

College of Education News

August 23, 2017

Georgia Southern University

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i2STEMe partners with STEM Academy of USA for international teacher development

August 23, 2017



Lisa Stueve, Ed.D. is pictured (bottom left) in a local West Bengal, India newspaper.

Lisa Stueve, Ed.D., of the College of Education’s Institute for Interdisciplinary STEM Education (i2STEMe) visited West Bengal, India where she assisted in the completion of a three-day professional development offered to 40 teachers from six local schools.

Stueve, who serves as the i2STEMe outreach specialist, said the event was a result of the Institute’s ongoing partnership with the [STEM Academy of USA](http://www.stemacademyofusa.org).

“The Institute has a memorandum of understanding with STEM Academy of USA,” she explained. “We formed a relationship with the Academy through a science teacher from Newton County, Saibaba Arcot, a member of their team, and executed the memorandum in 2016 prior to our first visit.”

The July professional development was held at [STEM World School](#) in West Bengal with a focus of illustrating STEM projects and problem-based learning opportunities and encouraging teacher collaboration.

“The trip was wonderful,” said Stueve. “The teachers were receptive and diligent—asking for specific guidance and excited to work through models.”

Stueve says she particularly enjoyed working with a small government school in Chennai where the STEM Academy of USA group met directly with students to model a lesson.

“We had the students evaluate existing animal habitats at the Arignar Anna Zoological Park in Chennai and asked them to work within the parameters of the land available to design improved habitats for some of the residents,” said Stueve. “We encouraged the teachers to continue the project and to engage the zoo in the conversation—modeling after a project out of Tucker Middle School with the Atlanta Zoo.”

STEM Academy of USA is an educational organization that works to enhance STEM education in India via collaborative partnerships. Focusing on STEM curriculum for grades 4-9, the Academy offers teacher trainings as well as support materials for STEM based activities. The leadership team consists of India natives who are now residing in the United States. The Academy’s focus on STEM education in India results from what they describe as a decline in the country’s STEM literacy over the past few decades.

The STEM Academy of USA team has been invited back to India in October. As partners with the Academy, Georgia Southern University has a team working together on the professional learning development prior to execution. For the fall trip, two members of the University’s team will join STEM Academy of USA for the professional training activities.

Georgia Southern team members include: Robert Mayes, Ph.D., College of Education; Elizabeth Rasnick, Ph.D., College of Engineering and Information Technology; Celine Manoosingh, Ph.D., College of Engineering and Information Technology; Shainaz Landge, Ph.D., College of Science and Mathematics; Denise Carroll, Ph.D, College of Science and Mathematics; and Stueve.

In the future, the STEM Academy of USA plans to launch STEM Centers of Excellence in West Bengal and New Dehli and to continue to collaborate with Georgia Southern in training STEM education specialists in India.

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Fox receives 2017 COE staff award

August 23, 2017



Carol Fox

The Betty-Ware Wray staff award is given annually to a College of Education (COE) staff member who has excelled in his or her job performance as well as University service. During the College's annual meeting on August 9, Undergraduate Teacher Education and Accreditation's (UTE) senior administrative secretary, Carol Fox, was named the 2017-2018 award recipient.

An employee of the undergraduate office since 2012, Fox provides support of the UTE office activities including the placement of all preservice teacher candidates and student teaching applications.

Staff members are nominated for the Betty-Ware Wray Award by COE faculty, staff and students, and the nominations are reviewed by the Staff Advisory Council. The nomination letter for Fox included comments about her professionalism and positive impact on the College.

The writer indicated that "Carol represents the College of Education in a very positive and collaborative manner in her regular and almost daily interactions with school partners."

"She goes beyond the professional politeness to get the job done, to making personal and sincere connections with P-12 teachers and administrators," the writer continued.

Fox said she was very humbled by the award.

"I'm honored to be the recipient of the Betty-Ware Wray Award," she said. "Treating people with respect and striving for a spirit of excellence with our school partners is a win-win combination."

The Betty-Ware Wray staff award honors the memory of former COE Student Services staff member Betty-Ware Wray. Wray's in-laws established the award to honor Wray and her legacy as a beloved member of the College family.

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Two COE faculty named University Excellence Award recipients

August 23, 2017



Professor Wendy Chambers, Ph.D. (left) with University President Jaimie Hebert, Ph.D.



Professor Cordelia Zinskie, Ed.D. (left) with University President Jaimie Hebert, Ph.D.

During Georgia Southern University's annual convocation held on August 9, two of the six University-wide Awards for Excellence were captured by College of Education faculty members.

[Wendy Chambers, Ph.D.](#), was named a recipient of the 2017-2018 Award for Excellence in Contributions to Instruction, and [Cordelia Zinskie, Ed.D.](#) received an Award for Excellence in Service.

Both full tenured professors in the Department of Curriculum, Foundations and Reading, Chambers and Zinskie have been with the College for 24 years.

About Wendy Chambers

Chambers serves as a professor of developmental psychology for the College of Education. She teaches courses in areas including cognitive and language development; learning theories and applications; and theories of development. Chambers completed her master's and doctorate in developmental psychology at the University of Florida.

Chambers has taught over 200 courses and roughly 6,000 students at Georgia Southern, from first-year to doctoral level. Her courses are known for being reading and writing intensive. She wrote and published a textbook for use in her Cognition and Language course, *Cognitive and Language Development: The Child's Journey* (2013). One glance at Chambers' course reviews online, and one will see that her students describe her as being knowledgeable about the content, passionate, engaging and concerned for their success while also holding them to high standards.

“I have found that students appreciate being challenged to engage critically with content while developing their written communication skills,” said Chambers. “Successful educators are enthusiastic about the subject matter and committed to supporting each individual student,” she added.

Chambers has also been involved with course and curriculum development at all levels of the institution. She chaired the COE committee that developed the College’s pre-professional block (PPB) courses and worked with P-12 partners to successfully implement the courses in her role as the first PPB coordinator. She also served on the University FYE Task Force and assisted with development and implementation a university-wide FYE 1220 First-Year Seminar course, in addition to the Conversations with Professors program and the Early Alert system for first-year students who are not making satisfactory progress.

In recent years, Chambers has combined her interests in nature photography and effective instructional practices through her work in local elementary schools, where she has been assisting classroom teachers with nature photography-related activities as a means to support learning in environmental science and technology as well as literacy skills.

About Cordelia Zinskie

Zinskie joined Georgia Southern after serving as a research assistance specialist and instructor at Memphis State University where she earned a Doctor of Education in Foundations of Education with an emphasis in Research Methodology and Statistics. She served as chair of the Department of Curriculum, Foundations and Reading for seven years (2006-2013) before returning to the faculty.

“After returning to a full-time faculty role, I made the evaluation area of service a priority as I felt that this is where I could have the most immediate impact on my students, peers, institution and professional community,” said Zinskie.

Zinskie’s commitment to service can clearly be seen by reviewing the leadership roles she takes in both the College and her professional community. She currently serves as the program coordinator for the new master’s in evaluation, assessment, research and learning degree program and a member of the College’s Curriculum Committee. She previously served as a member of the University’s Institutional Review Board and as chair of the College’s Technology and Instructional Resources Committee. Zinskie is also recognized for service beyond the institution in her roles as editor of the *National Youth-At-Risk Journal* and president of the Georgia Educational Research Association. She served as one of the 2016-2017 co-chairs for the National Youth-At-Risk Conference Savannah, the largest conference hosted by the University.

During her years in the College, Zinskie has used her expertise in research methods to mentor students at the Ed.S. and Ed.D. levels through service on their graduate research committees. She has chaired five dissertations and served as a committee member for 47 additional completed dissertations. Zinskie has also been a committee member for 100 Ed.S. students who completed field-based research projects.

“Service is my passion,” noted Zinskie. “It is my service commitments that keep me inspired and energized. Service allows me to use my disciplinary-specific expertise to make a difference at the institution and in my profession.”

Georgia Southern University Awards of Excellence

Each fall, Georgia Southern University names six recipients of the Awards for Excellence. The Award for Excellence in Instruction honors contributions to the teaching-learning process at the institutional level.

The recipient must demonstrate excellence in the classroom and beyond by making contributions to the discipline and to the overall institutional mission. Recipients of the Excellence in Service Award are recognized for the use of their academic disciplines to provide non-compensated assistance to the region as well as to the academic community. The Excellence in Research/Creative Scholarly Activity Award seeks to recognize faculty who excel in their research efforts in addition to fulfilling regular full-time teaching responsibilities.

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Four faculty members recognized for Jack Miller Awards

August 23, 2017



Pictured (l-r): Aslihan Unal, Ph.D.; Amanda Wall, Ph.D.; Michelle Reidel, Ph.D.; and Julie Garlen, Ed.D.

The Jack Miller Faculty Awards are given annually to recognize Georgia Southern University College of Education (COE) faculty for demonstrated excellence in areas of teaching, service and/or scholarship. Awards can be given in each area along with an additional Educator of the Year Award, which recognizes scholarship in all three of the considered areas.

For the 2017-2018 academic year, four COE faculty members received Jack Miller Awards including [Amanda Wall, Ph.D.](#), [Aslihan Unal, Ph.D.](#), Julie Garlen, Ed.D. and [Michelle Reidel, Ph.D.](#)

[Amanda Wall](#) received the **Jack Miller Educator of the Year Award**, recognizing her proven success in all award areas including teaching, service and scholarship. Wall is an assistant professor of middle grades education in the Department of Teaching and Learning. She joined Georgia Southern in 2013 after completing her doctorate in teacher education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Since 2014, Wall has served as the faculty advisor for the Collegiate Middle Level Association (CMLA). She is an active member in several professional organizations including: the American Classical League; American Educational Research Association; Association for Middle Level Education; Georgia Middle School Association; and the National Association of Professors of Middle Level Education.

Wall's research interests include middle level education and adolescent literacy.

[Aslihan Unal](#), recipient of the **Jack Miller Award for Teaching**, is an assistant professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning. Unal teaches graduate-level courses in the master's of curriculum and instruction—accomplished teaching program. A member of the COE faculty since 2013, she previously served as an assistant professor at Usak University in Usak, Turkey. Unal earned a Ph.D. in Elementary Education from Florida State University. She also holds a master's in elementary education from the University of Missouri and a bachelor's in elementary education from Pamukkale University in Turkey.

Unal's research interests include assessment of teaching and learning, technology in education, classroom management and parental involvement.

The **Jack Miller Award for Scholarship and Creative Activity** was awarded to Department of Teaching and Learning's **Julie Garlen**. Recently promoted to the full rank of professor, Garlen serves as the program coordinator of the M.A.T. in Early Childhood Education degree program. A Triple Eagle Alumna, Garlen earned a bachelor's and master's in history as well as a doctorate in curriculum studies from Georgia Southern University. This is the third Jack Miller Award that Garlen has received, as she earned the award in the area of teaching in 2014 and the award for service in 2012. She has also received a University Award for Excellence in Service (2013).

Primary research interests for Garlen include early childhood education and cultural curriculum studies, including critical childhood studies and pop culture pedagogies. She has recently published articles in *Feminist Media Studies*, *Curriculum Inquiry*, *The Journal of Consumer Culture*, *Educational Studies*, and *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*. She is the co-editor of two volumes published in 2016: *Disney, Culture, and Curriculum* and *Teaching with Disney*.

[Michelle Reidel](#) was named winner of the **Jack Miller Award for Service**. An associate professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning, Reidel serves as the program coordinator for both the M.Ed. in Secondary Education and M.Ed. in Middle Grades Education degree programs. She joined Georgia Southern in 2006 after serving as an instructor at the University of Colorado-Boulder where she earned her doctorate in curriculum and instruction, specializing in social studies education. Reidel is also a previous winner of the Jack Miller Award for Teaching (2009). She serves as the coordinator of the Southeast Regional Social Studies Fair and is an active supporter of the Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy.

Reidel's research interests include democratic education, social studies teacher education and the role of emotion in teaching and learning.

The Jack Miller Faculty Awards are given each fall during the College's annual meeting.

Jack Miller was the former Dean of the College of Education at Georgia Southern. He endowed the Jack Miller Faculty Awards in 1994 after leaving to accept the position of Dean of the College of Education at

Florida State University. In September 2016, Miller retired from his position as the President of Central Connecticut State University. The awards are open to all full-time, tenure-track COE faculty who have completed at least three years of full-time service at the University.

For more information about the Jack Miller Awards or to view past recipients, visit <https://coe.georgiasouthern.edu/awards/>

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