



CENTER for LEARNING through the ARTS

Quarterly Report

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University of California, Irvine

A Word from the Director...

Liane Brouillette

The new Dana Foundation book, *Transforming Arts Teaching: The Role of Higher Education*, profiles innovative programs within 24 institutions of higher education. These institutions were chosen by a select committee for their exemplary training of arts educators. If interested, please visit <http://www.dana.org/news/publications/publication.aspx?id=10158> to download a free copy of this thought-provoking volume. The UC Irvine Center for Learning through the Arts is profiled on pp. 63-64. A hardcopy is obtainable by sending a written request on institutional letterhead to the address on that webpage.

On December 31, 2007, the UCI Center for Learning through the Arts will officially change its name to the UCI Center for Learning through the Arts and Technology. With the transfer of administrative oversight to the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology (Calit2), the Center embarks on an exciting new era.

Over the past three years, the Center has become increasingly involved in Internet-based delivery of both research findings and curriculum materials. However the technology component of our activities will, during the next three years, be different in kind. In addition to making our peer-reviewed journal, the *Journal for Learning through the Arts*, and research papers in the Center's eScholarship Repository available over the Internet, there will be an emphasis on the unique kinds of learning made possible by technology. The 2008 issue of the *Journal for Learning through the Arts* will focus on digital arts.

ArtsCore: K-2 Project Awarded \$828,219

The ArtsCore: K-2 project has won funding for a new professional development program to help improve teaching in kindergarten through second grade in the core content areas of visual and performing arts and English language arts. The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) awarded ArtsCore: K-2 a four-year grant of \$828,219 in a statewide competition. The new program is a partnership between UC Irvine and the San Diego Unified School District.

The program will provide 60 teachers each year with summer institutes and school-based activities that enable them to incorporate standards-based arts education into their classes in ways that strengthen the English language skills of their students. In all, 180 teachers will receive training, directly affecting approximately 7200 K-2 students in the district. A special feature of the project is that participating teachers will hone their arts integration skills by partnering Teaching Artists, who will help the teachers implement arts lessons in K-2 classrooms.

This grant is part of the federal Improving Teacher Quality Program funded under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. It is the latest edition of a long-standing federal program aimed at improving student achievement through professional development for teachers. In the two decades that CPEC has administered the program, more than \$93 million in grants have been awarded to colleges and universities working with high-need K-12 schools throughout California. The 2007 grants all focus on supporting teachers in kindergarten through second grade.

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CPEC requires rigorous evaluation and research to demonstrate how implementation of the professional development program affected both student achievement and teacher practice. While the professional development provided by these grants is vitally needed, the research requirement is especially important, according to CPEC Executive Director Murray Haberman, who explained: “Being required to demonstrate the impact of the professional development on student achievement, not just on teacher practice, is critical and supports CPEC’s overall commitment to accountability in educational programs.”

Olivia Singh, chair of CPEC, said the grants play an important role in making sure every student has a highly qualified teacher. “The program has had a long-term impact on helping teachers strengthen their content knowledge and their understanding of effective teaching strategies—key elements of education reform,” Singh noted. “UC Irvine and its partner schools should be proud of the quality of their proposal and its potential for improving teaching and learning in San Diego.”

The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. Its primary focus is to ensure that the state’s educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities. More information about the Commission and its work can be found on its website at www.cpec.ca.gov.

Renewal as Center for Learning through the Arts and Technology

On the recommendation of the Academic Senate Council on Research, Computing, and Libraries (CORCL), UCI Vice Chancellor for Research Susan Bryant extended the Campus Center designation of the Center for three years (through December 31, 2010) on November 20. During this period, the Center will report to the Director of the UCI Division of the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology (Calit2). In renewing the Center, CORCL members commended the Center for its performance, particularly with regard to the interdisciplinary nature of its faculty, its programs in K-12 schools, and the success of its electronic scholarship repository.

Mapping the Beat Lessons in Wiki Format

A wiki is a collaborative website with content provided and edited by a specified group or the general community. In fall 2007, UCI Network and Computing Services (NACS) made a pilot wiki service available to academic departments research programs on campus. The Center for Learning through the Arts opted to use software to help facilitate communication and collaboration among participants in the multi-campus Mapping the Beat program funded by National Geographic.

During the 2006-07 academic year, the original Mapping the Beat lessons developed through the UC San Diego ArtsBridge program were made available to participating teachers and ArtsBridge scholars either in pdf format or on a password-protected website, where suggestions for alternations or enhancements to a specific segment of any Mapping the Beat lesson could be submitted. However, the teachers and scholars found the process laborious and few used it.

A “Teaching Materials” page (<http://www.clta.uci.edu/teachingMaterials.html>) has now been added to the Center’s website, with all of the Mapping the Beat lessons made available in wiki format. Teachers and scholars can now add enhancements (maps, images, on-line music sources) directly to a given lesson. (Of course, caution must be taken to avoid uploading copyrighted material.) Anyone wishing to contribute content need only contact the Center (clta@uci.edu) to receive instructions for the wiki.

Unlike the password-protected Mapping the Beat webpage used in 2006-07, the new wiki-format lessons can be read by anyone. They open to the world. This allows others to benefit from the Mapping the Beat project. Already the number of lessons available is growing. Under the leadership of Lawrence University ArtsBridge Director Jasmine Yep, with the support of fifth grade host teacher Matt Bonson and ArtsBridge faculty mentor Phillip Swan, ArtsBridge scholar Sarah Tochiki has created several lessons that comprise an exciting addition to the Mapping the Beat lessons we have all become familiar with. These lessons include:

The Civil War, Civil War Bands, and their Music;
Chinese in America: The Gold Rush, Gum San, and the Transcontinental Railroad;
American Work Songs in Hawaii.

New Faces in the CLtA Office

At the beginning of the Fall 2007 quarter, the CLtA office acquired two new student members. Calvin Shin and Arjun Venugopal. This quarter, we will profile Calvin Shin, who did much of the work involved in formatting this newsletter. In this section, we have asked Calvin to say a little about himself and what he has been contributing to CLtA this fall:

My name is Calvin Shin and I am currently a 4th year undergraduate student majoring in Psychology and Social Behavior with a minor in Criminology. I aspire to either to go into the field of psychology and become a therapist or go to law school and become a criminal defense attorney. I assist Professor Brouillette with secretarial tasks such as formatting newsletters, helping in the production of her book, and keeping the office as organized as possible. I believe this to be a beneficial experience because as a student, I never get to see this aspect of the school. Also, the tools learned here will be useful in any future work situation. I plan to work here until I graduate in Spring. During my time here I would like to do my best to accomplish the goals of CLtA.

UCI Poetry Academy at El Sol

The fall 2007 issue of *The Graduate*, published by the UCI Graduate Division, featured an article by UCI Poetry Academy Director Sue Cronmiller. (Please see <http://www.rgs.uci.edu/gradquarterly/pdfpubs/07F.pdf>) As the CLtA Associate Director for Community Partnerships, Cronmiller has worn many hats. Long a UCI Instructor, first in the School of Humanities, then in the Dept. of Education, she is currently expanding her service to the children of Orange County as program officer for CHILDREN FIRST—A Merage Foundation.

This change has led to a transition in the way that the weekly tutoring sessions at El Sol Science and Arts Academy are delivered. Tutoring at El Sol was formerly carried out by UCI undergraduates taking fieldwork courses. This fall the undergraduates, who were enrolled in the education minor, were joined by MFA graduate student instructors, including poets Abby Gambrel, Leah Green, Ben Keating, Collier Nogue, Justin Rigamonte, Rich Simms and Kelly Swartz. Fiction writers Lauren Johnson and Patrick Coleman both instructed and helped with coordination. All reported an enhanced learning experience as a result of the involvement of these talented UCI MFA students.

“In the News” Lessons

Many educators have noted in recent years that the strong focus, at the state and federal level, on raising student achievement in language arts and math has caused teachers to cut back on the amount of time dedicated to social studies and science. To help hard-pressed teachers to provide accurate and timely lessons to students on events that are currently in the news, the Center recently added a new section to its webpage (<http://www.clta.uci.edu/teachingMaterials.html>).

The Powerpoints in this section provide highly visual summaries of scientific and geographic facts associated with newsworthy events. A lesson entitled “Causes of California Wildfires” was widely circulated among teachers in Southern California after the recent tragic series of fires. Another lesson examines the qualities of the Southern California landscape that contribute to the danger of wildfires. A third lesson looks at the causes of the flooding in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

Please visit us at the CLtA Website:
<http://www.clta.uci.edu/>

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