Exercise is Medicine
(See back cover)

Hospital CEOs Discuss Partnership with School of Nursing (Story pages 8-9)
Among recent milestones at CSU has been the reaccreditation of two counseling programs, the M.Ed. in School Counseling and the M.S. in Community Counseling. Accreditation has been extended through 2017 by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). In addition to extraordinary amounts of time and effort involved in undergoing external program review, a successful outcome requires effective group process. In fact, CACREP standards include group work as one of eight core curricular areas in counselor education. In step with this standard, CSU’s counseling programs require COUN 6265: Group Techniques and Procedures, which addresses research, process, and practice pertaining to group work across settings.

Being an effective group member and leader is important in many professions, counseling included. It is especially so among school counselors.

Oftentimes, school counselors run guidance or counseling groups for children and adolescents in order to focus on issues and topics impacting their development. These topics may include, for example, study skills, assertiveness training, career awareness, and grief/loss.

Through classroom-based guidance sessions, counselors may reach larger numbers of students. When effective, such interventions are well planned, carefully facilitated, and evaluated with group process and practice in mind.

These direct-service interventions are only part of the school counselor’s involvement with groups. He or she also collaborates in teams with teachers, parents, administrators, and others. The latter may include nursing staff, counselors in community agencies, and school psychologists. Their collective challenge is always to understand and address students’ needs well.

Counselors also carry out administrative tasks that necessitate their being effective group workers. Serving on committees and consulting with others to coordinate interventions places counselors regularly in group situations. In the midst of these activities, paying too much attention to group content (the nominal topic or task) at the expense of process can derail the effectiveness of a group. Thus, a balance of content vs. process, which inevitably varies depending on the group’s purpose or even the type of group, is necessary for any group to succeed.

Although the principal is the formally designated leader in a school, informal leadership among groups often emerges from others. Typically, individual members of a group clarify content, keep members on task, seek consensus, and involve others. For this reason, helping counselors-in-training learn more about group work assists them in developing knowledge and skills to become more effective group members, regardless of their roles.

The photos on the left, the Stack, capture part of what is going on at Columbus State University and in the College of Education & Health Professions. They depict (from top to bottom) 2008 Education Hall-of-Famer Lucy McGuffey and Stephanie Walker, her student, at the Academic Success Center; School of Nursing international students show off their dress from their home countries; (center) children participating in 2010’s Summer Spectacular at Northside Elementary; Ellen Martin (physical education) and Tamara Condrey (nursing) amused by a life-like mannequin in an Illges Hall simulation lab; and (bottom) Schwob librarian Michelle Jones, who serves as liaison to the COEHP.
The Education & Health Quarterly is published four times annually and distributed without charge. Its mission is to inform readers about the programs, events, and people—students, faculty, staff, alumni, and others—in the growing professional community comprising the College of Education & Health Professions at Columbus State University.

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Mescon Updates Faculty, Fields Questions from Professors

CSU President Tim Mescon, in the first of a series of lunchtime sessions with faculty in late September, updated professors on campus developments related to security, facilities, and academic affairs.

Mescon addressed security issues at the outset of his remarks. In consideration of an early fall shooting on campus, he noted that dormitory parking areas will, in early 2011, have gates installed that require bar-coded cards for entry. Additional fencing is also planned.

The President went on to explain that the completion of the Columbus Fall Line Trace bike route adjacent to campus makes the campus more accessible, which is both a blessing and a potential problem. The new trail is probably linked to an upsurge in thefts on campus, especially auto break-ins and burglaries in the parking lot adjacent to the Walden Soccer Complex.

Recreation Center Nears Completion

Faculty and staff express strong interest in using the new Student Recreation Center, dedicated on January 10. Mescon stated that employees will definitely have access to the facility, but that details regarding fees and schedules have not yet been determined. Construction of the Center was funded out of student activities fees.

The state-of-the-art facility houses both a fitness area and an aquatic center. The fitness area features basketball courts, aerobic rooms, free weights, a running track, racquetball courts, indoor soccer, volleyball, and a large-event area. The aquatics center has a 25 yard lap pool, a one meter diving board, leisure pool, therapy pool, and sauna.

Lori Coffield, until recently fitness director at the YMCA, now fills a similar position at CSU.

CSU Needs Classrooms and Offices

Citing the fact that CSU has had no System-level funding for capital improvements for nearly a decade, Mescon pointed out that the university needs both new classrooms and office space. Howard, Illges, and Jordan Halls, he insists, should not be the “face of Columbus State” prospective students see in the future.

Currently, the Columbus area does not have a representative on the Board of Regents. In fact, there has been no Regent from West Central Georgia for eight years. Mescon believes that it is important for institutions such as Columbus State “to have a seat around that table.”

Developments in Academic Affairs—Searches, Growth, and Promotion and Tenure

In the remaining part of the 2010-2011 academic year, CSU is conducting three searches for new deans—in the College of Education & Health Professions (COEHP), the College of the Arts, and the Schwob Library.

Dr. Tom Hackett, formerly graduate director and department chair in the COEHP, now serves as Interim Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs. Hackett, according to Mescon, will continue in that role as other key slots in academic affairs are filled.

One attendee at the session noted that the so-called “baby boomlet” has just about worked its way through the colleges in the past few years. “How,” he asked, “will CSU continue to grow when the applicant pool may be shrinking?”

In his answer, Mescon said that Georgia “is robust in terms of population migration.” With population in the Columbus area stable or, due to sharply increased personnel at Fort Benning, growing, CSU is likely to remain in a growth posture.

Finally, faculty expressed concerns about promotion and tenure policies. These have been a bone of contention in the past eighteen months. Mescon said that “we’ll honor policies that were in place when one was hired.” He continued, “There will be no changes for anybody who is here now.”

COEHP faculty—among them Michael Mangum and Interim Dean Ellen Roberts—were well-represented at September’s information session with President Tim Mescon.
Transitions in the School of Nursing

2011 will be a year of change in the School of Nursing, with long-time Director June Goyne (on left in photo) retiring as of December 1, 2010, and Sherri Noviello assuming the role of Interim Director.

Under Goyne’s leadership, CSU’s nursing programs have broadened their accreditation, developed an associate-to-bachelor’s degree program, and strengthened partnerships with area hospitals. Noviello, a member of the CSU faculty since 1991, has served most recently as Associate Director for Undergraduate Programs.

Accolades to School of Nursing for Student Success Program

Nursing is a rigorous, highly competitive academic major. At Columbus State and elsewhere, there are often many more students who want to enter the field than there are available slots. At CSU, in fact, fewer than 200 students are in-program juniors and seniors, while more than twice that number are classified as pre-nursing majors. These are underclassmen who, as sophomores, apply for program admission in the spring.

Attrition rates among nursing students in the junior-senior years are also high, both nationally and, until the implementation of a Student Success Program (SSP) in 2006 and following, at Columbus State. This program—focused on retaining and graduating nursing students as they move through the junior and senior years as well as boosting their performance on NCLEX licensure examinations—was honored in 2009 by the Georgia Association for Nursing Educators for reaching these goals.

The specifics: the program-completion rate among Columbus State nursing majors has risen from less than 60 percent in 2006 to better than 85 percent in 2009. In addition, the pass-rate for graduates on licensure examinations is now better than 96 percent, significantly higher than the national average.

Three nursing professors—Stephanie Lewis, Amanda Hawkins, and Lisa Frander—presented the details of the CSU success program at the November convention of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. The meeting took place in Orlando.

Faculty agree that SSP works because of several related actions taken by the School of Nursing. First, each professor serves as a mentor to about 15 nursing students; mentor groups meet regularly. As well, numerous faculty have adopted more engaging—and more collaborative—teaching strategies, which promote in-depth understanding of content. Other aspects of the program are practice examinations, sessions on test-taking strategies, and, on occasion, referrals to the CSU Counseling Center and/or Writing Center.

Serious about success. Nursing students pictured here are all business as they take a practice pharmacology exam using hi-tech clickers. Professor Amanda Hawkins looks on.
Teacher Preparation, Service, and AKA Go Hand in Hand

Ana Moorefield

Of the seven members in Columbus State’s Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, the organization for African-American women founded in 1908, five major in teacher education. Readers need not be misled by the group’s relatively small size, however, for the women of Eta Iota chapter make their presence known through excellence in academics, community involvement, and support for other sororities at CSU.

Educating children is a passion of AKA sisters at CSU. President Kierra Cornwell points out that Eta Iota’s primary objective is to “study and help alleviate problems with girls and women.”

AKA members work toward this goal not only by preparing themselves as future educators but also by volunteering at Girls, Inc., a nonprofit local organization that seeks to inspire girls “to be strong, smart, and bold.” There AKAs teach younger girls about etiquette, career planning, goal setting, self esteem, and other topics.

AKA, founded more than a century ago at Howard University in Washington, DC, is America’s first African-American sorority. It counts among its members many distinguished women, including Georgia author Alice Walker, poet Maya Angelou, and Bernice King, daughter of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Columbus State’s AKAs find time for friendship and service in their busy schedules despite the fact that three of them—Kierra Cornwell, Pagianna Boykin, and Amber Fluker—were student teaching last fall. Of the five members majoring in education, four are in early childhood education, with President Cornwell breaking the mold by earning her degree in a different field, secondary mathematics education.

Nationally, one part of Alpha Kappa Alpha’s mission is to achieve “high scholastic and ethical standards” and, in addition, “to be of service to all mankind,” says Cornwell. The CSU chapter is making strides toward this goal. In fact, during a recent semester, its members had the highest combined GPA of all Greek organizations on campus.

The passion for education evident in Eta Iota goes back to its founding at CSU in 1972. A majority of its original members were educators. This tradition has continued. Out of the two current sisters who are not education majors, one works at Girls, Inc.

Those interested in affiliating with the chapter, Cornwell explains, should do so out of their personal interest in community service. AKA seeks new members who have served others on their own initiative. Other membership information can be found on the AKA national website, www.aka1908.com.
New faculty in the College of Education & Health Professions are a talented, academically impressive group of women and men. Beyond this obvious fact, they go home at night, walk the dog (well, some of them), turn on the TV, and live their lives.

What follows takes a look at several new professors by probing a bit, looking at “more than a mug shot.”

Connecting with the City and the Campus Community

New faculty members are favorably impressed with Columbus itself and what they believe is a strong sense of community on campus. Sally Richter (nursing, public health emphasis), who commutes from LaGrange, observes that Columbus, together with Phenix City, “is more like a metropolitan area” than she had thought previously.

Both she and Eddie Obleton (teacher education) point out that the campus community is very welcoming. Richter was delighted at how new faculty are introduced to the university. “I have never had an orientation that was this organized, thorough and welcoming.”

Andrea (Dawn) Frazier (educational research and foundations) came to CSU from Ball State University. She thinks that the proximity of Fort Benning has a lot to do with the character of both Columbus and CSU as a university. She finds herself pondering “the military as a comparable institution [to colleges and universities] in helping young men and women progress further along the road to adulthood.”

Christine (Christy) Schwarting (nursing, advanced cardiac life support) is a Columbus State/College alumnus. She comments, “When I graduated, our student rec center consisted of a few video games, one billiards table, and one television with basic cable. I was surprised at the various departments [e.g. Counseling Center, Writing Center] in place to ensure the continued growth and success of our students. This is a wonderful university.”

Something Missing?

New faculty expressed themselves about what they missed from their work before coming to CSU. Brian Tyo (exercise science) and Dawn Frazier joined the COEHP faculty direct from graduate study. Predictably, they miss friends and acquaintances from their graduate school experience in Knoxville, Tn. and Muncie, In., but each is pleased to have moved beyond the pressure-cooker environment of dissertation research and job-hunting.

Leslie Painter (maternal new-born nursing) enjoyed the relative flexibility of her former position or, in her words, “days off.” She explains that nurses often work 12-hour shifts, but enjoy days off as well. Schwarting, her colleague, continues to work part-time at St. Francis Hospital; she echoes Painter’s list of what she misses: “free time, less stress and anxiety, [plus time for] non-fiction books.”

Eddie Obleton, a recently retired high school principal and system-level administrator, sounds a note of irony in stating that what he misses is “the stress that came with listening and solving complaints, disciplinary hearings, and endless meetings.” (Wait until he has been in higher education for a year or two.)

Continued on page 11
While pointing out that St. Francis and Columbus Regional have supported Columbus State nursing programs for decades, both Larry Sanders (Columbus Regional) and Robert Granger (St. Francis) believe that today’s nurse needs to be better educated than nurses in the past.

Nurses, notes Sanders, function in complex organizations which need to employ “broadly educated individuals” with strong communication skills. As health care changes, top-tier nurses must be ready to grow into and master new roles.

Granger concurs, noting that “St. Francis hires 50 or more Columbus State nurses every six months.” Strengthening CSU’s programs, he continues, “is critical to our long-term success.” CSU’s redesigned AA to BS program is designed to attract nurses with associate degrees wishing to complete four-year programs and earn bachelor’s degrees. Among the program’s features is a student-friendly format and schedule which allow completion without disrupting a working nurse’s professional schedule.

Granger credits Columbus President Timothy Mescon with orchestrating the three-way financial agreement between the universities, St. Francis, and Columbus Regional. He is enthusiastic about the possibility of a master’s degree in nursing at CSU.

Sanders observes that, over time, Columbus State’s School of Nursing has “listened carefully to the needs of the community.” Sooner rather than later, he notes, Columbus Regional will need more nurse educators, directors, and chief nurses. Thus, opportunities for advanced study are critical for nurses wanting to move up the professional ladder.

Columbus Regional and St. Francis Complement More, Compete Less

Both hospitals are not-for-profit organizations, with no shareholders. What might be money in the bank in the case of some hospitals is reinvested by St. Francis and Columbus Regional in new or improved health care services in the region. Granger emphasizes the fact that “everything gets put back into the community.”

Among St. Francis’s strengths are its extensive cardiology program and its Center for Breast Health. Cross-town, Columbus Regional provides southwest Georgia’s lone level II trauma center and a high-risk nursery serving families with premature babies.

In many respects, the two hospitals complement one another rather than compete. This is due in part to the fact that most US hospitals are governed by a state-level authority which, in order to limit costly overlap, requires hospitals to document the need for new services before putting them in place.

That said, both hospitals are growing and expanding on what they do well.

In the past three years, for example, Columbus Regional has acquired Doctors Hospital—adjacent to the Medical Center—and the Hughston Orthopedic Hospital in north Columbus. In the near future, plans call for consolidating obstetrics and pediatrics departments (now separate functions at Doctors’ and the Medical Center) into one unit.

Both Doctors and Hughston were for-profit hospitals in the past.

St. Francis, founded in 1955, has also undergone substantial growth in the past several years and has recently acquired the Tidwell Cancer Center. It is also in the process of a general facelift.

Granger comically observes that, “every 60 years, a hospital needs to fix things up.” More than a facelift, he points out, will be the conversion of patient rooms from semi-private to private in the next three years.
Larry Sanders joined the Medical Center in 1981 as its vice president. When Columbus Regional Health-care was formed in 1986, he became its first chief executive officer.

A Tennessean and graduate of both the University of Tennessee and the University of Alabama—Birmingham in health and hospital administration, Sanders sees Columbus Regional as a “safety net hospital.” Such institutions, he explains, “do things for those who cannot do for themselves. That’s what we, as healthcare professionals, are about.”

Sanders and his wife Bonnie, a registered nurse, live in Midtown Columbus. Lindsay Sanders, their daughter, is also a nurse, and their son Clayton works in Boston.

Robert Granger has been CEO of St. Francis Hospital for six years. He came to Columbus from a hospital leadership position in the Florida Panhandle.

Granger, an accounting major at the University of Oklahoma, did not at first plan to enter healthcare administration. Following graduation, his employer, an accounting firm, assigned him to work on a number of hospital audits. After that, one thing led to another, and eventually to St. Francis.

Granger lives in North Columbus with his wife, Allison. Their son, Derek, is a college senior, and daughter, Laura, is a freshman. Granger enjoys playing ice hockey and is an active member of Northside Baptist Church.
Consequently, even when I am not teaching COUN 6265: Group Techniques and Procedures, I focus on group dynamics and strive to provide an environment conducive to both participation and collaboration. This involves everything from how the physical space is structured to fostering student-to-student introductions and/or personal connections plus using icebreakers tied to course content. It also connects with how group activities are organized and implemented in each course along with the necessity of modeling facilitation skills.

By design, I attempt to be transparent about group process and purposeful in attending to both course content and group dynamics. As a result, when students participate in small-group activities, particularly in large classes, my intent is to simultaneously promote more active participation and facilitate opportunities for them to learn from one another.

Effective group work rarely occurs by accident. Rather, it is imperative that group members understand and subsequently attend to both the content and dynamics that impact groups. Considering the amount of time that we in the College of Education & Health Professions spend working with others—in classes, as supervisors, and in committee meetings—being increasingly knowledgeable and skillful regarding how groups work well is relevant across all disciplines.

Note: The author thanks EHQ Editor James Brewbaker for his contributions to this article.

Suggested Reading


Gary Shouppe Sparks CSU’s Distance Learning Growth

Interim Provost Tom Hackett: “We went from zero to eighty in a big hurry.”

Since 2009, ed leadership professor Gary Shouppe has taken the lead on campus in developing an array of courses available through distance learning. As a result, master’s degree candidates from as far away as Saudi Arabia are now able to complete their studies without attending face-to-face classes on campus.

Since 2008, in fact, credit hours generated at CSU by distance learning courses have jumped by 60 percent. Three out of four military personnel in graduate programs enroll in CSU on-line courses.

Are CSU’s on-line courses as good as those taught in a traditional format and setting? Shouppe responds, “We did not want our on-line program to be different from our face-to-face classes. I was determined to use every tool available to create collaboration and good instruction.” With the input and guidance of CSU’s Information and Technology Services (UITs) specialists, Shouppe utilized such tools as Tegrity, CougarVIEW, and WIMBA to design and implement his various graduate courses, ten of them by a recent count.

Shouppe’s involvement in distance learning was sparked by Tom Hackett, formerly the chair of Counseling, Foundations, and Leadership. Hackett encouraged Shouppe—a one-time principal in three Columbus Schools—to develop online courses. From that point, Shouppe investigated programs at different schools, visited websites, and learned how to use CougarVIEW to its full potential.

An associate professor and CSU alumnus who earned his bachelor’s degree in early childhood education, Shouppe points out that there can be a downside to distance learning. Students in such courses must be self-motivated, self-directed, and comfortable with the technology. He quips, “Procrastination is the root cause of ulcers.” As well, he underscores that on-line teaching—done well—is labor intensive.

Shouppe was a featured speaker at CSU’s inaugural Distance Learning Conference in September. More than 200 educators attended the meeting.

Cardin Will Lead COEHP Development Efforts

Laura Cardin is the College of Education & Health Professions’ new Development & Events Coordinator. She assumes responsibilities that Mary Johnson carried out in 2009-2010, including fundraising and organizing an array of events such as receptions, major meetings, and fund raising activities.

Cardin’s early focus has been to secure continued funding for “If I Had a Hammer” in downtown Columbus (see story, pages 12-13). She also managed “A Child’s World,” an art show and reception in November featuring the art of a dozen elementary school children.
Family Matters . . . Life Beyond the Campus

Dawn Frazier is single but, as she puts it, visited “my honey” in Chicago over the October fall break. (EHQ will check back with her and keep readers posted.)

Brian Tyo and his wife have an active six year old son (see his reading recommendation, below). He notes that new acquaintances are surprised at times by the fact that he played college baseball “in a prior life,” as he puts it.

Other New Faculty Have Larger Families

For example, Leslie Painter’s three youngsters range from kindergarten age through middle school. Christy Schwarting’s three school-age children are into ice hockey, scouting, and gymnastics. She and her family look forward to the opening of Columbus’s second ice hockey rink in the coming months. In their so-called free time, she and husband Richard follow NASCAR, Alabama, and pro teams from Pittsburgh.

Sally Richter also has three children plus the added bonus of daughters-in-law and three grandchildren. Her youngest son plays golf for LaGrange College (her husband coaches the team), and her daughters-in-law are teachers.

Eddie Obleton’s four children—Keri, Brent, Ashley, and Gabriel—range in age from 29 to 7 years old.

New COEHP Faculty Are Reading . . .


Kotter, John. A Sense of Urgency. Harvard Business Press, 2008. Recommended by foundation professor Eddie Obleton, this volume details Kotter’s assertion that complacency is the greatest impediment to change in both business and other institutions.

Leman, Kevin. The Birth Order Book: Why You Are the Way You Are. Revell, 2009. Leslie Painter recommends this popular volume. She says it is “great for understanding how the order you fall in your family . . . affects how you deal with situations.”


Riordan, Rick. Percy Jackson and the Olympians. Hyperion, 2008. Christy Schwarting reads this series with her son; she says that it has introduced him to Greek mythology and reinforced positive life lessons.

New Faculty Saw These Movies Recently—Have You?

At the movies last fall, you may have sat next to new faculty who saw Secretariat; Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga’Hoole; Karate Kid; Eat, Pray, Love; Robin Hood, or Salt.

Brian Tyo took in Legend of the Guardians with his son, who loved the animated feature. Regarding Salt, Dawn Frazier comments, “Angelina Jolie has become a diva to me because of her convincing butt-kickedness on screen.”

Continued from page 11
Anna Rodriguez

At 9:00 AM on a late September morning, a school bus full of fifth graders rolls up outside 1242 Broadway. Soon they assemble inside in a space made available to Columbus State University by Reynolds Bickerstaff.

Under the direction of middle-grades professor Spencer Garrard, these youngsters are here to build a house—and learn some applied mathematics—as participants in CSU’s “If I Had a Hammer” program. Beyond the obvious link to mathematics, “Hammer” also teaches teamwork and group communication.

The students are from Mark See’s class at Johnson Elementary School. He divides them into four teams—red, green, yellow, and blue—as they file inside. For their morning work, each student gets an apron, long and short screws, a hammer, and safety goggles. They also get an “If I Had a Hammer” t-shirt that will be theirs to keep.

Each team works separately to construct one-fourth of the house.

Once inside, children assemble in color-coded areas which correspond to the four team colors. Next they participate in several mini-lessons, the first emphasizing safety. Garrard makes it clear, for example, that they must “always walk forward, never backward, while helping people carry something heavy” and be sure to “place your other hand on top of the drill to keep it steady while drilling.”

Measurement skills and fractions are a major element in house-building. Children understand the latter better through using a tool called “The Big Inch,” an oversized wooden “inch” in which one may fit pieces of wood of varying lengths: halves, fourths, eighths, sixths or of a whole. By manipulating these pieces, students grasp how three-sixths plus two-eighths plus one-fourth equal a whole, and they do so without pencil-and-paper calculations.

To teach perimeter, Garrard brings out the tape measures and paces around the floor of the house, not yet closed in by walls. “If I walk all the way around the house,” he asks, “how many feet would I walk?”

The students also determine the area in square feet of the floor, and they watch as Garrard demonstrates that the height of the triangle-shaped piece of siding used to support the roof is called the “rise,” and its length is its “run.”

Garrard wraps up the build with mock job interviews with students, who are, of course, future workers. He gives children basic interview advice, such as speak up, give a solid handshake, and be polite.

After boys and girls drill and assemble final pieces of the house, and when they have added roofing to the frame, they gather around their handiwork. This morning, as is typical, they itch to get inside.

“Their favorite part is at the end when the house is done. They go in and say, ‘Look at our house!’ They take a lot of pride in it,” says Garrard.
“If I Had a Hammer” will involve no fewer than forty classes from area schools this academic year. Garrard explains that one build may differ from another. Self-evaluation, he notes, is a key part of the program, “Every day we sit down after a build and ask, ‘What could we have done better?’”

Follow-up evaluations are conducted with the participating fifth-grade classes two to three months later to assess the effects of “If I Had a Hammer” on math and communication skills.

Challenges and Rewards

The biggest challenge during a build in which ten- and eleven-year-olds wield power tools and lift heavy objects is making sure no one gets hurt. “I am constantly watching,” says Garrard. “I enlist my grad students to keep an eye out for any dangerous situation, and if they see something, to immediately step in.”

For Garrard, who taught middle school language arts for several years at Brookstone School, the rewarding part of the program is working directly with children. “Because we at CSU teach teachers, we usually don’t get to see the results of what we do,” he says.

But with “If I Had a Hammer,” both professor and teacher candidates get to see how the lessons affect the class.

It is easy for Garrard to pinpoint his favorite moment of the whole experience: “Watching the expression on the children’s faces when they finish drilling something in for the first time,” he says immediately. “When they line it up, with a hand on top, squeeze, and it goes in, they look up and say, ‘I did it!’ They just light up.”

Founded in 1987 by Perry Wilson, “If I Had a Hammer” is a national program based in Franklin, Tn. It is designed around three basic beliefs, which are (1) that every child can learn if engaged properly; (2) that success is available to every child; and (3) that children need to understand the value of education as a foundation for their lives.

Interested in volunteering with “If I Had a Hammer”? Contact Laurel Bennett at bennett_laurel@colstate.edu
Rick Gardiner walked into Jordan 140A dressed in a black tasseled cap and graduation robe over a black button-down shirt and a black vest. His modern-day black dress pants were rolled up to the knee, and he wore gold buckles on an elastic band over his black dress shoes, white knee-high socks, and a white Elizabethan collar. On the computer monitor in the corner was a screen that said, “A College Class in 1683 New England.”

Today, Dr. Gardiner became Dr. Mather, a seventeenth-century Harvard professor. After a brief introduction, he looked around at the small group of students seated in front of him and declared, “I am befuddled as to the presence of females here at Harvard.”

Among other things, Gardiner used this class for future history teachers as a quick refresher in colonial history. For example, they discussed the four temperaments, the distinction between a Lady and a mere female, and the real reason for calling someone “Mister Davis” rather than simply “Davis.”

Dr. Mather—consistently in character—then prompted a discussion of the political relationship between the colonies and England. As he did so, Gardiner took stock of his students’ knowledge of religion in New England during the period.

An especially memorable aspect of the session was learning about the markedly different roles of men vs. women at the time. In this way, Gardiner’s students experienced how a learned man like Dr. Mather would have treated women. To say the least, his communication style was very different with men and women.

It is not too much of a stretch to say that class participants were not only engaged but also a little intimidated as they tried to keep up with Dr. Mather.

What is described here is a sample of living history in Gardiner’s EDSE 6145 class (Teaching Social Studies to Grades 6-12). It is an approach the professor has engaged in for many years, including a ten-year stint as a high school teacher in Racine, Wisconsin.

Explaining his approach, Gardiner points out that “it’s not really about the costume. It’s more about trying to get people to feel what the people of that era were feeling, and what they were talking about. It’s about the content.”

Like a Time Machine

Gardiner makes it clear that both he and his students have to commit to the history. “I try to set it up so that as soon as you walk through the door, it’s like a time machine. So if I walk in the room in character and they ask me, ‘What’s the homework?’ I give them the business and reply with something like, ‘What sayeth thou?’”

In 2009, the professor filled a faculty position in History Education at Columbus State. Now he shows future teachers how to use living history in their own classrooms.

Before Gardiner became a teacher, he was employed as a living historian, initially at Old World Wisconsin, a destination much like Westville in Lumpkin, Ga. However, he was most inspired when he visited Plimoth Plantation, a living museum near Boston, which he describes as “one of my favorite places on the planet to visit.” (Plimoth is a seventeenth-century spelling.)

Plimoth Plantation is staffed by professionals—many with graduate degrees—who spend the night on site and postpone
modern practices such as bathing for the sake of realism. To illustrate their commitment to historical accuracy, Gardiner relayed an exchange he heard between a historian and a visitor, who asked, “How many kids do you have?”

Without pause, the re-enactor said, “Twelve, but we killed six last year,” and, with no further explanation, went back to what she was doing before she was interrupted. The misunderstanding arose from the modern usage of “kid” to mean “child.” At Plimoth Plantation, kids are strictly goats.

Playing an historical figure requires much more engagement than ingesting facts from a lecture. Gardiner brought this engagement into high school classrooms in Wisconsin and, more recently, into the preparation of educators.

He explains, I just thought, ‘Let’s try that.’ It’s not something you’d use every day, but on certain days, you’d have students embody real people from history. From there, “it just expanded and expanded.”

Gardiner’s Columbus State students have taken living history on the road extensively during his short tenure as a faculty member. He and his costumed students have dramatized subjects as diverse as the Roaring 20s and slave quarters in the 1850s, and they have visited both schools and sites such as Westville and the Historic Columbus Foundation (see insert).

**Living History and the Fear Factor**

While living history is a powerful tool, it is intimidating to use at first. Gardiner describes teachers’ hang-ups about bringing it into their own classrooms. “Teachers would say, ‘Oh, that’s only for elementary grades. High school students would never do that.’” But when I show them a video of the high school version, they’ll say, ‘That’s too advanced, elementary school students won’t be able to do that.’”

Because of their reluctance, Gardiner encourages teachers to start small, to adapt the method to their own grade levels and be sure to cover multiple standards. He argues that one may assess a student’s knowledge by requiring him to ask one question to a classmate who’s doing an impersonation, and then having that student answer a question himself when he’s giving his own presentation.

Gardiner frequently shows graduate students videos of simulations he’s done with high school students. He tells them, “I’m not trying to show you how to do it. I’m trying to show you examples. Steal some ideas. Living history isn’t for the faint of heart, so stay within your comfort zone.”

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### History Re-Enactments by CSU History Education Majors, 2009-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic/Period/Era</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antebellum Georgia</td>
<td>Upson-Lee High School, Thomaston</td>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Roaring 20s</td>
<td>Phenix City Central HS, Phenix City</td>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Mill Girl</td>
<td>Hardaway HS, Columbus</td>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Battle of Columbus</td>
<td>Coca Cola Space Science Center</td>
<td>Fall 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Custer’s Last Stand</td>
<td>Glenwood Prep School, Phenix City</td>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slave Quarters</td>
<td>Historic Columbus Foundation</td>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>The 1850s</td>
<td>Westville in Lumpkin, Georgia</td>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>The 1960s</td>
<td>Phenix City Central HS, Phenix City</td>
<td>November 2010</td>
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Pumped Up about a Month of “Exercise is Medicine”

Columbus State will emphasize an important health-and-fitness idea this spring. With the strong support of President Mescon, CSU has identified May 2011 as “Exercise Is Medicine” month. A faculty committee chaired by Wellness Coordinator Alicia Tatum is planning a series of activities that, in April and early May, will drive home the benefits of physical activity to health and well-being.

A fall preview of “Exercise Is Medicine” events took place on November 17 when author Alicia Ashe spoke on campus. She has written of her experiences in How I Dropped 142 lbs. in a Year and Lost 220 lbs. in a Day.

Youngsters at River Road Elementary and CSU students in Lori Coffield’s kick-boxing class learn that exercise is both fun and good for you.