a cognitive difference, such as autism or Asperger's or even developmental disabilities, can be seen as gifts

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## GIFTED TIPS AND TEACHER TRICKS



Melanie  
Lichtenstein

### *Fostering a college-going culture for first-generation gifted middle school students*

Where I grew up, when a baby was born they were often photographed in a favorite college themed outfit. For states with prominent college sports rivalries such as: Michigan-Ohio State University, Alabama-Auburn, Army-Navy, and Clemson-University of South Carolina, college themed baby onesies are popular new baby gifts. I would like for you to consider what this early introduction to college may mean to the baby. I imagine it could send the message of: this is a place you should be proud of, this is a place you can picture yourself, or this is a place you will go to when the time comes. It may seem like an early start to have the conversation of attending college, but the value has already been established as an expectation and a part of that baby's identity. (For the purpose of clarification: I am not suggesting that only children who wear onesies from colleges go to that college, or that if you wear a college onesie you will be going to college in general. I am merely pointing out the implications of the tradition.)

The expectation of college attainment as a part of a child's identity and life trajectory is a privilege that should not be limited based on that child's family's access and opportunity. And yet, it still occurs. Having access to college preparatory classes, challenging coursework, and participation in gifted and talented programs have been identified as ways to foster a college going pathway for historically underrepresented populations (Civil Rights Data Collection, 2014). In my previous columns, I have addressed ways to identify underrepresented students for gifted education, retaining and engaging students in gifted programming, and what it means to be a culturally responsive educator of the gifted. For this column, I will suggest ways to advocate and educate your gifted diverse students for entry into the college pipeline. The college pipeline is a theoretical phrase that describes the specific tasks a student should accomplish for postsecondary education attainment (Horn, 1997).

For many first-generation students, college attainment is considered out of reach. The reasons vary from financial concerns to systemic policies that prevent access and opportunity for first-generation students (Carter & Welner, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Grantham, Trotman Scott, and Harmon, 2013). First-generation college students are considered to be children whose parents or guardians have not completed a four-year post-secondary program. Scholars suggest that schools must establish a college-going culture to address the pipeline (McDonough, 2011; Welton & Williams, 2014; Welton & Martinez, 2014). In addition

to attending a college-going school, it is suggested that students should also have a college plan by seventh grade and that the families of the children should be involved in the process (McDonough, 2011). These expectations often fall under the duties of the guidance counselors of schools. At my Title I middle school, the guidance team was also responsible for school wide scheduling, test coordinating, intervening for behavior problems, providing support for social and emotional issues and to the school administration support, and substituting for school nurse when necessary. As the educator and advocate for my gifted students, I took the college-going process as part of my responsibility.

The following is a list of a few strategies I implemented to create a college-going culture in my gifted and talented classroom:

- ***"Math gets you to college, writing keeps you there."***—This quote was one I heard at an Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) conference. (See <http://www.avid.org/>.) Access to challenging math courses in middle school that allow for high school credit, and an early start in the college pipeline process are the first actions I emphasized. At my school we were fortunate to have math teachers who were high school certified in Algebra I. This allowed our students who demonstrated advanced math skills in the quarterly tests to be enrolled in high school credit classes starting in the seventh grade. The earlier your students can start gaining high school credit, the more prepared they will be for the college preparatory courses in high school. (Other considerations for high school credit classes in middle school may include, depending on your state and their policies): English I, Modern Languages I, and Physical Science).
- ***Communication and collaboration with your neighborhood high school***—One of the challenges of having students take Algebra I in seventh grade is there may not be teachers at the middle school certified to teach the next math course in the traditional sequence. The neighborhood high school was very open to offering seats to the middle school students to take geometry. We arranged for the students to be bussed to and from the high school in order to take and complete the next math course in the high school sequence. The students would catch the high school bus in the morning, take their high school credit class, and someone from the high school would use the activity bus to bring them to the middle school. I acted as the liaison and point

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person to ensure the students were on target and successful. I would provide time and space for the students to work on their high school work if they were falling behind or needed extra time.

- **College Talk**—One of the ways I engaged in college talk was to dress the classroom in the decorative equivalent of college baby onesies. My classroom had college pennants from the Big Ten, Southeastern Conference (SEC), Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and the Ivies always hanging from my ceiling or adorning the walls. (See picture.) The best aspect of having these hanging from my ceiling related to the conversations that I would overhear the students having. They would point out which mascot they liked, or which school colors they admired. Often they would share where they planned on going to college. If students were daydreaming, at least they would be daydreaming about college. (Hint: Students can work on their formal letter writing skills to contact colleges and get pennants for your classroom.)



- **Information and Resources**—For the middle schools that served the more affluent neighborhoods, every eighth grader would take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT). At my school, unfortunately, it was often a small group of students who scored within a certain range on the state exams that qualified them to take the PSAT for free. To address this, I worked with the guidance and leadership team to secure funding, time, and space to make sure as many children as possible could take the PSAT. It was a challenge to convince the children to voluntarily take a test that is normally given to high school students, but I could be fairly persuasive. This was especially the case when it came to explaining what doors open to the students when they merely take the test. (Plus, pizza helps, too!)
- **Collaboration**—In addition to collaborating with the high school and with my guidance team, I would collaborate with the Gear Up team (<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html>) and Communities in Schools (<http://www.communitiesinschools.org>). We would work to arrange field trips to local colleges. The Communities in Schools team helped the school-wide college-going culture by identifying the postsecondary institution that each teacher attended, and created décor for each classroom sharing this information. This way the students could see where their

teachers went, and hopefully engage in some more college talk with teachers other than myself.

These are just a few examples of fostering a college-going culture in the gifted classroom that may start the journey to college for first-generation and underrepresented students. If I could do it again, I would hold more events to inform families and students about the various ways to fund college. Fortunately, many of my former students secured funding through scholarships and grants. There are many resources that exist for first-generation and underrepresented students to fund their college experience. Teachers can provide time and space for the students to explore their options. Being identified as gifted does not automatically enroll a student into college. It may afford the student more access and opportunity, but the teachers and school need to provide the additional support for the first-generation and underrepresented students to enter the pipeline for college attainment.

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*What A Child Doesn't Learn, continued from page 1*

entitled to an allowance and that days off from school are for relaxation and play and not chores. Experts argue that this will be the first generation whose standard of living will not surpass (or even match) their parents' socio-economic level. This is an entitled generation – or so they think.

How a person thinks about his talent and ability has an impact on his actions. Cognitive psychologist Carol Dweck (2007) argues that there are two types of mindset: fixed and growth. Unfortunately many mistakenly believe they are born with a fixed mindset, a certain level of talent and ability that cannot be altered. Rather, people should embrace the growth mindset, a belief that ability, talent, and intelligence are malleable – they can change through hard work and effort. “Without effort, a student's achievement suffers, if not sooner than later. Thus, it is important for student to value and believe in effort as a vehicle for academic success” (Dweck, 2012, p. 11). Our children must understand that without effort, success is fleeting.

Ben Franklin once said, “Genius without education is like silver in the mine.” We could alter that a bit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century American young person: “Genius without work ethic is like silver in the mine.” No matter how bright, our children will not succeed personally or professionally without a strong work ethic. Working hard at intellectually stimulating tasks early in their lives helps to develop that ethic.

This first response is definitely lengthier than the others. That is because work ethic is the cornerstone to success.

### *Responsibility*

Responsibility is conscience driven. We make the choices we do because it is the right thing to do. Dishes must be washed in order to be ready for the next meal. The research paper must be done well and on time if we want that top grade. Punctuality helps us keep our jobs, so even though we choose to stay up until 3:00 am to finish a novel, when the alarm sounds a very short two hours later, we're up. Each day's responsibilities must be met to be a productive family member, employee, and citizen.

Early in life, we should learn the orchestrating role responsibility plays in our lives. And we also should realistically learn the outcomes when responsibilities are not met. It's all about cause and effect. If children do not live up to their responsibilities and if natural consequences are not enforced, we are not equipping children with this vital virtue.

### *Coping with Failure*

To be perfectly frank, failure for a gifted child is neither an F nor a D. Sometimes it is a B – and sometimes even a mid-A! For gifted children (and for most of us), failure is

not meeting the self-imposed expectations. Realistically, though, our greatest lessons in life often stem from falling flat on our faces. Through failure, we learn how to pick ourselves up and continue. We learn perseverance and resilience. We learn that we're not always right and that we don't need to be – that we may discover more through our failures than we ever imagined we could through our accomplishments! Dweck (2007) remarked: “Success is about being your best self, not about being better than others; failure is an opportunity, not a condemnation; effort is the key to success” (p. 44).

When we face obstacles early on, we discover how to separate our identities from the task itself – that means the failure of meeting the goal or accomplishing the task does not equal failure of us as people. Young people, especially those who are gifted and talented, must learn to take academic risks. They must learn to celebrate the outcome and be able to learn from the failure!

### *Self-Worth Stemming from the Accomplishment of a Challenging Task*

We have all faced obstacles that seemed overwhelming, tasks that seemed too challenging. Giving up was never an option, so we worked and struggled and toiled until finally we overcame that obstacle or completed the task. The intrinsic rewards far outweighed the praise or even the pay earned at the end. We felt good about ourselves, our work ethic, our management skills, our persistence, and our ability. And even if the tangible outcome wasn't the promotion or “A” we wanted, that was secondary to the inner sense of accomplishment and pride we felt.

When students never work hard at challenging tasks, they can't experience those intrinsic rewards. Naturally, then, they focus on the extrinsic rewards. Unfortunately, being in an age of high stakes accountability only reinforces extrinsic motivation for students as they earn pizza parties for improved scores and best effort on statewide testing in the spring. Likewise, by giving them good grades for little effort that merits no intrinsic value, we're depriving them of this life-driving tool.

### *Time-Management Skills*

Adults constantly juggle roles: parent, spouse, child, person, employee/employer, volunteer, neighbor, friend, etc. With each role come demands on our time and energy. Often these demands conflict with each other requiring us to budget our time carefully. Through experience, we have gained time-management skills by keeping track of the responsibilities of each role, estimating the time needed to meet that responsibility, and then following through. We adjust and readjust based on our experiences.

We know how difficult we make our lives when we procrastinate; likewise we know the sweetness of free time that comes from managing our time well. Young

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people who don't have to put effort into their work to earn high grades won't understand the time needed in order to develop a high quality product necessary in more demanding classes, much less the time needed to do a job that would be acceptable in the work environment. Instead of gradually learning these lessons in schools, they may very well have crash (and burn) courses in the real world.

### Goal Setting

We can't reach goals if we never set them nor can we reach goals if they are unrealistic. We also can't reach goals if we don't have a strategy in place that incrementally encourages us to meet that end goal. Students must have practice in goal setting and goal achievement. Those skills will impact their personal lives, their professional lives, their social lives, and even their spiritual lives.

### Study Skills

Time-management, goal setting, self-discipline – all of these are embedded in study skills. When children don't need to study (because they already know the information or they have the ability to absorb it as they listen in class), they never learn vital study skills. So when they are presented with challenging material whether that be in their first honors class or, even worse, in college, they simply don't know how to study! How do you attack a lengthy reading assignment? How do you take notes in an organized fashion? How do you prepare for an exam that covers the entire semester's material? Yes, study skills can be learned, but like most things in life, the earlier we acquire those skills, the better.

Decision-Making Skills and Problem-Solving Skills  
Weighing pros and cons. Predicting outcomes of possible choices. Systematically breaking down issues as to importance. Ranking possibilities and importance of criteria. All of these skills come into play when making a decision. All of these skills come into play when problem-solving. If children don't ever have experience with this early on in their learning, then when it is time to make decisions about learning and life, when it is time to solve professional and personal problems, they are ill-equipped to do so.

### Sacrifice

Yes, I would rather curl up with a wonderful read than dig into my taxes. But if my taxes aren't complete by April 15, I am in trouble. Period. I would rather catch the latest Academy Award winning film than bulldoze the dirty clothes into the laundry room and lose myself for the rest of the day. But wrinkled, dirty clothes don't go very well with a professional image nor do they encourage lunch mates. As responsible adults, we well understand

sacrifice. Sometimes we sacrifice our free time for our responsibilities. Sometimes we sacrifice what we want to do because others wish to do something else. We fully understand that we must "pay our dues" in life.

But if young people procrastinate on assignments because they really want to finish the Xbox One game or texting their friends and their shoddy work earns A's, they're not learning about real life. Excellence requires sacrifice. The IRS won't care that the reason your taxes were late (and incorrect in just a couple of places) was because you'd rather spend time reading a novel. Your potential employer doesn't even want to hear the excuse of choosing to watch a movie over the preparation of your clothing for the interview. Life's not always about fun or about what you want and when you want it. It's about sacrifice and work ethic. It's about working your hardest at challenging tasks.

These answers to the question *What does a child not learn?* is only partial, and yours may well include values that this one didn't. What's particularly frightening with this one is that these are some of the most important concepts for a successful life.

So what does a child not learn when he earns good grades and high praise without having to make much effort? Simply put, he doesn't learn the values and skills needed in order to be a productive, caring person who contributes positively to our world.

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## Serving Twice-exceptional Students in an Inclusive Classroom Setting

By Renae Black, Amy Frields, Diane Krug, and Stephanie Snell

*Serving twice-exceptional students (those with a co-existing high ability and a disability) can prove to be challenging.*

In 1985 Greenwood School in Jacksonville, Florida, was established as an alternative for students who had “fallen through the cracks” of the traditional education system and who would benefit from a multisensory hands-on approach to teaching and learning. Our school is proud to be located on 14 acres of wetlands that serve as an outdoor lab for our students. Greenwood School is an ideal setting for twice-exceptional students. Identifying students’ different learning styles and incorporating them into lessons that include kinesthetic, visual, and auditory components provides opportunities for all learners to succeed. Active engagement in learning keeps students interested and increases student performance. We do this by incorporating a variety of student centered teaching methods along with community partnerships.

Educational partnerships demonstrate many benefits to all participants, as shown by the Harvard Family Research Project (2010). For example, successful partnerships have been shown to strengthen, support, and transform individual partners, resulting in improved program quality, more efficient use of resources, and better alignment of goals and curriculum. Greenwood serves students in grades 6 through 12. All graduating students receive a standard high school diploma. Our school is certified through the Florida Council of Independent Schools.

Through participation in several Citizen Science projects, in conjunction with our partnership with the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens, students gain hands-on experience in environmental education and work directly with local scientists and science educators. Furthermore, students work to educate the local community through various demonstrations and outreach projects. These experiences promote social awareness and high self-concept in our students.



*Greenwood High School students share their knowledge about wetlands with visitors at the annual Jacksonville Zoo Earth Day Celebration.*

At Greenwood School, we have many students in the twice-exceptional population, including students who have high cognitive ability in addition to the Autism Spectrum Disorder or a Specific Learning Disability. With this population, it is imperative to provide opportunities to bolster self-concept. If a child has a high global self-concept, he or she may be better able to cope with domain-specific areas of difficulty (Harter, Whitesell, & Junkin, 1998). Students who understand their personal pattern of strengths and weaknesses are better equipped to participate in their learning actively.

One example of student involvement in an on-campus as well as community service and education project is the Milkweed and Monarch Butterfly Propagation Study. Students wrote a grant and were awarded money. They built structures, maintained gardens, collected seeds, propagated plants, recorded observations, and now plan to distribute plants to organizations throughout Jacksonville, Florida. These high school students taught and collaborated with middle school students and promoted awareness at the Earth Day Jax event, both through the annual city event and at the Zoo.

Students also presented Citizen Science projects to educators at the Florida Council of Independent Schools (FCIS) annual conference. These interactions provided opportunities that engendered social awareness and positive social connections, which often prove to be challenging for these students. These types of experiences equip students with skills and confidence that can be generalized and applied to all areas of their lives.



*Greenwood Middle School students learn how to tag a Monarch butterfly for release.*

*continued on next page*

*Serving Twice-exceptional Students, continued from previous page*

The ideal fit for a twice-exceptional student and his or her educational environment is one where both the student's giftedness and disability are evenly accounted for through appropriate education and services. Looking at the "big picture," twice-exceptional students are important to the future of our communities (National Education Association, 2006). At Greenwood School, our mission includes providing students with highly trained teachers in exceptional education and the content areas, as well as gifted education. We strive to promote self-advocacy strategies and self-determination through awareness of individual strengths and challenges in students.

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- Harvard Family Research Project. (2010). Partnerships for learning: promising practices in integrating school and out-of-school time program supports. (10)3, 235-36.
- National Education Association. (2006). *The Twice Exceptional Dilemma*. Congressional Document, n.p.

## 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).

## *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 2016 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. (See page XXX for instructions on how to access the electronic version of JEG.)

### ABSTRACTS FOR JEG 39(1) MARCH 2016

*Using Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis to Measure Construct Validity of the Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors Scale (TABS)*, Kevin D. Besnoy, John Dantzler, Lisa R. Besnoy, and Caitlin Byrne - This study evaluated the construct validity of the Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors Scale (TABS). Data for this study were collected from two separate school districts across 3 different academic years in the southeastern United States. Of the total sample (N = 2,330), 64.6% of the children were identified as African American, 29.0% as Caucasian, and 6.4% had no or other racial category specified. A two-step process was used to assess evidence of construct validity in the TABS. The first step was to identify an optimal factor structure using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) techniques. The second step was to confirm the structure using confirmatory factor analysis methods (CFA). Results point to a one-factor solution as the optimal factor structure for the TABS EFA sample; however, CFA showed mixed results for model fit. Despite these limitations, results of this study suggest that the TABS might help reduce teacher bias during the referral/nomination process of gifted children. Although the TABS factor structure suggests it measures a single construct of giftedness, additional studies need to be conducted to confirm these findings.

*Accepting a Scholarly Identity: Gifted Students, Academic Crowd Membership, and Identification With School*, Jennifer Riedl Cross, Stephen J. Bugaj, and Sakhavat Mammadov - This study examined identification with school among middle school students and its relationship with academic crowd membership, a public expression of one's academic orientation. Of the 127 grade 6–8 students in the sample, 55 reported participation in a gifted program; 44% of these gifted students did not claim affiliation with the academic crowd. There was a positive correlation between identification with school and the importance placed on membership for students in the academic crowd, both gifted and nongifted. The California Bully Victimization Scale was used to determine that no group was more likely to have been victimized. Cluster analysis of crowd memberships indicated that gifted students not in the academic crowd had few other crowd memberships, suggesting middle school may be an important time to encourage a willingness to be viewed by peers as academically oriented through promoting identification with school.

*A Single Case Study of the Impact of Policy Changes on Identification for Gifted Programs*, Russell T. Warne and Chris J. Price - The annals of gifted education research contain few educational policy studies and even fewer studies on the impacts of changes in policy. To partially fill this gap, the authors performed an ABA study investigating the impact of accountability legislation on the number of students reported gifted in Texas public schools. Data were collected from the 1999–2000 school year to 2012–2013 school year from a public educational database. Data analysis showed that when accountability legislation was in effect more students were identified as gifted in Texas public schools. Additionally, the percentage of campuses with few or no gifted students was lower when accountability systems were in place. Therefore, it seems likely that accountability legislation is an important component for gifted programs in public schools. The article concludes with a discussion of the limitations of this single case study.

*Fidelity of Intervention of English/Language Arts Elementary Curriculum for Gifted Students: An Exploratory Investigation in Different Service Delivery Models*, Tonya R. Moon and Sunhee Park - Recent research has shown that implementation of innovative programs at the classroom level continues to be a major challenge. The purpose of this study was to examine the types of modifications made during implementation of two curriculum units in two different setting types (i.e., self-contained, pull-out) in order to identify areas that should be considered when developing curriculum for gifted learners served through various service delivery models. Following two cohorts of third-grade teachers implementing two language arts units, results indicate that teachers made choices to modify the curricula in detrimental ways more often than in productive ways, with pull-out classroom teachers making more negative modifications. Findings of the study suggest that modifying curriculum appears to be inevitable. In order to utilize research-based curriculum in educational settings, teachers should be provided knowledge about how to modify the curriculum for their setting in order to not detract from the intended learning goals, as well as understand the essential curricular components that should not be modified.

*Double Lines, continued from page 4*

themselves. Physical disabilities become immovable obstacles that produce creative responses, while degenerative disease or communication challenges becomes battles. So much of our view of this tension between disability and gift is determined by the nature of the disability itself and our view of its immutability.

What is so striking in all of these movies is that the “giftedness” is portrayed in three different ways as well, as a direct result of the nature of the disability. Either the giftedness is an innate characteristic of the person who has to overcome the disability, as in the case of “The Theory of Everything” when Steven Hawking struggles to work despite his ALS. Or the giftedness is a result of overcoming challenges, such as Christy Brown’s work in “My Left Foot.” Or lastly, the disability and the giftedness are the same thing, but from different viewpoints, as in “The Big Short.” In all of these cases, giftedness and disability mutually define each other through their relationship with each other.

Twice-exceptional children’s self-perceptions are shaped by how they are viewed in our culture. It is important to understand how twice-exceptionality is portrayed in films because so much of our culture is shaped by, and reflected in, popular movies. As twice-exceptional children struggle to understand the relationship between their abilities and disabilities, movies are an excellent source of information and viewpoints. Parents, teachers, and twice-exceptional individuals themselves should be encouraged to watch movies with an eye to identifying their own struggles and finding their own strengths. Whether giftedness and disability are innate, learned, or different sides of the same coin is a conclusion that each person must come to on his/her own. Using media, specifically in the format of film, is one step toward reaching that conclusion.

#### Reference

Lewis, Michael. (2011). *The Big Short*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.



### 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:

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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.
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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.

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## 2016 CEC-TAG PROGRAM

### CEC CONVENTION

### ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

#### WEDNESDAY

Concurrent Session: *Exploring Identification Issues of Twice-exceptional Learners Through Case Studies*

Case studies situate learning in authentic and meaningful contexts. This session will provide examples of authentic experiences in which educators will explore issues and concerns related to identifying twice exceptional, gifted and talented children and will engage participants in a reflective analysis of a case study through discussion questions and activities.

Wednesday, 4/13: 2:15 PM - 3:15 PM

#### THURSDAY

Concurrent Session: *Preparing High-Ability Students From Poverty for Gifted Programs: The Young Scholars Program*

The Maryville Young Scholars Program identifies and serves high ability children from groups traditionally underrepresented in gifted programs. In its 6th year, the program is preparing over 100 children from four elementary schools in Ferguson and St. Louis city to enter district gifted programs by middle school. The model involves four primary facets: 1) identification based on local norms, 2) significant teacher education, 3) hands-on parent workshops, and 4) more than 140 hours of high-end summer programming annually. The Program is leading to state policy change and serves as a model for similar programs across the region. This session will review the program and its evaluation data.

Thursday, 4/14: 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

*Multi-presentation Session: Identifying and Providing Resources for Gifted and Talented Youth*

*Dreamers, Leaders, and Collaborators: Utilizing Regional Resources and Collaboration to Cultivate Talents of Gifted Youth*

Have you been working to dream up new ideas for services for your identified gifted and talented students? Pondering ways to get your community involved in new ways? Learn how a regional consortium of teachers, administrators, and higher education personnel designs, prepares, and annually hosts 2,500 students through their annual DreamFest, Middle School Leadership Symposium, and Young Women LEAD conferences for students in grades four through twelve. We will share ideas for collaborating across districts, with local universities, and with local business and arts entities.

*Finding the Exceptional in Unexpected Places*

Charter schools are designed to give families choice in free public education; however, not all choices are equal.

Confluence Charter School in St. Louis, Missouri, realized that they were losing their best students to magnet schools or other public schools because their primary instructional focus was on improving the outcomes for learners who were below grade level. As a result, Confluence Charter became the first charter school in St. Louis to start a gifted program. Learn how they created a new program to identify and serve their top 5% in their diverse schools and programs.

Thursday, 4/14: 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

*Multi-presentation Session: Recruiting, Retaining, and Service Diverse Learners in Gifted Education*

*Providing Optimal Educational Opportunities for Academically Diverse Learners Using Tiered Assignments*

How do you challenge diverse learners with a wide range of academic abilities including gifted students in an inclusion setting? This session uses a case study to explore a strategy known as tiered assignments which allows for teachers to teach the same objective or standard to students while encouraging mastery at various levels.

*Recruiting and Retaining Underrepresented Gifted Students Using an Equity Lens*

Since at least 2002, when the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) began keeping data on gifted education in what is now the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), Black and Hispanic students have been underrepresented in gifted programs. This session focuses on the two most CRDC (2009 and 2011) data sets. The purpose is to help participants understand underrepresentation in their state and district, as well as to set quantifiable equity goals known as the 20% rule as was implemented in a recent court case - *McFadden v. Board of Education for Illinois School District U-46* (2013). Recommendations and guidelines for addressing underrepresentation and seeking equity are provided for these two groups.

Thursday, 4/14: 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM

*continued on next page*

CEC-TAG Program continued from previous page

**FRIDAY**

Poster Session: *Comprehending and Cultivating Creativity: Torrance, Talents, and Teachers*

This session will address Dr. Torrance's constructs of creativity: Fluency, Originality, Elaboration, Abstractness of Titles, and Resistance to Premature Closure. Examples as they appear in various student responses will be examined. Selected activities from Talents Unlimited and teacher designed activities will be shared with the participants. Attendees will leave the session understanding the expressions of creativity and with several classroom activities that can increase the likelihood of obtaining a creative response.

Friday, 4/15: 10:30 AM - 11:15 AM

Concurrent Session: *TAG Showcase: STEM Opportunities for Gifted Learners*

Participants will learn about creating and securing STEM opportunities for gifted learners. Specifically, panelists will discuss creating STEM partnerships with schools and the community, integrating technology innovation into existing programs for gifted learners, specialized STEM schools for highly able children, and extracurricular STEM opportunities for K-12 students and their teachers.

Friday, 4/15: 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Concurrent Session: *Influences on Beginning Teachers' Differentiated Instructional Practices: A Case Study*

In this case study, we identified the influences on beginning teachers' differentiation within the context of a complex educational system. The results highlight the important educational experiences and support that (a) teacher preparation should provide to preservice teachers and (b) schools should provide for beginning teachers.

Fri, 4/15: 2:15 PM - 3:15 PM

Concurrent Session: *Equitable Identification: Training Teachers to Accurately Recognize the Characteristics of Minority Gifted Students*

Years of active gifted child find, including extensive research and field testing, have allowed this district's team to hone the child find process. Teacher training is at the core of this identification process. We provide a close look at both the method and the content of the district's teacher training procedures for appropriate gifted referrals. Participants will leave with a model for successful teacher training that has resulted in increased identification of underrepresented students, especially those from poverty.

Saturday, 4/16: 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM

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**Conference**  
**April 13 to 16, 2016**  
**St. Louis, Missouri**

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## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

**RENAE BLACK** graduated from the University of North Florida with a degree in Early Childhood Education, She teaches middle grades math at the Greenwood School and is the Math Department Chair. She is certified in several subject areas including Exceptional Student Education, Middle Grades Math, and is ESOL endorsed. She is currently a graduate student at University of Central Florida pursuing her M.Ed. in Exceptional Student Education along with a Certificate in Autism.

**KIMBERLEY CHANDLER** - [klchan@wm.edu](mailto:klchan@wm.edu) Dr. Kimberley Chandler is the Curriculum Director at the Center for Gifted Education at 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, co-author (with Barbara Dullaghan) of "The Primary Place" column in *Teaching for High Potential*," and the editor of the CEC-TAG newsletter *The Update*.

**AMY FRIELDS** began working at the Greenwood School after graduating from the University of North Florida. She received a degree in Secondary Education, is certified in Exceptional Student Education, and is also gifted education endorsed. Ms. Frields teaches middle grades science and is currently the Middle School Department Head.

**CLAIRE HUGHES** - [cehughes@ccga.edu](mailto:cehughes@ccga.edu) Dr. Claire E. Hughes is an Associate Professor at the College of Coastal Georgia in an integrated Elementary /Special Education teacher preparation program. She received her doctorate in gifted education and special education from the College of William and Mary, and has been a Visiting Fellow at Oxford. She is the past chair of the Special Populations Network for the National Association for Gifted Children and the co-editor of the *Excellence and Diversity in Gifted Education (EDGE)* journal for CEC-TAG. She is the author of two books on High Functioning Autism. Her research areas include: twice-exceptional children; cognitive interventions; and Response to Intervention.

**TRACY INMAN** - [tracy.inman@wku.edu](mailto:tracy.inman@wku.edu) - Dr. Tracy Ford Inman is associate director of The Center for Gifted Studies at Western Kentucky University. She has taught English at the high school and collegiate levels, as well as in summer programs for gifted and talented youth. In addition to writing and co-writing several articles, Tracy has co-authored three books with Julia Roberts through Prufrock Press. They received the Legacy Book Award from the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented for *Strategies for Differentiating Instruction: Best Practices for the Classroom*. Tracy was co-editor of the Legacy Award winning *Parenting Gifted Children: The Authoritative Guide* from the National Association for Gifted Children. She and Jana Kirchner have written *Parenting Gifted Children 101: An Introduction to Gifted Kids and Their Needs*, which will be available in June.

**DIANE KRUG** became a high school teacher at Greenwood School, after working for 25 years in the field of Zoology in various zoological institutions. She received her B.A. in Biology at Warren Wilson College and is certified in Exceptional Student Education. She teaches Biology, Environmental Science, and Anatomy and Physiology. Her course work utilizes the school's 14 acres of wetlands as an engaging, hands-on outside inquiry lab.

**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.

**STEPHANIE SNELL** has been teaching for 24 years, 14 of which have been at Greenwood School. She earned a BS in Elementary Education from the University of Alabama and has completed significant continuing education work. She is certified in Wilson Reading and Corrective Reading. Ms. Snell is a "Schools Attuned" certified teacher and is certified in Exceptional Student Education. She currently teaches Middle School English and Literature.