

COEHS alumnae honored with Professor for a Day awards

by Carlyn Brown - Thursday, November 10, 2011

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/15354/coehs-alumnae-honored-with-professor-for-a-day-awards/>

Each year, through its Professor for a Day program, the College of Education and Human Services (COEHS) honors two alumni who have made significant contributions to their profession and provides a day for them to interact and share their experiences with students.

On Nov. 9, Penny Antell MSE '93 and Brenna Garrison-Bruden '00 were honored for their significant contributions in K-12 education.

Student to teacher to lifelong learner

Antell, who has a master's degree in reading, said that the education that she received at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh was a strong foundation for her current position as the K-5 Reading Coordinator at D.C. Everest in Weston, Wis., and has been beneficial as she works towards her doctorate degree at the University of Arkansas.

One of her responsibilities as a reading coordinator is serving as the district literacy coach, which allows her to train and provide support to other literacy coaches. She also works directly with students in intervention groups, which gives her the opportunity to incorporate hands-on activities in the classroom.

"I nominated Penny for Professor for a Day because of her commitment to lifelong learning and the leadership she has shown within and beyond her district," said reading Professor Michael Ford. "Having visited her school, I could see firsthand how her knowledge and actions have led to a comprehensive literacy program that is truly focused on moving all students forward."

Along with her work at D.C. Everest, Antell also provides staff development on literacy and assessment as a leader in Partnership Comprehensive Literacy. She also teaches courses for the Partnerships in Comprehensive Literacy Model Institute and leads workshops on Common Core State Standards.

"I'm thrilled to be asked and held in such high regard by a previous professor. It is an honor to be both considered and selected," said Antell.

Antell has continued to work with Ford through the Wisconsin Reading Comprehension Test Committee and as part of the Wisconsin State Reading Association (WSRA), which discovers practices for instruction that strengthen instruction in the art of communication. Antell also is a member of the National Reading Council, the International Reading Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and is an adjunct professor at Viterbo University.

Building close ties contributes towards success

Garrison-Bruden believes in making a difference in the lives of her students.

“Each day I draw on my experiences at UW Oshkosh to support the students, staff and families I serve,” said Garrison-Bruden, who is currently the principal at Carl Traeger Elementary in Oshkosh. “I continue to have a close relationship with the College of Education and Human Services and strive to offer current students the same great experiences I had.”

During her time as an educator in Oshkosh, Garrison-Bruden has also been both a second grade teacher and principal at Webster-Stanley Elementary in Oshkosh.

While principal at Webster-Stanley Elementary, Garrison-Bruden initiated a partnership with the Tri-County Community Dental Clinic in Appleton to offer free dental services to elementary students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. The volunteer clinic consists of 100 local dentists from the community who volunteer their services to low-income residents in the Fox Valley.

Her past professors and colleagues do not find it surprising that she is moving up the education ladder. With her hard work ethic and love for working in administration, she excels at the tasks she is given.

“She is a lifelong learner, well-read in education, cutting edge strategies and research initiatives,” said Suzanne Doemel, an ad hoc instructor for COEHS . “She is highly-motivated and child-centered, doing whatever it takes to meet individual student needs.”

“The College of Education and Human Services has an amazing staff that fosters best practices in teaching and learning,” said Garrison-Bruden. “The professors teach and model the latest research-based best practices that are linked to enhanced student outcomes.”

Garrison-Bruden continues to give back to the University by presenting at both COEHS and Student Wisconsin Education Association functions to support and inspire pre-service teachers by giving perspective and advice from her administrative and teaching positions. In 2004, she received the Distinguished Alumni Award from UW-Fond du Lac, where she completed her foundation courses before transferring to UW Oshkosh. She has also served as a Fond du Lac County supervisor and as county board chair.

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