Northwest FAMILY

INSIDE

Division of Enrollment Management
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An issue on quality education

Northwest's education program receives national award
Northwest has enjoyed an outstanding reputation as a leader in teacher education, both within the state of Missouri and nationally.

That reputation was further validated when the University learned in September that it is a recipient of the prestigious 2006 Christa McAuliffe Award for Excellence in Teacher Education.

Northwest’s teacher education program is so impressive that, during a State Board of Education meeting earlier this year where the University’s accreditation was continued for another seven years, Missouri’s Director of Teacher Education said, “Northwest has provided a state model for others to emulate and has in fact set a new standard in many of the program reviews. Northwest is the best kept secret in Missouri teacher education.”

Dr. Joyce Piveral, Northwest’s assistant director of teacher education, said it’s important to note that all of the University’s colleges collaborate toward the success of the Teacher Preparation Program.

“The cooperation we get to prepare teachers comes from all the colleges,” Piveral said. “The College of Arts and Sciences and the Booth College of Business and Professional Studies are involved in teacher preparation and committed to it.”

Dr. Cheryl Malm, director of secondary education and associate professor of mathematics education in the College of Arts and Sciences, said the McAuliffe award was indicative of the work being done at the University.

“I think it’s great,” Malm said. “It’s always a pleasant surprise when other people understand and recognize the work we’re doing. It’s a very prestigious award and speaks well to what we’re doing.”

Northwest’s assessment program was praised during a site visit by representatives from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. As a result, the state accreditation team changed its policy to include more authentic assessment options, such as Teacher Work Samples that Northwest implemented.

Instructor Tim Wall, director of educational assessment and teacher education student services, played a key role in establishing the assessment and tracking system.

“Tim set up an incredible system for us to know where our students are and how we can help them,” Malm said. “It makes the program very strong and it helps the students. In the overall program, that’s a unique piece.

“I applaud the hard work that the entire professional education unit has done the last few years. As a unit we work very well together, and it shows in our program.”

Piveral agreed that the “linchpin” in the McAuliffe award application was the TWS model.

“We had started early on, in 1999 or 2000, putting data together about making informed decisions to help our teacher candidates,” Piveral said. “Our national licensure exam scores had gone up, and we were headed in the right direction. Our pre-assessment and post-assessment shows our teacher candidates how they impact students. We train our teachers to look at that and measure student growth. Now we ask for reflection. There are measurable ways to assess performance and to help P-12 students achieve peak performance.”

Amy Wilson, a secretary who provides support for Educational Leadership’s Teacher Education Support Services office, also had a large hand in writing Northwest’s McAuliffe award application.

Piveral said the McAuliffe award affirms the University’s work in adding value for teacher candidates and P-12 learners.

“This award renews our belief in the work we’re doing,” she said. “It spurs us forward to break new ground.”
Working with children at a before- and after-school program in Iowa led Philip Pohren toward a career in education.

The Red Oak, Iowa, native, who earned a master’s degree from Northwest in December 2005, spent some time at his undergraduate alma mater trying to figure out what he wanted to do. Once he chose elementary education, he knew he’d made the right decision.

“My advice to any student wishing to pursue a career in education is simple: get involved with kids, preferably in a setting outside the classroom; understand that the rewards of your labor are not always recognized at first, but they will be seen; and learn to live frugally,” Pohren said.

After earning a bachelor’s degree in elementary education in 1998 from the University of Iowa, Pohren began teaching in the North Kansas City School District. After three years he moved to Fayette, Ga., and taught third grade for another three years. He then gravitated back north and enrolled in Northwest’s graduate program, serving two years as a graduate assistant in the Horace Mann Lab School.

“Northwest’s reputation of equipping educational leaders for the challenges our schools currently face has traveled well around Iowa, Missouri and beyond,” Pohren said. “When the doors opened so I could work as a graduate assistant at Horace Mann and move closer to family, I ran through it. I was able to teach during the day, take classes in the evening, and spend time with my family on a beautiful campus. In 18 months I finished my master’s in the Educational Leadership Program (Elementary) and then began looking for my first job in administration.”

He began his first administrative position on Aug. 7 as principal at Winston R-VI Elementary School.

“I’m learning as I go, and at times I’m barely keeping my head above water,” he said. “But I love every minute of it and couldn’t think of anything else I’d rather be doing. The very best part of this job is knowing that I cast my net of influence on the entire school, as opposed to a single classroom.”

“When I first got into teaching, I honestly didn’t believe I would want to change sides and go into administration. After one or two years, I knew I could make a bigger difference wearing an administrator’s cap. Having served under three principals, it was apparent that many of our schools lack the leadership necessary to achieve the high standards set forth by our federal and state governments as well as our local school boards.”

Pohren said Northwest’s program allowed him to cultivate many relationships.

“The relationships made with my peers as well as my professors have proven most valuable,” Pohren said. “In this program, I was able to utilize material covered in class, both in my classroom (the next day) and in my new job (on the first day). We tackled current issues that are abundant in today’s school community and drew individual relevance, given each of our unique circumstances.”
Darryl Johnson, Christy Compton and Dr. Dwight Pierson never crossed paths during their days as students at Northwest Missouri State University.

But the three alumni recently joined a unique group by receiving prestigious education awards.

Johnson, a communication arts teacher at Smithville High School, is Missouri’s Teacher of the Year for 2006-07. He holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in English from Northwest. He has been named Smithville’s Teacher of the Year eight consecutive years.

Compton, an instructional coach at Topping Elementary School in the North Kansas City School District, is the United States Department of Education’s 2006 American STAR of Teaching award recipient for the state of Missouri. She holds a master’s degree in education from Northwest and is scheduled to complete her elementary administration certification from the University in December.

Pierson, superintendent of the Forest City (Iowa) Community School District, has been named the 2007 Iowa Superintendent of the Year. He received three degrees from Northwest: a specialist in education in 1988, a master’s in guidance and counseling in 1974, and a bachelor’s in business administration in 1968.

Darryl Johnson

Johnson has maintained strong ties to Northwest throughout the years and received the Northwest Alumni Association’s Young Alumni Award in 2003. As a result of his state award, Johnson now becomes Missouri’s candidate for the 2007 National Teacher of the Year award.

Johnson said several reasons pointed him in the direction of teaching.

“Like most teachers, my decision to teach wasn’t based on a single experience, person, or any other external influence,” he said. “A few know when they’re young that they want to teach. Some stumble into the profession, and still others have this epiphany later in life. Regardless of their respective paths into the field, teachers choose to teach because they see the value and potential in young people. I am no different.

“Honestly, I entered the profession with much trepidation. Despite the fact that I had a rich student-teaching experience in Maryville with Doris Throckmorton and Barb Drake, I still hadn’t convinced myself that I made the right vocational choice. I really didn’t know what I could offer as an educator.”

That question has been answered. A teaching career that began 15 years ago and included stops at Plattsburg and Northeast Nodaway may never have been launched had Johnson chosen to follow his older brothers.

“I hadn’t decided to attend college until the spring semester of my senior year in high school,” he said. “My two older brothers had joined the military, and for a while I thought I would follow their lead. Needless to say, once I made the decision to further my education, I scrambled to take the ACT and then chose a college, Northwest.”

Johnson was honored by the State Board of Education during a Nov. 15 banquet in Jefferson City. He said former Northwest professors Michael Hobbs, Beth Richards and Bruce Litte pushed him toward graduate school. But it was Virgil Albertini who influenced Johnson most.

“He had the biggest impact on me as an undergraduate and later as a graduate student,” Johnson said. “As a professor, he was articulate, intelligent, funny and very demanding. Even now as a mentor and friend, I find him generous and genuine. And the man has a memory like no one else.”

Johnson said being named the state’s teacher of the year is “an incredible honor.”

“I have always considered it a privilege to be an ambassador of the greatest profession in the world,” he said. “Of course this is an incredible honor, and I am grateful for the opportunity to represent Missouri as I travel within the state and across the country this year. This award took 14 years to achieve, and I cannot accept it without acknowledging all those who’ve supported and guided me.”

Christy Compton

Compton, who earned a master’s degree in education (reading) from Northwest and plans to begin working on a
doctorate next year through the University, knew at age 3 that she wanted to become a teacher.

Working with and tutoring students since she was 14, Compton now works with teachers to implement research-based strategies and best practices in the classroom. She works with teachers to improve math, reading and writing instruction. She also helps teachers improve classroom management and put interventions in place for students with behavior problems. She also pores over data.

“In this day and age, we use academic and behavioral data to determine instruction and programs in our schools,” Compton said.

She has been in the North Kansas City School District since 2001, serving as a first- and second-grade teacher at Crestview and Ravenwood elementary schools. She praised Dr. Margaret Drew, associate professor of curriculum and instruction, for helping mold her into the educator she is today.

“She is a true teacher of teachers,” Compton said. “She inspired me to become a better teacher and truly understand the role of a reading specialist. Dr. Drew’s role has also been instrumental in my new role as an instructional coach. I feel equipped with the tools that I need to help teachers become better teachers of reading.”

Compton has enjoyed her association with Northwest.

“I have been impressed with the overall program,” she said. “The outreach program has been convenient for someone like me who teaches full-time. The classes I have taken have provided me with real experiences and applications to use in the classroom.”

She said she’s just happy to be recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

“There are so many deserving teachers out there,” Compton said. “I believe that anyone who devotes their life to kids and teaching is a star teacher.”

“I just want to say thank you to the University.”

Dwight Pierson

Pierson’s career includes three stops as superintendent of schools, including a superintendent internship in Maryville from 1987-1988. He said he never thought of becoming anything but an educator since he grew up with parents closely tied to education.

“My mother was a school teacher and my father was on the board of education from the time I entered elementary school until I graduated from high school,” Pierson said.

“Besides farming, much, if not all of our conversations, focused on what happened during our school day. I never really gave much thought to being anything but an educator.”

After a four-year stint in the military, Pierson returned to graduate school to earn a degree in guidance and counseling.

“I thoroughly enjoyed my years as a guidance counselor,” he said. “As with most administrators, I have several mentors who strongly encouraged me to become a principal. New mentors encouraged me to pursue the superintendency. I have never regretted my decision to become a school administrator.”

Pierson said one of the most satisfying aspects of his job is the chance to work with professionals to create an environment where students feel welcomed and want to learn.

“This is a never-ending task,” Pierson said. “As superintendent, I am challenged to ensure that teachers have the resources to be successful in their classroom. Observing students grow and seeing first-hand the art of how a master teacher can influence learning in the classroom is most gratifying.”

With 362 superintendents and more than 2,200 administrators in Iowa, Pierson said being named superintendent of the year is a very humbling experience.

“There are many others in my position who are more deserving of this honor,” he said. “Having said that, it is very important to take advantage of opportunities to speak to various audiences, advocate for kids and speak of the need for all of us to support our public schools.”

patients have strong ties
Dr. Joyce Piveral first became interested in teaching at age 4 when she pretended to grade papers using junk mail at her grandmother Verta Bell’s house. As a reminder of Bell’s influence, Piveral has her grandmother’s Northwest Normal pennant framed and hanging in her office inside Brown Education Hall. Piveral, who has been in education for the past 36 years, holds bachelor’s, master’s and specialist degrees from Northwest, and a doctorate through Northwest’s cooperative program with the University of Missouri. She recently was interviewed by Northwest Family.

**NF: What makes Northwest’s Teacher Education program so successful?**

**Piveral:** “The people here at the University who help prepare teacher candidates and are committed to teacher education really make a difference. From the dean, to the people in this building (Brown Education Hall), to the people who let us teach their students here in the lab school, to all of our P-12 (preschool to 12th grade) partners, everyone works together to try to make this program the very best.”

**NF: How has the profession changed through the years and in what ways has Northwest kept up with those changes?**

**Piveral:** “Elementary teachers have focused on learner-centered education for a long time. Now everyone is focusing on that. We need to know how our students learn, and we’ve done this in several ways. One thing we found is we need to look at the diversity of learners. What are the students’ learning styles? We’re getting better at determining how to assess that child’s learning. We’re also graduating teacher candidates who can teach critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills and so on. And technology, of course, has changed the way we do a lot of things.”

**NF: Baby Boomers are starting to retire. Many of that generation are teachers. What impact will those retirements have and what is Northwest’s plan to help alleviate what appears could become a large teacher shortage?**

**Piveral:** “We’ve put programs in place, particularly at some community colleges, to give students a start toward a career in education. We’re also going into urban schools to recruit students to become teachers. We’re also considering how we can create middle school and high school lab schools for our students to practice. We kind of have to grow our own. If we identify someone with potential and good skills, we’ll do everything we can to help that student become a teacher. We’re also going to see scholarships increase in critical needs areas such as special education, math and science. I also think the (Christa) McAuliffe (award) lends credibility to our program and helps teachers who have graduated from our program look back and know that they came from a good program. Our Alternative Certification program, a two-year program that allows teachers to prepare for a different area of interest, is successful. Education takes such hard knocks. You always hear about the bad things that happen. But for every bad thing, there are many good things happening in teacher education.”

**NF: What do you see as the single most important issue facing P-12 education today and in the next five years?**

**Piveral:** “Meeting some of the federal mandates can be stressful and distracting to teachers.

The public sees those federal standards as a barometer or gauge for a school. Sometimes you have to teach to the test. It’s also a strain on administrators. It’s good to have high expectations, and the public has a right to expect us to have high standards. But sometimes we get so caught up in meeting those mandates that teaching isn’t as focused.”

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Joyce Piveral

Dr. Joyce Piveral, assistant director of teacher education
Kansas City ad agency funds scholarship

A major Kansas City advertising firm, Nicholson Kovac, has created a $1,000 scholarship that will benefit Northwest students preparing for careers as advertising professionals.

The company also donated $1,000 to the University’s advertising club, Adlink, which adviser Jacquie Lamer, instructor of mass communication, said will be used to help fund student participation in national and regional conferences.

Lamer said Nicholson Kovac often hires Northwest alumni, especially graduates with degrees in advertising and interactive digital media. She added that a senior media buyer from the firm visited Northwest last year specifically to meet with faculty and students and discuss opportunities in the field.

NK partner Pete Kovac agreed to fund the scholarship and donation after Adlink club members approached one of the firm’s account executives, Northwest alumnus Brent Steffens, about the need for corporate assistance.

“Our last few years, NK and Northwest have developed a relationship,” Steffens said. “The club realized it had some financial needs and saw an opportunity to get a corporation involved with their organization. We realized that as long as those needs were there, this would be a win-win situation. Certainly providing financial assistance to students is always something we believe in.”

Nicholson Kovac has hired seven Northwest graduates over the past five years, Steffens said, adding that the annual scholarship will continue over the next three to five years, at which time Nicholson Kovac will re-evaluate its involvement.

“Northwest graduates do whatever it takes to get the job done,” he said. “Their work and dedication are unmatched, and when they come to us they hit the ground running. It doesn’t take long to groom them.”

Later this fall, members of Adlink will travel to the annual Kansas City Ad Club’s Career Day, which attracts students from much of the four-state region. Northwest traditionally has one of the largest undergraduate contingents in attendance at the event.

FCS cafe adds gourmet touch to Friday nights

Bon appetit! The Department of Family and Consumer Sciences’ Friday Nite Cafe has returned this fall for another season of fine dining.

Tickets, available at the Student Services Center on the first floor of the Administration Building, are $8.50 for adults and $5 for children under 12. Diners are urged to purchase tickets early since seating is limited. All meals are served from 5:30 p.m. on the Administration Building’s third floor.

Offered every other year, the Friday Night Cafe has become a tradition at Northwest. The buffet-style meals are prepared and served by Northwest’s quantity foods class under the supervision of Dr. Jenell Ciak, assistant professor of family and consumer sciences.

Ciak describes the cafe program as a “dining event” that offers a great meal to patrons and invaluable training for dietetics and food service majors.

“This is a hands-on educational program,” she said. “When students work in quantity food kitchens they learn about equipment and preparation, but they don’t necessarily learn management skills. This is a management experience.”

The food is delicious, Ciak said, noting that comment cards filled out by patrons are almost always positive. But operating a successful cafe takes a lot of preparation and elbow grease.

“The students have all the management problems that people in the industry have and then some,” she said. “Nobody takes this class for fun. It’s too much work.”

The remaining Friday Nite Cafe schedule:

Nov. 10 – Taiwanese; Nov. 17 – Indian; Dec. 1 – Cajun.

Tuition lowered for grad students in select Kansas, Oklahoma counties

Northwest’s Board of Regents passed an administration-recommended proposal Oct. 20 that lowers tuition for graduate students who reside in select Kansas and Oklahoma counties.

Graduate school students living in seven Kansas counties: Atchison, Johnson, Leavenworth, Miami, Wyandotte, Crawford and Cherokee, and three Oklahoma counties: Delaware, Craig and Ottawa, are eligible to pay the current in-state graduate tuition rate of $274.25 per credit hour when they enroll in graduate classes at any Northwest campus. The rate does not apply to online degrees.

Although students in those specific Kansas and Oklahoma counties can get the tuition break at any Northwest site, the measure is intended to make the University’s Graduate School more competitive on the Kansas side of the metropolitan Kansas City area as well as in Oklahoma and Kansas counties located near Joplin. A number of colleges and universities offer similar programs in or near both cities.

The new in-state tuition rate will begin with the spring trimester, which starts in early January.

Current out-of-state graduate Outreach tuition is $459.75 per credit hour, which includes a $30 off-campus fee and a $7 technology usage fee. In-state tuition for graduate outreach students, including both fees, is $274.25.
Upcoming Events

November
11 Football at Southwest Baptist, 1:30 p.m., Bolivar
15 Study Abroad Fair
15 Advisement Night, 3-6 p.m., Kansas City Center, Liberty
15 Women’s basketball vs. Rockhurst
16-17 Theatre: “Proof,” 7:30 p.m., CJT
17-18 Winstead-Reeves Basketball Classic
17 Men’s basketball vs. Upper Iowa
17 Northwest Dance Company fall show, 7:30 p.m., PAC
18 Cross Country NCAA Championships
18 Football NCAA Playoffs-First Round
18 Northwest Jazz Ensemble concert, 5 p.m., CJT
18 Indian Student Association Dinner, 6 p.m., Union Ballroom
19 Men’s basketball vs. Lincoln
19 Tower Choir/University Chorale concert, 3 p.m., PAC
20 Studio Jazz/Chamber Music concert, 8 p.m., CJT
21 Men’s basketball vs. Graceland
21 Thanksgiving break begins, 5 p.m.
21 Residence halls close, 6 p.m.
23 Thanksgiving
24-25 Women’s basketball at Western Washington-Bellingham
24 Men’s basketball at Northern State Tourney, Aberdeen, S.D.
25 Football NCAA Playoffs-Second Round
26 Residence halls open, 1 p.m.
27 Classes resume, 8 a.m.
28 Women’s basketball vs. William Penn
28 Encore: “Cats,” 7:30 p.m., PAC
30 Women’s basketball vs. Montana State-Billings

December
1 Transfer and returning preregistration
2 Football NCAA Playoffs-Quarterfinals
2 ABC Kwanzaa Dinner, Wesley Center
2 Men’s basketball vs. Principia
3 Wind Symphony concert, 3 p.m., CJT
4 Women’s and men’s basketball vs. St. Mary’s
5 Northwest Orchestra concert, 8 p.m., CJT
8-9 Art Show and Pottery Sale, Fire Arts Building
8-9 Yuletide Feaste, 6:30 p.m., Union Ballroom
8 Classwork ends
9 Football NCAA Playoffs-Semifinals
9 Women’s and men’s basketball at Southwest Baptist, Bolivar
10 Theatre: APO Children’s Show, 2 p.m., PAC
10 Wesley Student Center Luminary Lights of Care, 8 p.m.
11-15 Final exams
15 Residence halls close, 6 p.m.
15 Commencement, 7 p.m.
16 Football Division II Championship
20 Women’s basketball at South Dakota-Vermillion
25 Christmas
30 Women’s and men’s basketball at Fort Hays, Hays, Kan.
31 New Year’s Eve

Tickets on sale now

Bearcat basketball is gearing up for the 2006-2007 season. Catch all the action in Bearcat Arena by purchasing your tickets now.

Gene Steinmeyer’s women’s team will have its home opener at 7 p.m. Nov. 15 against Rockhurst, while Steve Tappmeyer’s men’s team takes on Upper Iowa at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 17 in the Ryland Milner Classic for its home opener.

Season tickets:
- Chairback Season $95
- Railback Season $70

Single Game:
- Chairback $10
- Railback $8
- Adult General Admission $6
- Student General Admission $3
  (non-Northwest students ages 5 through college w/ID)

For season tickets, fans need to stop by the Student Services Desk, first floor of the Administration Building, or call (660) 562-1212. Hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

For single game tickets, follow the same process as above or buy them at www.nwmissouri.edu/tickets/.

For more information about Northwest, visit www.nwmissouri.edu or call 660.562.1212

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