

TODAY

beyond our borders

FCS department looks to bring outside experiences into the classroom

by Angie Dowell

The articles in this issue all address the general topic of “beyond our borders.” We wanted to focus on how we both incorporate the outside world into our classrooms, as well as extend our classroom curriculum and experiences into the larger community in which we exist. In other words, we want to share with our readers how we pull from the outside world into our own world here in FCS,

and also reach outward extending beyond the classroom into the broader university, community, nation, and world. Whether it be through bringing our outside experiences back into our curriculum and classroom discussions, pulling from recent headlines to discuss current issues with our students, working with other departments through the ever-growing

interdisciplinary education that students seek, or taking our students on field trips to broaden their perspectives, in Family and Consumer Sciences, we are reaching beyond the borders of our discipline to provide the best possible education for our students. And their accomplishments confirm that traversing borders is critical to being well-rounded, successful future professionals.



Fashion Merchandising instructor, Angie Dowell, was selected by Rotary International to be part of a group study exchange team to Northern India. Above (holding art), she admires the arts and crafts made by young girls in a remote village of Chandigarh.

from the
chairperson

FCS faculty reach beyond our borders

by Duane Whitbeck

Titles are used to clarify the content and context that follows.

To each person, the title may bring many different thoughts



Whitbeck

to mind. The title of this issue is “Beyond Our Borders.” In this case, I reflected on those borders that we have that may limit our growth or vision. I teach in class about the importance of getting outside of our comfort zone. We often are limited by our experiences, what we have observed or read, or what we have perceived as boundaries imposed by others. The FCS faculty have stretched themselves and brought a new vision to their individual teaching and program areas.

Angie Dowell has taken on the responsibility as editor of this newsletter. She has demonstrated an ability to get the process moving and to create a clear vision of what we want to share. She recently returned from a month-long stay with Rotary International cultural exchange program in India. In March, Angie took a second large group of students to New York City for a fashion industry study tour.

Denise Bertoncino helps to place many students

(see Faculty, pg. 3)



change

Change: It's the way designers work!

by Denise Bertoncino

Interior Design is in an ever-changing state. Factors influencing this constant metamorphosis include technology, globalization, universal design, and sustainable design.* These issues affect how designers design and create a transition in the way interior design is taught. Students must be economically, politically, and culturally aware to continue to design in a manner that benefits all.

This evolution in the way designers need to think and react impacted the interior design students projects in the FCS 325 Interior Design: Studio II course. The project consisted of a 9,300 square foot office space for a law firm specializing in the condemnation of real estate. The major focus of the project was dealing with open office systems (modular panels). Students and myself based the preliminary programming of the project on previous examples. What we found from research and field trips was that office design has changed. People have more control over their work environment, team collaboration is standard, and employees have a different work

style and schedule. Work is no longer necessarily from 8 to 5. The new office systems redefine how and where work is done. Design of office space needs to be flexible, functional, and practical for the end users, which no longer allows one particular mold to fit all.

The implementation of team collaboration has eliminated much of the tiered hierarchy that was previously seen in office design. When visiting 360 Architecture in Kansas City, the students found that the principals were not in a secluded office with walls. They were working with everyone else in an open warehouse type of situation. For their office, this creates a dynamic work environment encouraging a cohesive whole to the projects that their firm produces.

Our ever-changing world will continue to affect all aspects of interior design. There will always be an ongoing process to understand and respect different cultures, to connect with the environment we need to live in, and to be aware of how people work and interact on a day to day basis.

* Sustainable Design Source: Wikipedia.

Interior Design students visited the Belger Arts Center to see the Innovative 20th Century Chair Design Exhibit. The guide provided the students with information and history on the furniture pieces and gave them a private tour of some of Mr. Belger's personal collections. Above, students and faculty member Denise Bertoncino (right), are looking at the Swan Chair by Arne Jacobsen, who led the field in the design of sculptural furniture.

“Excellence is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, skillful execution and the vision to see obstacles as opportunities.”

- Author Unknown



Interior Design students visited Scott Rice Office Works in Kansas City. David Dieckman, the Director of Workplace Design, met with the students to discuss open office systems and how office design has changed.

experience

The community as a classroom

by Jan Venter-Barkley

Within our role as an early childhood teacher training facility and as educators of future professionals in early childhood development, it is essential for pre-service students to understand the profession outside of our program. They need to leave our building and our campus to gain a perspective of the classrooms and agencies

in our larger community of southeast Kansas. While giving students more experiences working with children in varied settings is important it is also critical to know that what they experience represents “best practices” in the field. There is a significant body of literature to support the idea that teachers teach like they were taught. Or in other words, teachers teach in ways similar to what they experience in practicum and student teaching experiences because they can see an immediate connection between what they are doing with children and what they experienced in the past. When students see the best models, they are able to adopt those principles in their own work environments.

Since 2004, Linda Broyles, Senior Associate with SEK-CAP Head Start, and our faculty have developed a working relationship that has been beneficial to each of our programs. Linda and some of her co-workers have been guest speakers in early childhood classes and also for



Student teacher Marissa Trotnic enjoys a moment with children during outdoor time at the PSU Early Childhood Preschool Lab.

the Early Childhood Student Organization. Our students have rotated through Head Start classrooms during their student teaching experiences. We have also had students in the CHOICES program in Pittsburg, and in Fort Scott and other community programs. All these collaborative efforts have been beneficial

to each of the partnering organizations and individuals. Linda Broyles commented that “First and foremost the affiliation with the department provides Head Start with a higher degree of credibility. Pittsburg State is the major supplier of personnel in the early childhood field. By hiring PSU graduates we are able to meet our federal mandates which require us to provide children with quality early childhood degreed teachers.”

We have also seen each successive group of graduates take on new challenges within a short time of their graduation. This reinforces to us, that they get over any timidity during their student experiences and their confidence in their abilities has grown to a point where they are ready to step out and apply their knowledge and skills in useful ways in whatever program with which they may be connected. Working with community programs is a win-win situation for all involved.

FACULTY (from pg. 1)

in summer Interior Design internships all around the U.S. Her students have the skills and knowledge to be successful wherever they go. She takes students to conferences and helps them understand that the principles they learn away from campus can be brought back to their design work, and the work they do on campus will translate to the greater world.

Cris Elliott has been involved with FCS leadership at the state level and has worked with others to coordinate conferences for FCS teachers. Additionally she has taken large numbers of students to state and national conferences. Once again she will take students to the National AAFCS conference in Charlotte, N.C.

Jan Venter-Barkley has studied the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood programs, which originated in Reggio, Italy. She has adapted the approach to fit with our curriculum and student needs. She has helped students to stretch their abilities by attending state and regional conferences, as well as involving them as presenters.

As the department chairperson, I have become more involved at the national level with organizations affiliated with Family & Consumer Sciences. Through these experiences, one learns that there is a lot that can be accomplished on the national level from Pittsburg. We really are in the center of all that is happening.

The department goes through periods of growth and refinement. This past year has been the latter, in which our emphasis has been on expanding our reach while maintaining the numbers that we reached last year. We have a great team of faculty and students of which to be proud.



Best wishes, Ilene!

Ilene Bolan retired in April after working with the PSU physical plant for 30 years. Ilene was a familiar face for the students and she was also one of our most memorable characters. Ilene worked as the custodian in Chandler Hall for 23 years until it was razed in 2002, at which point she was transferred to another building. Ilene’s dedication showed everyone who entered the building what pride she had for our program and students. Through the years she has checked each newsletter

to find out how past graduates are doing and, periodically when she is out and about in Pittsburg, she gets greetings from some of our former students. Ilene and her husband, Tom, are looking forward to enjoying more camping and fishing in their retirement years. Ilene and Tom, we wish you all the best! Those who would like to send Ilene a personal note, you may do so through the FCS department.



A young man hand-tufts carpet at a factory in Panipat, a leading textile-producing city in Northern India.

culture

Made in India

by Angie Dowell

I had the pleasure of experiencing the culture, people, and industries of northern India during my five-week stay there in January and early February 2006. As part of a Rotary International Group Study Exchange team, I did a bit of sightseeing, lived with host families, and saw various Rotary service projects. Perhaps most educational though, were the intimate, behind-the-scenes tours of their textile, apparel, and home furnishings manufacturing facilities.

I was taken to one facility where the sole operation was to hand-bead fabrics that would later be assembled into women's sarees (wrapped, dress-like garments), kurtas (long tunics), or shawls. It was located on the third floor of a fairly run-down building. Approximately 20 young men sat on the floor, producing very intricately detailed pieces. They worked very quickly in a concerted effort to turnout these hand-stitched, quality fabrics.

I toured another apparel facility where old garments shipped to this factory from all over the world, were recycled into new ones. They had to first be separated into similar color groupings, then cut into small strips, regenerated back into a fibrous state, made into yarn, and then woven again into fabric. While the processes at this factory were a bit more mechanized than at the previous one I mentioned, there was still an immense amount of handwork done here. For example, women sat on the floor, cutting the buttons, pockets, and zippers out of the used garments, and preparing the fabric for the next stage.



The cultural exchange team was comprised of applicants selected from Rotary District 6110, which encapsulates parts of the four-state region. Pictured (l to r): Larry Long, James Smith, Angie Dowell, and Jake Lambert.

Other tours included a visit to a carpet-making factory and a woodcarving operation. The carpets of the particular plant we toured are ones we can buy at stores such as Target for a relatively inexpensive price. What's amazing is the amount of hand-labor involved in their production. Young men and women operate the non-mechanized looms, and literally hand-tuft and finish each and every rug they produce. I was also surprised at the hand carved furniture and home décor produced at the other factory; young men sit on the concrete rooftop of a building hand carving every intricate detail of such items as jewelry boxes, end tables, and decorative chairs.

Many Americans often times get discouraged by the amount of products sold in the U.S. that are not made domestically. Having witnessed the amount of labor, care, and hours that go into the production of many of the products we use makes me much more appreciative.

So, next time you see "Made in India" on a product you buy, consider thinking about the processes involved in its production. I know I will.



Women separate used clothes into similar color groupings, and begin removing extraneous materials such as zippers and pockets so the fabric can be used to remake other garments.

"Service is the lifeblood of any organization. Everything flows from it and is nourished by it. Customer service is not a department...it's an attitude."

- Author Unknown

diversity

Beyond the borders in FCS education

by *Cris Elliott*

The rich diversity of today's society is increasingly evident in many of today's classrooms. The learning environment must work for all students and it must reflect the cultures of the communities it serves. Teachers today must address these multicultural issues to a greater extent than ever before. Our teachers and schools must go beyond traditional borders into a new paradigm of teaching. Students must be protected so that they will not be targets of racial inequality and institutional discrimination.

Classrooms in the Midwest are experiencing growing student populations of Latino and Hispanic Americans, Lao Americans, Native Americans, African and African-Americans and other diverse cultures. Students from these backgrounds offer rich cultural experiences and opportunities to schools and communities. It is essential that teachers acknowledge the diverse student population and use instructional techniques that enhance these opportunities. Curriculum reform is essential to ensure the classroom has key characteristics of a multicultural curriculum. Key points of this reform might include using a diversity of learning styles, making sure the content is complete and accurate, avoiding tokenism of under-represented groups (people of color, women, people with disabilities, etc.), critically examining learning materials for bias, and teaching content from a variety of perspectives and angles in order to be accurate and complete.



Kristi Leal, 9th Grade FACS teacher at Carthage Middle School, uses creative teaching techniques to improve communication in her diverse classroom.

Teachers and students have the opportunity to gain knowledge about designing and maintaining multicultural classrooms by taking English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

Family and Consumer Sciences teacher and alumni, Kristi Leal, has gained first hand knowledge about the significance of putting forth extra effort to connect with students who live in a home where English is not the primary language. Leal is completing her first year as a teacher at Carthage Junior High School. Several of her students speak Spanish as their primary language. She puts forth extra effort to communicate with these students in both Spanish and English. Not only are the students appreciative of her efforts, they feel connected to their teacher and the class due to improved communication. Additionally, Leal has been able to benefit through learning and improving her Spanish speaking skills.

With ever-changing ethnic, cultural, racial, language and religious diversity, educational institutions and teachers have to create a learning environment that will give students the knowledge, attitude and skills required to function outside of traditional borders. Young teachers like Kristi Leal will take our students forward to a world of acceptance, equality and mutual respect. Leal is able to pass on this important message to students in the department as a member of our department's advisory board.



Twelve PSU students recently attended the Family & Consumer Sciences United Conference in Wichita along with their sponsor, Cris Elliott. Pictured (l to r): Linda Graverholdt, Goldie Prelogar, Nisreen Siam, Jennifer Blanke, Stacey Baldwin, Marla Sterling, Krysti Patterson, Alison Kiser, Jackie Harwig and Caroline Crady. Not pictured are Lexie Kerr and Sarah Smith.

December 2005 graduates

Amanda Issac Aikin, Family & Consumer Sciences Education–Ft. Scott, Kan. Amanda is employed by Precision Express in Pittsburg.

Meghan Bretches, Early Childhood Development–Parsons, Kan. Meghan and Stephen Bretches had a baby boy, Noah, on December 16, 2005. Meghan is currently a stay-at-home mom with future plans to open a family childcare facility.

Kim Castagno, Fashion Merchandising–Pittsburg. Kim is in a six-month manager in training program with The Buckle in Springfield, Mo.

Loren Coppola, Early Childhood Development–Leavenworth, Kan. Loren is a lead teacher with Family Resource Center in Pittsburg.

Andrea Honsicker, Early Childhood Development–Girard, Kan. Andrea is a Family Educator III with SEK-CAP Choices in Pittsburg.

Julie Hoover, Early Childhood Development–Mindenmines, Mo. Julie is a lead teacher at Family Resource Center in Pittsburg.

Tasha Lewis-Hanson, Fashion Merchandising–Ft. Scott, Kan. Tasha is employed in admissions at Citizens Medical Center in Colby, Kan. She and Colby Markham will be married on June 3, 2006.

Joy McClure, Family & Consumer Sciences Education–Applevally, N.M. Joy is a family and consumer sciences teacher at Garden Plain High School in Kan.

Kelsey Monke, Fashion Merchandising–Overland Park, Kan. Kelsey is employed with Nordstrom in Boca Raton, Fla.

Jennifer Resner, Fashion Merchandising–Gardner, Kan. Current information unavailable.

Crystal Staats, Interior Design–Garden City, Kan. Crystal is employed by T.H. Rogers Lumber in Pittsburg.

alumni spotlight



Abby Clevenger, Class of 2004

by Angie Dowell

Abby Clevenger, Fashion Merchandising graduate in 2004, is making great strides in the accessories industry. Designing her own line of jewelry, she has turned a pastime into a career.

Having begun her education in Studio Art at Missouri Southern, Abby transferred to Pittsburg State to complete her degree in Fashion Merchandising. Her work history certainly complemented her academic interests; she's worked for several retailers, including The Gap, a small boutique, and a salon. As a side interest, Abby made jewelry for her relatives, and her pieces began to catch other people's eyes. Abby recalls, "I made jewelry for my family for Christmas one year, and then started getting orders from those pieces." By venturing out to make jewelry for more than just her family members, Abby's excitement for designing grew. After researching about how to purchase wholesale materials and realizing the vast amount of materials and options available, Abby remembers thinking "it was like a blank canvas to me. I couldn't wait to start!" From there, her business slowly began to grow. While working at the salon, she began selling her pieces there, and eventually began offering in-home jewelry parties, which sparked interest among an ever-growing local following.

After graduating from PSU, Abby realized she had a decision to make. She could either maintain the level of business she was operating, selling by then in a few local shops, or pursue growing her business by getting her products into a wider range of stores. She opted for the latter. "I'm always up for a challenge and wanted

my business to be looked at as more than a hobby, so I decided to go for it." And did she ever. Abby's business, Abby Anne, is now housed in a permanent showroom at the Dallas Apparel Mart, where retail buyers go to purchase products for their stores on a seasonal basis. While the showroom is open year-round for buyers who wish to look at her collection, Abby travels to Dallas five times per year during the major market dates to represent her line in person. Abby's line can be found in approximately thirty stores, one of which is a major department store, and she recently began outsourcing her designs to India.

While she has been remarkably successful already in the short time she's been in business, Abby's goals are even grander. She hopes to get her jewelry into even more stores across the U.S., and "would love to expand Abby Anne into accessories and even a clothing line someday."

For current Fashion Merchandising students who are eager to start their own businesses, Abby suggests taking advantage of the opportunities presented through their degree program, such as working in the showrooms at the Dallas Apparel Mart. If students gain this type of experience, Abby thinks it will allow them to "see how the fashion industry works on all levels." In fact, Abby did work at a showroom in Dallas while in school, and she states that doing so "opened doors" for getting her jewelry in a showroom there. Regardless of one's future professional goals, Abby offers one final piece of advice: "Don't worry about failing; you will never succeed if you don't fail at least once!"



Charleen McClanahan, Class of 1953

by Jan Venter-Barkley

We have had many outstanding past students from our department over the past 100+ years. Some use their time and degree here as a springboard to further education and a career teaching at the college level. One of those is Dr. Charleen McClanahan Varner, who currently resides in Topeka, Kan. with her husband. Charleen graduated with a degree in vocational home economics from the Family and Consumer Sciences department in 1953. At that time the department was named Home Economics and Ms. E. Louise Gibson was the chairperson. As an undergraduate student, Dr. Varner was active in the department and became a member of Phi Upsilon Omicron. She was also a senior class officer and a homecoming queen

candidate during both her junior and senior years. Since leaving PSU in 1963, Dr. Varner has had a long and illustrious career focused in the area of education. She credits PSU, the Department of Home Economics, and Ms. Gibson for much of her success. She states that she has very positive memories from her days here and that the atmosphere stimulated her to achieve and do the best she could.

Dr. Varner received her Ph.D. in Nutrition from Texas Woman's University in 1966. She received a grant from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) that completely paid for her education and living expenses. Her M.S. degree
(see Spotlight, next pg.)

update

Alumni news

Kellie Durham, '05, is an executive administrator for Vizalution, a consulting firm in Tulsa, Okla.

Emily Hendrick, '05, is a senior associates manager at Kirkland's, Inc., in Niles, Mich.

Katie Omang, '05, is a junior executive with Dillard's in Overland Park, Kan.

Brooke Stephenson, '05, was presented a merit award from her company, Paul Steelman Digital Design Group in Las Vegas, Nev.

Angi Womeldorff, '05, is working in the multi-unit development of the architectural division of Wilson Darnell Mann Architects in Wichita, Kan.

Ali Davidson, '04, is visitor services coordinator/curriculum director for a children's museum in Shawnee, Kan. They just received a nice grant to begin planning a new hands-on science camp for this summer.

Meegan Gatewood, '04, is co-sales manager at Express in Fayetteville, Ark. She also works independently as a certified makeup consultant.

Jessica Keiswetter, '04, is currently assistant director of Canterbury Preparatory School

in Overland Park, Kan. In August she will promote to director.

Ginny Adams Reischman, '04, and husband, Joe, reside in Tonganoxie, Kan. with their new son, Gabe Michael.

Ginny is currently a stay-at-home mom with plans to open a home daycare for infants. Her husband, a PSU graduate, is superintendent at Meadows Construction.

Stephanie Schlagel, '04, teaches family and consumer sciences at Drauden Point Middle School in Plainfield, Ill. She is engaged to Chris Poss, whom she will marry on Oct. 21, 2006. Chris, also a PSU graduate, is superintendent for Pulte Homes near Chicago, Ill.

Korie Uniack, '04, is a sales rep. with Morrison Homes in Florida. She helps buyers select interiors and furnishings for their new homes.

Melonie Vail, '04, is a school psychologist para for Southeast Kansas Interlocal #637 in Pittsburg. She will be student teaching this fall.

Jennifer Holt Hall, '03, married Jake Hall in August, 2004. She is currently pursuing her

master's degree. Jennifer is site manager and lead teacher for SEK-CAP in Oswego, Kan.

Penny King, '03, is a computer lab teacher at Roosevelt Elementary School in Miami, Okla. She is also an evening library clerk at Northeast Oklahoma A & M College.

Shelly Smith Livingston, '03, teaches family and consumer sciences at Webb City High School in Mo. Shelly is working on a master's in educational leadership at PSU. Her husband, Ryan, a PSU '03 graduate, is maintenance supervisor at Quaker Hill Manor.

Deanna Morffi, '03, is office manager of Mallary, Inc. in West Virginia. She and Steven Richardson will be married in Kansas City, on April 26, 2006.

Lindsay Ellebrecht, '02, is co-director of All Around Child, an early childhood education center and preschool, in Overland Park, Kan. She plans to get a second degree in elementary education.

Cori Wagner, '02, is manager of Curves fitness center in Prairie Village, Kan. She is engaged to marry Jeremy Herigon in October. Jeremy graduated from PSU in '01 and does quality control for Lafarge Concrete in Kansas City, Kan.

Chasity Ware, '02, is a family and consumer sciences teacher as well as a volleyball and basketball coach at Jayhawk-Linn in Mound City, Kan. Husband, Brian, is a PSU '02 graduate. They have three children, Brileigh, Brielle, and Brance.

Jen Brown Rhodes, '00, is a showroom designer at RBC Tile & Stone in Shawnee, Kan. Husband, Matt, a 2000 PSU graduate, is district manager at Toyota Motor Sales. They have a daughter, Cali, with a second child due in April 2006.

Cynthia Leniton, '99, is a family and consumer sciences teacher in Cedar Vale, Kan. She and her husband have a daughter and a son.

Tanya Scott Crabtree, '97, is a stay-at-home mom to Theodore and Annabell. She remains an advocate for early childhood and helped organize a licensed daycare in Liberal, Mo.

Laura Wolfe Willard, '76, a retired family and consumer sciences teacher, coordinates Crosslines, an eight-week sewing class in Joplin, Mo. She and husband, Iridell, are active in Inmate Family Support Group. They have three children, Sherry, Ray and Elisa.

SPOTLIGHT *(from previous pg.)*

is in general Home Economics from the University of Arkansas. She also studied at the University of Missouri-Columbia and at Michigan State University.

Previously, she spent four years on the Home Economics faculty at PSU (1959-63). After she received her Ph.D., she also taught at Central Missouri State University and was the chairperson of Home Economics at Emporia State University. Before becoming an instructor at PSU, Dr. Varner taught both Home Economics and Biology in Joplin, Mo. Currently, Dr. Varner has a consulting business, is a practicing dietitian, and an adjunct faculty member at Highland Community College.

Charleen has received many honors in her life including being listed in *Who's Who in America* and *Who's Who in American Women*. In addition to teaching high school and college students she also taught first grade for a year and summer school classes for exceptional children in Florida. According to Dr. Varner, some of the happiest days of her life were at PSU as a student and as a professor. She always has appreciated the department and Ms. Gibson.

Dr. Varner caught our attention again when she filled in the part of the newsletter that provides us with an update on what she had been doing.

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alumni

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Thank you for your continued support!

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