

Fall 2009

Center for Catholic Education Newsletter, Fall 2009

University of Dayton

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OUR MISSION: SERVANT LEADER

Realizing a vision....

Math teachers from partner schools in the Catholic Education Collaborative have recently formed a professional learning community that meets regularly to share effective teaching practices, innovative materials and dreams for an exciting math curriculum by which students learn and have success. This professional community was born of the passion and commitment of dedicated Catholic school teachers filled with the spirit.

How did this come to be...

In August of 2008 the Excellence Initiative was launched as teachers of schools in the Catholic Education Collaborative of the Dayton Deanery gathered for an introduction to creating professional learning communities for purposes of advancing academic excellence in a culture of Catholic faith formation. The Center for Catholic Education formulated the plan for the Excellence Initiative in conjunction with the staff of the Catholic Education Collaborative. Teachers were challenged to see the vital connections between curriculum, instruction and assessment to foster the potential of each student in every school in the Collaborative.

Following the introductory professional development day, more intimate work sessions were conducted by Bena Kallick, internationally known for her work in *Habits of the Mind*. Bena and other personnel connected to Techpaths, a state of the art software program, instructed teachers and principals in the process of mapping curriculum with the ultimate goal of noting alignment of concepts taught in accordance with the Archdiocesan Graded Course of Study. In

February of 2009 fourteen schools agreed to begin the mapping process with a few faculty members in most schools and, in some cases, with all teachers in a school mapping. Principals requested close to 200 accounts, one for each teacher participating in the program. Math was the first content area to be mapped.

In June of 2009 math teachers who pioneered the mapping process in Collaborative schools cooperated to review maps. Math educators shared insights and logistics for quality maps. They came together by grade levels to note essential skills needed to move from one grade level to another. This group of enthusiastic leaders will meet in December to create core maps that can be posted to the Techpath software and viewed by all in the Collaborative schools for better alignment, more consistent expectations and, eventually, to create common assessments that will better guide and improve instruction and academic achievement. It is from this group that the math professional community has been realized.

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LALANNE

By Jacinta Mergler, Director of Lalanne

On the road again, I just can't wait to get on the road again... I love Willie Nelson! And that is what I have been playing in my car's CD player as I travel around observing our Lalanne teachers in this year's classes. I do every year, but it is not routine – every year is unique because there is a new set of first-year teachers to mentor and second-year vets to coach.

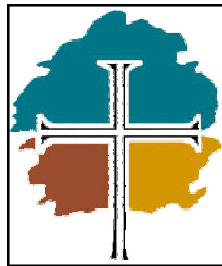
This year is no exception – Lalanne teachers are in 15 urban Catholic schools in 4 communities – Dayton, Cleveland, Indianapolis, and San Antonio. As Amy and I visit each community, we are both in awe of the dedication and determination of our teachers, not to mention their creativity! Several of them have managed to turn ordinary food into a learning experience; one by teaching the sound of a hard “c” to kindergarteners by having them crunch on chocolate chip cookies, while another teaches the scientific method to high school freshmen by dissecting a bag of M & M's. Another teacher has students “cook” different colors of crayons to demonstrate the development of rocks over time. One teacher “spiced” up a lesson on vegetation in different climate zones by having her students research recipes from different regions and determine the climate zone based on the spices used in the recipes! I guess they are all “hungry” for knowledge, or at least lunch.

All of our teachers challenge their students to make the connection between the example of how Jesus lived with how they live and work and treat

others in their daily lives. This is what makes Catholic school teachers, and especially Lalanne teachers, exceptional. They help to form the spiritual lives of children that affect everything they do for the rest of their lives! What an awesome opportunity!

Practical aspects of teaching include trying to get students excited about learning while presenting lessons which intertwine ways of living the faith. Lalanne teachers have the chance to live their own faith in a special way, too, through a community of like-minded souls, their fellow Lalanne teachers. They share the joys and struggles of the day, pray together for their students, and pray for the grace to continue the work they do. I am able to see how the combination of Lalanne's cornerstone – service, community, and opportunities for spiritual growth – work together to shape our newest Catholic educators. It is a hit when a teacher connects with a student and sees the lights go on. It is a home run when the whole class gets excited about a project or activity that teaches them their faith. But it is a grand slam when a teacher's own life changes forever because her experience in community confirms her vocation to teach (93% of Lalanne teachers are still on the road today – better than Toyota Camry!).

I have not yet made it around to every teacher's class this year, but I am on the road regularly and enjoying the surprises every unique member of our program brings to us.



Mark Your Calendar

The Annual

Joseph F. Rogus Lecture

Tuesday, March 16, 2010, at 4:00 p.m.

Kennedy Union Ballroom, University of Dayton

Presenter: Michael Cullinan

Topic: Impressions of Catholic Schools: Urban and Suburban

URBAN CHILD DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE CENTER

Due to the success of our program and generosity of our donors, the Urban Child Development Resource Center (UCDRC) was able to expand our services during the 2009-2010 school year. We are very pleased to increase our full-time staff to nine by welcoming two new

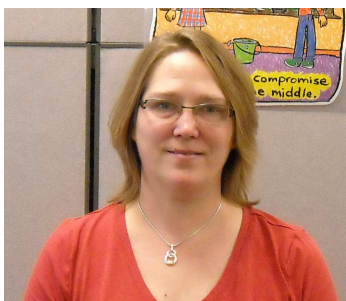
employees. Niyata Fanning is our new family advocate who will help provide basic needs to impoverished families needing assistance at any UCDRC school. Martha Brzozowski is our new mental health counselor and she will provide services to the Dayton Early College Academy (DECA),

the first high school and the first charter school serviced by UCDRC as of this school year. Like other UCDRC schools, DECA serves urban students in the Dayton area. We are proud of our presence in this school and look for a rewarding year ahead.



UCDRC is proud to introduce our two newest employees:

Martha Brzozowski is an independently licensed



social worker with 20 years of clinical experience working with kids and families. She spent her last 7 years working in school settings.

Prior to that, Martha was the residential clinical director at Oesterlen Services for Youth in Springfield. Martha is working for UCDRC as a clinical therapist in the Dayton Early College Academy (DECA). UCDRC is excited to have someone with the richness of Martha's professional expertise.

Niyata Fanning is a licensed social worker hired

to work as a UCDRC Family Advocate. She is helping UCDRC families meet their basic needs. Niyata has experience working as a social



worker in the foster care system and she

has case management experience with Head Start families. UCDRC is enriched because of Niyata's enthusiasm, energy, and positive attitude.

Our Mission: Servant Leader *(continued from page 1)*

As the new school year began, five more schools joined the curriculum mapping initiative with nearly 300 accounts established for teachers. More professional development has been offered, particularly in the area of assessment. Ten schools have agreed to more frequent testing with the Tera Nova test to better understand how much progress students are making and to better plan appropriate, effective, most needed instruction. These best practice, research-based procedures bring more accountability and transparency to daily classroom lessons with the promise of improved achievement for all students in the schools of the Catholic Education Collaborative.



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On behalf of the Center for Catholic Education at the University of Dayton, thank you for your prayers and your financial support. If you would like to find out more about supporting us, please contact Susan Ferguson.

STUDENT SUPPORT COORDINATOR

The Center for Catholic Education had to bid a fond farewell to our colleague of two years, Debra Sanderman. Debra served Our Lady of the Rosary (OLR) School as the Student Support Coordinator for the 2008-2009 school year and as the Director of the Lalanne Program during the 2007-2008 school year. A full-time Student Support Coordinator has been hired by OLR to carry on the academic services previously provided by Debra. While this new person is no longer an employee of the Center for Catholic Education, she does collaborate with

the UCDRC counselor, Sandy Eisenhut, who continues to provide social and emotional services to the students.

Debra and her husband, Dave Conard, both Lalanne alumni, became new parents as they welcomed their beautiful daughter, Elise. Debra's new role as parent was matched with a new role as a school counselor at Bellbrook High School.

We miss Debra very much! The Center for Catholic Education family has been blessed by her service.