Preschool Music Education Thriving through Summer Research

UW-Whitewater music student Emilee Deck framed her summer research around a growing problem in early education—the lack of focus on musical development. Under the guidance of her mentor, Professor Alena Holmes (Music), Deck partnered with pre-kindergarten teacher, Emily Hensley of Milwaukee's St. Francis Children's Center to provide daily music instruction to special needs preschoolers this summer.

"I have already seen such monumental improvements by the students, as well as an increase in interest and enthusiasm by teachers at the Center," Deck remarks. "Even at different developmental levels, these children have shown they can grasp musical ideas that are usually introduced in elementary school and have amazing self-motivation, enthusiasm, and joy for music." This motivation is crucial to the well-being and healthy development of children, particularly at the preschool age. Deck's lessons consisted of singing, improvisation, and instrument exploration as well as incorporating music through story time and play. At the end of the summer, instructors had access to Deck's lessons as well as instruments, puppets and books for future use in their classrooms.

This project was funded by the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program in Community Based Research, sponsored by the School of Graduate Studies and Continuing Education. Learn more about Emilee Deck's research and other Undergraduate Research projects at the Fall Undergraduate Research Day on September 24.

- written by Missy Kennedy
The Fairhaven Lecture Series will turn its attention to issues surrounding global democracies this fall. The ten lectures in the fall series, "Democracy Today: An International Perspective," will address questions such as: What is the state of democracy in the world today? Who are the advocates of democracy and how do they make their voices known in the ballot box, in street demonstrations, and via social media channels such as Twitter and Facebook? Presenters and community members will explore democracy's promises and challenges, examine our increasingly democratic world and discuss what it really means to participate. Kari Borne, coordinator of the Series, indicates that it has been a few years since the semester-long theme focused on international issues. "The lectures are timely conversations about what is going on in the world around us," Borne says.

All lectures in the Fairhaven Lecture Series are free and open to the public, and held at 3 p.m. on Mondays at Fairhaven Senior Services. "The faculty presentations are very informative and engaging," notes Kari Borne, coordinator of the series. "They are a great opportunity to hear from experts on the topics that we read about in the news, and to ask them questions on subjects that can be challenging to understand." Faculty, staff, students and community members are welcome and encouraged to attend. For a full list of lectures visit the new Fairhaven Lecture Series website.
Language Instructors Bring New Energy to Assessment in Foreign Language Education

UW-Whitewater language instructors are committing their time and attention to reenergizing and reshaping their teaching philosophies, strategies, and tools to better understand their students’ learning. Assessment is "much more than a quiz," states Ellen Boldt (Languages and Literatures). This August, UW-Whitewater held an assessment workshop for instructors of world languages led by Boldt and fellow instructors, Sheila Turek and Jodie Parys—a day devoted to the development and application of purposeful assessment at the high school and college levels. The day began with sessions on assessment modes, practices, and tools and concluded with working groups developing assessments for units from their own world language classrooms.

"Continuously evaluating teaching methods and student needs and progress opens doors for learning at every point in the academic process—for learners and teachers," explains Boldt, echoing the energy and enthusiasm brought to the workshop by both the instructors and the participants. One German language instructor noted, "the most beneficial part of the workshop for me was getting concrete, creative ideas on how to assess my students in the three modes of communication and also how to incorporate fun online tools in the process. It was a great opportunity to collaborate with German teaching colleagues from across the state." Other participants appreciated the "sense of community" created by the workshop, and how it nurtures learning for teachers and students at every stage of education.

- written by Missy Kennedy

Did you know...

The Camps & Conferences office just wrapped up another successful summer full of events for people of all ages and interests. Between June and August, over 5,400 athletes, musicians, educators, grandparents, and students attended 55 different camps, conferences, academies, and clinics at UW-Whitewater. Continuing Education Services staff, along with 750 coaches, camp counselors, speakers, and session leaders, delivered a wide variety of programs for youth and adults from all over the region.
Coming Soon!

The Education Outreach website is new and improved and will go live soon. The site is a valuable resource for educators, and includes information on district initiatives and a calendar of area events for professional development. Visit the Continuing Education [website](#) in the coming weeks and check it out!