

# Center News

## Mathematics Education Center

at George Mason University

### GMU Faculty Contribute To National Research Effort

The National Science Foundation (NSF) Math and Science Partnership Program strengthens K-12 math and science achievement, improves teacher quality, and reduces achievement gaps among student populations. The NSF awarded a \$14.7 million dollar contract to COSMOS, George Mason, and Brown University to conduct the Math and Science Partnership Program Evaluation (MSP-PE). GMU's Mathematics Education Center has a \$3.5 million dollar sub-contract for the MSP-PE.

Robert Yin (Cosmos) is the Principal Investigator. Patricia Moyer-Packenham (MEC Director), Kenneth Wong (Brown Univ.) and Jennifer Scherer (Cosmos) are Co-Principal Investigators.



**Dr. Anastasia Kitsantas**

As a member of the GMU team, Dr. Anastasia Kitsantas has played an important role in contributing to the research being conducted in the Math and Science Partnership Program Evaluation. Dr. Kitsantas is Coordinator of the Educational Psychology program in

CEHD and an expert in social cognitive processes and self-regulated learning. She has utilized this expertise in analyses of the instruments used by MSP's to gather data on characteristics of teacher quality along with collaborators Dr. Patricia Moyer-Packenham, Dr. Johnna Bolyard and Hana Oh. The analysis of these instruments showed that MSP Awardees were using a variety of instruments to collect data on teacher characteristics. Dr. Kitsantas is currently working with members of the MSP-PE research team to design and conduct analyses on variables related to teacher quality, quantity, and diversity in a large national data base.

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#### Special points of interest:

- Student Awards
- New Faculty
- Four MEL PhDs Graduate

### ExxonMobil Math Specialist Excellence Award



**Patrick Dexter (ExxonMobil Corporation), Dr. Patricia Moyer-Packenham, Theresa Wills, and Dean Jeff Gorrell**

For many years ExxonMobil has been a strong supporter of Virginia's Math Specialist initiatives by providing funds for mathematics specialists throughout the state of Virginia. This year marks the first time that an award has been given directly to a George Mason University Math Specialist student.

The student selected for the ExxonMobil Math Specialist Excellence Award demonstrated a strong commitment in her pursuit of the Math Specialists Master's degree and

has an excellent academic record in coursework and program activities.

This year's recipient of the ExxonMobil math specialist Award was Theresa Wills. Theresa recently completed her first year as a Master's Degree student in the Math Specialist program at George Mason University. She currently serves Alexandria City Public Schools as a 7th grade math Teacher. Theresa received \$1000 from ExxonMobil for the award.

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## New Mathematics Education Faculty

Dr. Jennifer Suh has accepted the position of Assistant Professor of Mathematics Education. For the past two years, she taught courses for the Elementary Education and Mathematics Education Programs at George Mason University as a super-adjunct professor. Her eleven years of teaching in elementary schools gives her a rich background when supervising PDS interns as a University Facilitator. Dr. Suh's research interests focus on students developing mathematics proficiency and their use

of virtual and physical manipulatives to build representational fluency. She is also interested in teachers' mathematics proficiency through building pedagogical content knowledge. In the Spring of 2005, she completed her doctorate in Mathematics Education at George Mason University. Dr. Suh earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Master's degree in Elementary Education from the University of Virginia. Her favorite thing to do is spend time with her two boys, Jeremy (4 years old) and Zachary (1 year old).



**Dr. Jennifer M. Suh**

## MEL PhD Student Wins Awards and Scholarships



**Linda Gantz**

Linda Gantz is beginning her third year in the Mathematics Education Leadership PhD Program. She is one of two students at George Mason University selected this year to receive a Datatel Scholars Foundation Scholarship in the amount of \$1,600. For over 25 years, Datatel Incorporated has focused exclusively on helping colleges and universities manage their business processes. Datatel Scholarships are awarded to outstanding students who attend Datatel client schools. Linda has also been selected as the 2006-07 recipient of the Elores Varnon Graduate Scholarship

(\$1,000). This award is given to teachers enrolled in a graduate program who have the desire to enhance their professional qualifications and remain in the teaching field.

In addition to her doctoral studies, Linda has continued her self-reflection and growth by applying to take the National Board Certification in Adolescent and Young Adulthood Mathematics. To pursue this goal, Linda received a \$1,000 Grant from the Virginia Department of Education. Congratulations Linda!

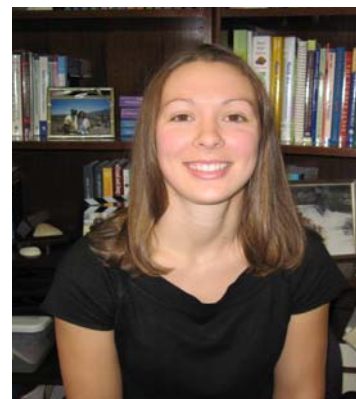
## Shannon Manke Receives Masters Degree Fellowship Award

Each year the College of Education and Human Development provides funds for the Mathematics Education Leadership faculty to select one student who has demonstrated academic excellence and leadership in mathematics education. The MEL faculty are pleased to announce that Shannon Manke is the recipient of the 2006-07 MEL Master's Degree Fellowship Award. This award carries with it a stipend of \$500 provided by the CEHD.

Shannon Manke was selected for this year's award based on her academic merit and professional leadership in

mathematics education. Shannon served as Mathematics Department Chair at Kilmer Middle School where she taught a variety of classes in grades 7 and 8, including honors classes. During the 2006-07 school year she begins a new position as a Step Up Mathematics (SUM) teacher for the FCPS Title I Office. In this position, Shannon will work with K-6 teachers at Pine Spring Elementary School to support classroom instruction in mathematics.

Shannon has also taught a manipulatives class for FCPS in the past few years, and she will be presenting at the annual NCTM meeting in the spring 2007.



**Shannon Manke**

## Johnna J. Bolyard wins PhD Award

During the Spring 2006 CEHD Awards Ceremony, Johnna J. Bolyard received the PhD in Education Service Award. Dr. Bolyard received this award based on her many contributions to the College of Education during her time as a PhD student in the Mathematics Education Leadership Program. She has taught a number of courses in many different programs at GMU, and has worked with both the College of Education and Department of Mathematical Sciences faculty and programs.

Dr. Bolyard served on a statewide mathematics course development com-

mittee. She represents GMU Math Education faculty on the committees for Geometry & Measurement and Geometry for the Middle School Math Specialist and has represented the GMU Math Education Leadership programs at state level meetings.

Dr. Bolyard is currently serving as a full-time Project Manager for the Math and Science Partnership Program Evaluation in MEC. She is responsible for hiring and supervising GMU staff, maintaining all budget operations for the project, and directing and conducting research in the Mathematics Education Center.



**Drs. Patricia Moyer-Packenham, Johnna Bolyard, and Dean Jeff Gorrell**

## Spring 2006 Graduation & Awards Memories



**Spikell Award in Math Education (PhD), winner Gwenanne Salkind (center), with Dr. Patricia Moyer-Packenham and Dean Jeff Gorrell**



**Graduating Math Educ. PhD Students**  
Drs. Jennifer Suh, Lynn Salvo, Lorraine Smith, and Johnna Bolyard

Congratulations



**Mason Graduation:** Drs. Jennifer Suh, Lynn Salvo, Patricia Moyer-Packenham, and Johnna Bolyard



**Mason Graduation**  
Drs. Lynn Salvo, Jennifer Suh, and Johnna Bolyard



## *Mathematics Education Center*

Director: Patricia Moyer-Packenham, PhD.

Assistant Director: Margret Hjalmanson, PhD.

George Mason University  
Mathematics Education Center  
4085 University Drive, Comm II, Suite 200A  
Fairfax, VA 22030

Phone: 703-993-4789  
Fax: 703-993-3643  
E-mail: [mathcntr@gmu.edu](mailto:mathcntr@gmu.edu)



The Mathematics Education Center (MEC) is located in the Graduate School of Education in the College of Education and Human Development at George Mason University, Fairfax, VA. The MEC conducts research, provides professional development, and designs instructional materials. The MEC works in collaboration with the Mathematics Education Leadership programs at George Mason University to support the scholarly research and professional development of PhD and Master's level graduate students enrolled in the programs.



**GMU Math Education Faculty**