

WARNER WORD



Warner Student Helps Promote Early Science Learning on Ever-Popular Children's Show

Even with a busy schedule as a classroom teacher, preschool curriculum specialist, doctoral student, and grandmother to six, Kathy Conezio still manages to find quality time these days for Elmo, Big Bird, and Oscar the Grouch.

As a child growing up, Conezio always knew that she wanted to be a teacher. But what she didn't realize is that her career in education would eventually take her on an adventure down one of the most loved streets in America. Today, she serves as the head science curriculum advisor for Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit educational organization behind *Sesame Street*. In this consulting role, she spends most of her time working closely with the team's writers and producers to review *Sesame Street* scripts, evaluating science content for accuracy and making sure the presentation is developmentally appropriate for the show's audience, now mostly two- to three-year olds.

Conezio, who brings a strong classroom connection to her work with *Sesame Street*, is able to see how different lessons work with kids and then takes this knowledge and experience back to writers. "What I didn't realize is everything I ask them to do in the script, they then have to figure out how to make it happen on the set with the characters," she says. "When I read the script I see how much is involved in production with bringing everything together."

Ever since the groundbreaking educational series for kids premiered in November 1969, it has taught children the joys of reading, counting, sharing and spelling, with the help of familiar characters, eye-catching puppets, mesmerizing animations, and catchy tunes. Now, as *Sesame Street* celebrates its 40th anniversary, it has taken on an extra focus: teaching young children about science through the world around them.

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Calendar

1/29/2010
Writing Workshop - Critical Reading of Academic Texts

2/03/2010
19th Annual Renewal & Reflection for Counseling Professionals Conference

2/06/2010
Writing Workshop - Genres of Academic Writing

2/12/2010
Writing Workshop - Constructing an Argument in Academic Writing

2/27/2010
Writing Workshop - Critiques and Literature Reviews

Visit warner.rochester.edu for event details.





News Around Warner...

King Renews National Board Certification

Jennifer King has successfully renewed her National Board Certification in Adolescent Young Adulthood/English Language Arts (ELA), a hallmark of excellence in the teaching profession. Originally certified in 2000, King goes up for renewal every ten years and is now certified until 2020.

To renew, King had to submit multiple papers in which she identified, described, documented, and reflected on four different professional growth experiences.

"I wrote about becoming a doctoral student, continuing my work in secondary ELA classrooms, participating in professional communities, and becoming a teacher educator," she says. "My involvement at the Warner School has been vital to my growth in all of these areas."

King joined the Warner School faculty in 2009-10 as a visiting instructor in teaching and curriculum directing the English teacher preparation program. Certified as an English language arts teacher, she brings fifteen years of experience as an ELA educator teaching at the middle school, high school, and university levels.

The Warner Word is the newsletter of the Warner School of Education, and is published monthly during the academic year by the Office of Communications and External Relations. E-mail news@warner.rochester.edu to submit news items.

Warner Student is One of Several Local Child Advocates Recognized for Lead Abatement Efforts

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) presented the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning, an initiative that Warner doctoral student Ralph Spezio co-founded and currently helps lead, the 2009 Environmental Justice Achievement Award. The Coalition, a partnership among the University of Rochester, City of Rochester, Monroe County, and Empire Justice, was recognized for its community-based efforts in reducing childhood lead poisoning in Monroe County.

BaileyShea Presents Research Findings

Doctoral student Chelsea BaileyShea presented her dissertation research findings at the 2009 Council on International Education Exchange (CIEE) Annual Conference that was held in Istanbul, Turkey in November. CIEE previously awarded her a dissertation fellowship in 2008-09 for her research on factors that affect American college student participation in study abroad.

Marquis Co-Authors Journal Article

Andre Marquis, assistant professor, co-authored the article "Michael J. Mahoney: A Retrospective," which was published in the *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, 19 (4). The article examines the lifework of Michael Mahoney, a researcher, therapist and teacher who began his work as a strict behaviorist, who became one of the pioneers of the "cognitive revolution," and eventually formulated one of the most comprehensively integrative metatheories of counseling and psychotherapy with his developmental constructivism.

Meuwissen Presents at Conference, Authors Review

Kevin Meuwissen, assistant professor, presented the paper "'What's Experience Matter if You Don't Learn Anything from It?' Exploring Wisdom and Ambition in Secondary Social Studies Teaching Via Theories of Domain Learning" and was a panelist at a session on technology innovations in social studies teacher education at the National Council for the Social Studies' November 2009 meeting held in Atlanta, Ga. He also authored a review of *Controversy in the Classroom: The Democratic Power of Discussion* (Routledge, 2009), written by Diana E. Hess, which appears in the Winter 2010 volume of *Theory and Research in Social Education*.

Luehmann, Chaffee Present at Anthropological Association

April Luehmann, associate professor, and doctoral student Rachel Chaffee co-presented "Investigations into the Learning Pathways and Processes Associated with the Development of Voluntary Expertise" at the American Anthropological Association in Philadelphia, Pa. in December. Luehmann and Chaffee discussed their ethnographic research on the ways Science STARS was lived out by one small group of students and their teachers, and how the emergent characteristics of the learning environment impacted two participating girls' development, specifically two girls who began the program with damaged identities with science.

Brent, Finnigan Publish Article on Charter Schools

Brian Brent, professor, and Kara Finnigan, assistant professor, published the article "Financial Management of New York's Charter Schools: A Normative, Descriptive, and Prescriptive Analysis" in the *Journal of School Choice*, 3 (4). The article reports on their study of the financial management practices of charter schools.

Smith Presents Research Findings, Publishes Article

Doctoral student Bernie Smith presented the results of her research at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) in Boston, Mass. in January. She presented "Integrating Ethics into LIS Teaching: The Journey" as well as participated in the Information Ethics Special Interest Group in the session "Integrating Ethics Across the Curriculum in Library and Information Science: An Interactive Discussion on Research and Practice."

In addition, Smith co-authored the article "Navigating the Doctoral Journey" in the *Journal of Hospital Librarianship*, 2009, 9(4). The article provides strategies for successfully navigating doctoral studies.

Hursh Co-Authors Chapter on Environment

David Hursh, associate professor, along with alumna Camille Martina, '05, (Ph.D.) and Michael Fantauzzo, a social studies teacher in the Rush-Henrietta School District, contributed the chapter "Environmental Toxins Near and Far: Health and Civic Responsibility" in *Social Studies and Diversity Teacher Education: What We Do and Why We Do It* (Routledge, 2009), edited by Elizabeth Heilman.

The chapter provides a rationale and examples for how teachers might teach about pesticides, lead poisoning, e-waste and other environmental dangers, and shows how what are often thought of as only science or health issues also relate to civics and citizenship.

Professor, Students Collaborate on New Book Examining the Rich Resources Marginalized Youth Bring to the Classroom

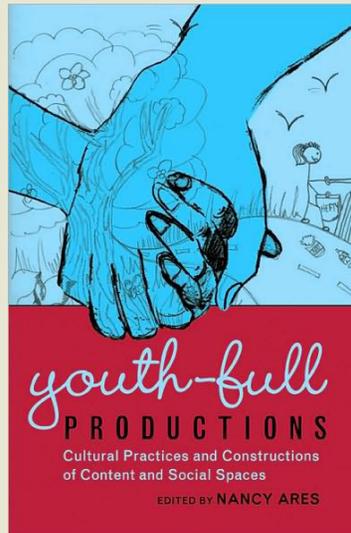
Nancy Ares, associate professor, has co-authored and edited a book that examines the rich resources and practices that youth of color and those living in poverty develop through the varied contexts of their everyday lives and bring to classroom learning.

Youth-full Productions: Cultural Practices and Constructions of Content and Social Spaces, published December 2009 by Peter Lang Publishing, is a collection of chapters highlighting how marginalized youth are active agents in creating cultural practices, social spaces, and disciplinary learning.

The nine chapters in *Youth-full Productions* were written collaboratively by Warner School doctoral students and senior social science scholars. Scholars contributing include Professor Joanne Larson; 2009-10 American Educational Research Association (AERA) President Carol Lee; funds of knowledge anthropologist Norma González from the University of Arizona; and urban education expert Michelle Fine from the City University of New York, Graduate Center.

Each chapter looks at the life experiences embedded in cultural communities—including language, communication, interaction patterns, goals, and beliefs associated with family, peer, and social networks—as valuable resources that youth bring to learning, and shares what schools can learn about and from youth regarding these everyday practices.

Youth-full Productions resulted from a compilation of research from an advanced doctoral seminar, titled “Cultural Practices as Resources for Learning and Development,” that was taught by Ares in 2008. Fourteen doctoral students, who each co-authored chapters in *Youth-full Productions*, spent a semester researching topics that made connections to mathematics, literacy, science learning, and cultural practices with



a focus on informing pedagogy and future research. Ares decided that the book would be a great way for the students to disseminate their research.

The book then expanded to include the research and practice of six senior authors, scholars and professionals, who supported the students' work, to elaborate on what Ares and the students had begun.

Ares focuses her research on classroom and community practices, with particular attention to the way that cultural and linguistic diversity and social interaction affect teaching, learning, and community transformation. She is co-author, with Edward Buendía from the University of Utah, of the book *Geographies of Difference: The Social Production of the East Side, West Side, and Central City School*.

Institute for Innovative Transition Receives Grant to Launch Think College NY! Initiative

The Institute for Innovative Transition at the University of Rochester has been awarded a \$15,000 Think College grant to conduct statewide planning for inclusive postsecondary education options for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Institute for Innovative Transition, housed at Strong Center for Developmental Disabilities (SCDD), is one of eight University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs) nationwide to receive a Think College grant from the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts Boston, with funding from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities.

The grant will allow the Institute for Innovative Transition to collaborate with the Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education at Syracuse University over the next nine months on state level strategic planning to implement an inclusive postsecondary initiative statewide. The

Institute will then sustain and continue project activities after the initial funding and planning period.

“Historically speaking, high school students with intellectual and developmental disabilities have had few, if any, opportunities and support to attend college,” says Martha Mock, director of the Institute who also holds joint appointments at the Warner School and in the Department of Pediatrics in the University of Rochester School of Medicine. “Increasing inclusive postsecondary education options will provide them with a valuable link to the school-to-life transition that will ultimately help to increase their outcomes for employability and independence.”

The Institute for Innovative Transition is well poised to lead this statewide planning effort as it has already made progress locally in addressing this transition issue in the higher education community and community at large.

This past summer, the Golisano Foundation hosted a group of university and college presidents, representing nearly a dozen local higher education institutions, who joined forces and formed a new consortium, the Western New York Consortium on Campus-Based Opportunities (WNYCCO), that will allow these institutions to work together to provide a range of inclusive supports and programs to students with developmental disabilities. The WNYCCO is an initiative of the Institute for Innovative Transition.

Launched in 2008 with a \$600,000 grant from the B. Thomas Golisano Foundation, and in partnership with the Warner School and Strong Center for Developmental Disabilities, the Institute aims to improve the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families as they transition from school age to adulthood. For more information about the Institute, visit www.urmc.rochester.edu/pediatrics/transition.

Conezio Serves as Head Science Advisor to Sesame Street

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Science is a natural way of thinking and trying to understand the world. Conezio, who pushes her own students to explore the world around them through active investigation, says that we need to keep science down-to-earth and capitalize on kids' natural curiosity about the world. "Kids need to see that science is connected to real life," she adds. "We need to wrap language around their experiences. It's not laboratory science—it's learning about everyday life, like picking up acorns and discovering where they came from or learning about evaporation as laundry hangs out to dry."

She also believes that we need to gain an appreciation for how much kids enjoy science. Building on their interest in and enthusiasm for science at an early age is key to building a strong foundation for lifelong interest and success in science. In the process, they also learn new concepts and language skills.



Kathy Conezio visits with Elmo and Kevin Clash, who plays the voice of Elmo, on the set of *Sesame Street*.

"Kids need embodied science experiences—they love that stuff—and we kill it in classrooms by making it boring," Conezio explains. "If we can do more science and keep kids interested in what they are already doing while helping adults to recog-

nize this as science, that would be a great thing that comes out of all of this."

She also works with *Sesame Street* writers to identify and use vocabulary and real science words, like "hypothesis" and "investigate," but in the context of the activities. "Children can learn these science words provided that they are learning them in the contexts of meaningful, hands-on experiences," she says. "Vocabulary acquisition is a very important part of reading success down the road."

Conezio's experience as a doctoral student in teaching and curriculum at the Warner School has been a valuable stepping stone between her own research interests and her work with *Sesame Street*. Collaborating with Professor Lucia French, she has looked at ways to bridge science and literacy in preschool classrooms and helped to develop a preschool curriculum that capitalizes on children's natural curiosity about the world and embraces science as an essential part of language and literacy development among preschoolers.

Conezio says, "It's very satisfying for me to continue to do what I do and to impact the lives of children, parents, and future educators. It's fun. It's creative. It's very satisfying."

Genesee Valley Writing Project Seeks Educators for 2010 Summer Institute

The Genesee Valley Writing Project (GVWP) is accepting applications for its 2010 Summer Institute, which brings together public and private school teachers from across Monroe County and surrounding counties, in all grade levels and all disciplines, for a month of intensive reading, writing, research, and practice. Applications must be submitted by **March 1**.

The four-week Annual Summer Institute, the heart of the GVWP, will meet from July 6 through 30. The Institute will be directed by Professor Joanne Larson, a leading scholar in new literacies who works toward empowering students to achieve the kinds of literacy needed to be successful. Her investigations on literacy practices

are distinguished by her partnerships with practicing teachers and school-based educators.

The GVWP will provide a \$100 stipend to each participant and three graduate credits, tuition-free, in education from the Warner School. Applicants must be practicing teachers who embrace writing and literacy as central components of learning in the classroom and who are looking for innovative ways to integrate literacy practices into student learning. Twenty outstanding teachers from all disciplines and at all levels of instruction, from pre-kindergarten to university, will be selected as 2010 Fellows.

"The Summer Institute brings together teachers from urban, suburban, and rural schools to explore their own philosophies of teaching writing and to engage in research that strengthens their knowledge, skills, and dispositions toward the teaching of writing," says Larson. "It is a valuable way for educators to share ideas and hone their own writing and to learn a variety of ways to implement authentic writing practices into their own classrooms while developing close ties with professionals from around the area."

To receive an application or for more information about the GVWP 2010 Summer Institute, visit www.rochester.edu/warner/gvwp, or contact Joanne Larson at (585) 275-0900 or jl Larson@warner.rochester.edu.