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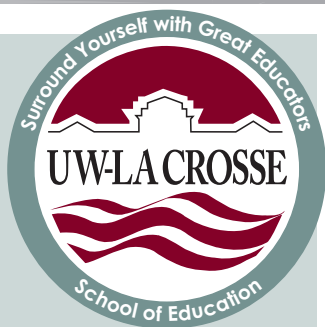


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# Eagle Edge

LEAD. EDUCATE. COLLABORATE. INNOVATE.



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## Hosea's Heart

**Mary-Kate Martin, '10, starts non-profit in Swaziland to free girls from sexual slavery**

After graduating from UWL, Mary-Kate Martin became a volunteer teacher in Swaziland. It wasn't long before girls — some as young as 12 — came to her with horror stories of sexual abuse. One girl's stepmother was selling her to men by night. She ran away, only to have to sell herself again to survive.

"After nine months of trying to help her and girls like her, it was clear they couldn't escape their lifestyles because there was no place of safety — no place to call home," says Martin.

That's when Martin co-founded the non-profit organization Hosea's Heart in Swaziland with a friend from high school. They opened a girls' home in 2013 with six girls. It is now full with 14 girls and one baby boy. The organization empowers girls to achieve freedom from sexual slavery by getting them off the streets and out of abusive situations.

Martin, who now lives in Swaziland, is grateful for college experiences — La Crosse CRU, Roncalli Newman Parish and being a resident assistant — that gave her skills and character to pursue her mission. The RA team she worked with impacted her immensely.

"Had I not worked with these people and learned about leadership, community and

team-building, I would not have the abilities or the willingness to run an entire project/non-profit," says Martin.

She's also grateful for a class project she did for Robert Richardson, professor emeritus of Educational Studies, where she had to create her "ideal school."

"I had to do a lot of research, planning, dreaming, working and writing in order to complete the project," she says. "The amount of work that went into his class caused many to complain, but it was by far the most valuable class I had in my entire college career."



Mary-Kate Martin, '10, (in pink shirt), a secondary education major, is co-founder of the non-profit organization Hosea's Heart. Here she is pictured with the girls from the girl's home she co-founded in Swaziland.

*Mary-Kate Martin alumni profile on next page.*

## ALUMNI PROFILE — MARY-KATE MARTIN

*Continued from front page.*

### INFLUENTIAL COURSES:

British Literature with Professor Mary Davis — during a slavery unit, she taught us about current slavery, particularly sex slavery. After watching a documentary in her class, it sparked my interest in sex-trafficking/prostitution, which is what my non-profit aims to prevent. Shakespeare with Dr. Natalie Eschenbaum, where I fell in love with literature all over again! I disliked Shakespeare until I took her class, and then I couldn't get enough of it, so I took more!

### INSPIRING PEOPLE:

The most impactful professor and class of my entire career is EFN 460 (I still remember the title ... that tells you something!) with Dr. Robert Richardson. He was known for his remarkably high standards and his overly demanding requirement of time devoted to his class. I found his class to be the most valuable learning experience of my life. His class prepared me for the demanding hours of work spent outside the classroom and how to manage a classroom of 32 fourteen-year-olds, which are lessons I didn't understand until I got my first teaching job.

### IMPACTFUL EXPERIENCES:

In addition to these teachers/classes, another life-forming experience was through Res Life. I became an RA my sophomore year under Melissa Iverson, and formed incredible relationships with my RA family in White Hall. It is through that experience I gained the necessary confidence, leadership skills and organizational/planning skills to enable me to run a non-profit. Without that experience — those challenges and difficulties, the people on my staff and as my residents — I would not be equipped to start nor interested to run a non-profit.

My student teaching experience was very difficult ... but worth it. I loved the conversations with fellow student teachers during our

carpool rides and the relationships we built with staff and our supervisors. One of my student teaching placements was at La Crescent High School, where I eventually got a job a year later, after volunteer teaching in Swazi for nine months. I taught there for three years before moving back to Swaziland to run the non-profit from the field full-time. Several of my students are now going to be freshman at UWL, and that makes me so proud.

My years at UWL are still some of the best years of my life. I could brag forever about UWL, the faculty, the environment, the classes, the ministries, the opportunities.

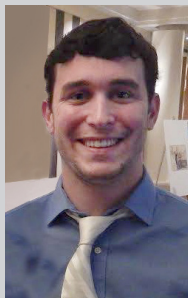
### WORDS OF ADVICE:

To a student who is deciding whether or not to major in education, I say this: There is nothing to lose, only all to gain in this program. You learn more about yourself, especially your weaknesses. Too many people go through life depending on their strengths and never taking time to transform their weaknesses into something powerful. Education does that. Being a teacher does that. There is no better place to change the world than in the classroom. The opportunities for impacting, changing, even saving someone's life are endless. The reward of having a parent come in during conferences and say, "You are the reason my daughter gets up in the morning," is worth more than all of gripe about the hours, the sad salary, and the politics of being a teacher. Teachers changed my life. UWL gave me the opportunities, the degree and the connections to do the same.

P.S. I now teach English to first-year students part-time at African Christian College in Swaziland, and it is the best part of my week!



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION MAJORS CLUB



UWL student Joey Fredrick was awarded the 2015 SHAPE Major of the Year Award.

UW-La Crosse has long been known as an exceptional institution for teacher preparation in physical education. The establishment of the Normal School in 1909 began the

tradition of preparing and training educators. The Physical Education Majors (PEM) Club was established in 1912 and is the longest continuous running organization in the school's history. PEM club is an organization designed to bring together students whose focus is in the field of Exercise and Sport Science-Physical Education

Teaching. This organization allows students to share and receive information regarding current issues in the field, learn about workshops, classes or conventions available. Students also gain valuable experiences through guest speakers, recreational and community based activities, and fundraising opportunities. Membership is currently about 50 members who actively engage in both campus, community and professional activities. Monthly socials bring students and faculty together as well as yearly participation in Oktoberfest

by providing concessions and physical activities for families in the Family Zone, an alcohol- and smoke-free environment, Miracle League Softball games, and hanging lights for the La Crosse Rotary Lights. Members attend the Wisconsin Health and Physical Education Conference and last year four students attended the national association conference (Society for Health and Physical Educators) in Seattle, WA. At this conference, UWL student teacher, Joey Fredrick was awarded the SHAPE Major of the Year Award.

## STUDENT INVOLVEMENT



Leadership in Action performing at a local middle school.

# Leadership in Action Supports Efforts in our Local Schools

Leadership in Action (LIA) is a UWL student group that for the past 19 years has been committed to engaging their audiences in critical conversations surrounding issues of human rights and equality. This social justice group has worked with audiences throughout the country that span all age ranges.

Members of LIA engage their audiences in critical conversation via the use of highly interactive skits that have dealt with the impact of bullying, school violence, harassment in the workplace, racial slurs, and gender inequality. In addition to performing skits, members of LIA develop

the skits they use and have created skits specifically tailored to the needs identified by their audiences. Finally, members of LIA embed service into their daily lives as a means to make a difference in their community.

During the 2014-15 academic year, members of LIA targeted their efforts at the local K-12 school level. This included working at the elementary level with after school staff interested in addressing issues of bullying. Further, LIA members teamed up with middle school students from Longfellow and La Crosse Design Institute's 6 Degrees to perform skits for

over 1000 middle school students, school staff, and community members in relation to being an 'upstander' versus a 'bystander' when bullying takes place.

Leadership in Action is open to all UW-La Crosse students. Those interested in learning more about how they can be part of this dynamic group should contact LIA President Matt Bjornstad at [bjornsta.matt@uwlax.edu](mailto:bjornsta.matt@uwlax.edu). Other UWL student orgs who would be interested in collaborating with LIA should also contact Matt. Finally, Ann Yehle, Ph.D., serves as the faculty advisor for this group. She can be reached at [ayehle@uwlax.edu](mailto:ayehle@uwlax.edu).

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

# Tutoring for Social Justice:

## Tutoring for Social Justice: Field-Based Course Encourages Head, Hands, and Heart Approach to Teaching for Social Change

During the 2014-2015 academic calendar, two sections of a “Teaching for Social Justice” course (EFN 475) were opened to UWL undergraduate students and aspiring teachers. The initiative was supported through an Inclusive Excellence Grant from UWL’s School of Education. Department of Educational Studies Faculty members Rita Chen and Jim Carlson served as course instructors and liaisons to two local schools, Northside Elementary and Logan Middle School.

The course provided UWL students an introductory field experience that allowed them to interact with elementary and middle school students identified as needing academic intervention. Aspiring teachers enrolled in the course committed a minimum of two nights per week to work with students in the after-school homework clubs at each site. On campus, students attended lectures, shared experiences from the tutoring sites, and discussed readings and current events related to culturally relevant teaching and teaching for social justice.

While there are many ways to conceptualize social justice, renowned multicultural educator, Sonia Nieto, provides a definition for the concept that guided the course. Nieto (2010) defines social justice as “a philosophy, an approach, and actions that embody

treating all people with fairness, respect, dignity, and generosity” (p. 46). Nieto stresses the importance of a social justice education that confronts and disrupts misconceptions (or untruths) and that builds on the strengths and talents that students bring with them to school. An assets-based approach challenged participants to critically think beyond perceived “deficits” and to act and reflect on developing insights in community with others working toward similar aims.

UWL’s Office of Field Experience and Northside Elementary and Coulee Montessori Principal Laura Huber, then the district’s After-School Programs Director, played a crucial role in developing the partnership. During the fall semester, Huber provided students enrolled in the course with a context of learning at the two schools. In addition, she relayed her daily struggles as a single parent raising school-age children and conveyed the importance of after school programming for welcoming and supporting students and families in the community in productive ways.

Dempsey Miller, the School District of La Crosse’s Family and Cultural Liaison, engaged students in learning about culturally relevant teaching during an invited talk. Miller presented details related to the changing demographics

of the district over the past few decades and offered tips to the tutors for being engaged in learning about the lives and backgrounds of the students they teach and tutor. Miller stressed the importance of building relationships with students and challenged the tutors to see themselves as cultural beings.

Lori Cooper-Stoll, Ph.D., an assistant professor of sociology in UWL’s Department of Sociology and Archaeology and the Founding Director of the Institute for Social Justice on campus, presented her research on “Race and Gender in the Schools” during a talk to the classes. Cooper-Stoll challenged the “common wisdom” that (1) racism is an individual problem, (2) education is a panacea for “solving” racism, and (3) that teachers and administrators can overcome racism by being “race-neutral” or colorblind. Cooper-Stoll shared insights and complexities related to “absent presence” of race in institutional settings. Cooper-Stoll’s data revealed paradoxes whereby race is simultaneously visible and invisible in teachers’ attitudes about the influence of race and racial inequality on classroom approaches.

In addition to talks from school and university leaders, Ellen Rasmussen, a community advocate for the homeless in La Crosse and a pastor at Wesley



United Methodist church, delivered a lecture on “Developing a Social Justice Consciousness.” Rasmussen shared her story of developing a consciousness, citing several teachers as influential in her advocacy for social justice. Rasmussen encouraged students in the course to seek out and integrate into the classroom artists and musicians whose work is aimed at achieving social change.

Along with experience working with diverse learners and individualizing instruction, one teacher candidate in the course experienced an important shift in thinking about what it means to be a teacher in the 21st century. The teacher candidate no longer viewed the primary role of the teacher as the sole purveyor of knowledge in the classroom:

[L]earning from the students has opened my eyes as to ... how much I'll be learning from them as much as they'll be learning from me.

Importantly, this future teacher is beginning to replace notions of didactic



instruction as teaching with a view of teaching and learning as dialogic in nature. In a final course reflection, the same teacher candidate expanded on learning about social justice through the tutoring experience:

I have become very aware of social justice in the educational setting and how close to home it can get. Before this tutoring experience, I was not aware just how close social justice issues are

to my very home; I thought it was a thing for big cities with populations of struggling youth.

Tutors will be back in action this fall in either the elementary or middle school course section. If you are interested in teaching for social justice, culturally relevant teaching, and the development of critical literacies, contact Rita Chen, Ph.D., [wchen@uwlax.edu](mailto:wchen@uwlax.edu) and/or Jim Carlson, Ph.D., [jcarlson@uwlax.edu](mailto:jcarlson@uwlax.edu).



Bethany Brent

## From the SoE's Multicultural Education Advisor:

It has been an exciting start to the school year in the School of Education. Many events and resources that current and prospective SoE students benefit from are already underway and ready for our students to take advantage of. One of these events was the ‘Why Teaching is a Great Career Program’ information meeting held in early October. During the session, students had the opportunity to meet the Director of Human Resources for the La Crosse School District, learn about the expectations school districts have for future teachers as well as the salary and benefits for teachers in the district. Students also heard from teachers of color about their experiences teaching in the La Crosse School District.

Another important event for students is the Praxis CORE informational meeting. At this meeting students are given an overview of the Praxis CORE such as, what is the Praxis CORE? Who needs to take the Praxis CORE? What skills are assessed? How do I register? How do I prepare? What scores are needed? These questions and more are addressed in the information session.

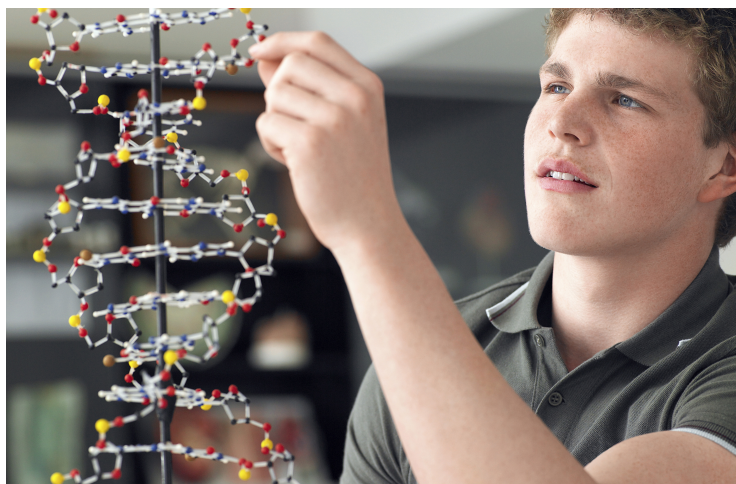
Lastly, the School of Education brochures have been created and printed! The brochures introduce the School of Education at UW-La Crosse and discuss what makes us unique. They also address reasons to pursue a teaching career and the types of employment a background in education prepares students for. These are excellent resources for all students interested in a teaching profession, but especially students of color. The brochures can be picked up in the School of Education office for those who are interested.

For information regarding any of the events or for brochures, contact Bethany Brent at [bbrent@uwlax.edu](mailto:bbrent@uwlax.edu) or 608.785.8121.

FACULTY RESEARCH

# Establishing the link between theory and practice through undergraduate research

In October 2014, Liz Bergeron, Ph.D., was awarded funding to revise a spring semester course to include undergraduate research opportunities. Bergeron was thrilled to be selected for this project as it included workshops with Scott Cooper, Ph.D., and Bill Cerbin, Ph.D., who are well-known for their expertise in undergraduate research. During the workshops Bergeron designed activities requiring pre-service teachers to evaluate instruments, design an instrument, collect data and analyze data.



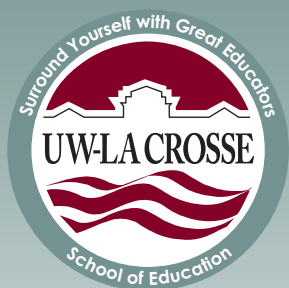
Bergeron teaches the science methods and science leadership courses in the elementary education programs offered through the Department of Educational Studies. These courses are designed to explore current methods for teaching general science, especially strategies for instruction and assessment, and general science curriculum. The intended purpose of this effort was to deepen UWL student understanding of teaching science while enabling them to learn about education research questionnaire design. However, as most faculty would probably agree, things don't always go as planned. An exciting unintended outcome from this project was pre-service teachers questioning the link between theory and practice.

In education we often discuss educational theory — the collection of beliefs, practices, and pedagogies designed to promote student learning. Educational practice is what educators do in the classroom. Theory requires the influence of actual practice to remain relevant and practice requires an underlining theoretical foundation. The distinction between theory and practice is jokingly described by Yogi Berra:

“In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice there is.” This describes an essential challenge in education: students are not learning in a vacuum; the real world impacts implementation. It has been challenging to elucidate this point to pre-service teachers because they haven't had the chance to be in the practice themselves. Surprisingly, by engaging in education research Bergeron's undergraduate pre-service teachers developed an understanding about the gap between theory and practice. As illustrated by one student: “The data opened my eyes to the gap between understanding and implementation that exists for, I would assume, many teachers.”

Bergeron presented her research surrounding undergraduate student research at the 17th Annual UWL Conference on Teaching and Learning. Bergeron's research was funded by a UW-System Discovery grant written by Scott Cooper, Ph.D., and Bill Cerbin, Ph.D.

## NEW FACULTY



Scott Baker  
Educational  
Foundations



Alyssa Boardman  
Literacy



Tom Jesse  
English Education



Roi Kawai  
Multicultural  
Foundations

## STUDENT OPPORTUNITY

# Breakthrough Teaching Fellowship

The Princeton Review rates the Breakthrough Teaching Fellowship as one of the Top Ten Summer Internships for students in the nation. UWL's Abi Nixon, was chosen as a chemistry teaching fellow for this premiere summer internship program in the Twin Cities.



*Abi Nixon is an education major with general science emphasis.*

This summer, Abi Nixon worked at Breakthrough Twin Cities as an eighth grade chemistry teaching fellow. Everyday, she woke up knowing she had the opportunity to make a positive impact on a number of students' lives. Breakthrough's mission is to prepare under-resourced students for college success and cultivate the next generation of educators. Ninety percent of Breakthrough students successfully enroll in college at the end of their six-year journey with Breakthrough. This is incredible and something Nixon was able to be an integral part of this summer.



Abi Nixon

Breakthrough has a very unique structure. Nixon believes the "quirky" things Breakthrough incorporates into its school day combined with the passion the teachers put into the program are the reasons why Breakthrough is so impactful and reaches so many students who may fall through the cracks of a traditional education system. For example, one "quirk" of Breakthrough is how many hats the teachers wear throughout the day. Teaching chemistry

was just one of the hats she wore at Breakthrough. Some of her other roles included: student advisor, bus game coordinator, college counselor, tutorial teacher and elective teacher! Breakthrough also calls homework BooYah, and every time she said, "BooYah" the students had to shout with enthusiasm, "BooYah!" back to her. Finally, on the way to classes, everyone (teachers and students!) danced in the hallways. This summer, Nixon saw the "quirks" are what can bring people together and create a sense of community amongst a diverse group of students and teachers.

During the summer at Breakthrough, she saw dramatic changes in students and herself as an educator. Nixon learned teachers matter a lot. The late nights she spent lesson planning, grading BooYah, and worrying about my students was worth it. She saw how developing strong relationships with my students multiplies ten-fold and taking the extra minute might just alter a student's entire outlook on life. She believes one of her students, Germain, wrote it best. "Breakthrough is a memory I will always have in my life. It has shown me there is a group of scholars who mean business when it comes to education. There is a group of future teachers who will be amazing teachers one day, that show they care about who you are as a individual and want you to succeed in life. Who never gives up on you. That's why I love Breakthrough."



Abbie Lee  
Physical Education,  
Adapted PE



David Liss  
Math Education



Heidi Masters  
Elementary Science



Matthew Maurer  
Physical Education



Josh Miller  
International/Global  
Foundations

NEW PROGRAM

# New Educational Leadership Program – Spring, 2016



Curt Rees, principal of Onalaska's Northern Hills Elementary School celebrating the ground breaking of the major building addition and renovation project.

The Institute for Professional Studies in Education (IPSE) is launching a new 28-credit Educational Leadership Certificate program for master's level teachers, school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers seeking PK-12 Principal (5051) licensure through the WI Department of Public Instruction (WI DPI). The philosophy of the program is a learning-in-community, constructivist model with culturally relevant teaching.

Aspiring principals join the program in a cohort providing them the opportunity to share common emotions, values or beliefs in education while actively

engaged in collegial learning. This program meets the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards, the Wisconsin Administrator Standards, and professional educational requirements for Principal licensure in Wisconsin and most other states.

The curriculum consists of nine courses including: Introduction to Educational Leadership; Principalship; Data-based Decision Making for Instruction; Supervision and Instruction; Leadership and Cultural Competence; School Law; School Finance & Resource Allocation; Pedagogical Practices; and Practicum in the Principalship & Seminar. Learners will also be required to complete a portfolio as part of the program.

IPSE is offering the Educational Leadership program in two formats for Spring 2016, online and blended. The blended cohort will be in the La Crosse area. For more information, please contact Cindy George at: [cgeorge@uwlax.edu](mailto:cgeorge@uwlax.edu).

