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UDP Focus: Serving Those Who Serve

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He also is excited about engaging teachers and students to explore their own areas, and Pits hopes that more people will start looking in their own backyards or find among heroes in their towns.

“History not only shows us our past, but inspires us and shows us our potential. People have done extraordinary things with limited resources,” Pits said. “History helps us imagine whose shoulders we’re standing on. We all contributed to this America that we hold so dear.”

More than marketing
The College of Education expresses a breadth and depth of information through the documentaries that conventional marketing brochures can’t convey.

Burenhull said community members have approached him about the “Dawn of Day” documentaries, which aired on a Topeka public television station. “They say, ‘What else do you do in the college?’ It’s creative, unique and lasting,” he said.

“History is important,” said Debbie Mercer, dean of the College of Education, which is the largest teacher preparation program in Kansas. “We don’t want part of our history to be forgotten or assume that children are going to automatically know or pick up on what we think is important. We need to be very purposeful in what we share and what we teach them.”

Along with more “Walk in My Shoe” films, plans are in the works for another ambitious documentary that follows several first-year teachers in schools across Kansas. The new teachers will keep video diaries that capture their daily challenges and successes.

“The response to our documentaries has been overwhelmingly positive, and I believe that is because we are adding more of importance and we are doing so thoughtfully and respectfully,” Mercer said. “Rarity is a unique talent in that within him the art and science of videography and the art and science of teaching converge.”

“The relación bring validity to the great community work our faculty do,” Earl said. “They also show that we care more about our students and their personal stories than trying to pull people in. And the end result is, we pull people in because we show that we care about our people.”

NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising calls the K-State College of Education home. The organization supports advising professionals at K-State and around the world. It also seeks to foster collaborative research between faculty and primary advisors, Charlie Nutt, NACADA executive director, said research in the field is thriving. Serving first-generation college students is a major focus.

NACADA has made the College of Education’s “A Walk in My Shoes: First-Generation College Students” documentary available as a resource to its 14,000 members worldwide,

“Many are using the first-generation documentary, and the materials are available online,” Nutt said.

“Workshops have been presented all over the country based on the information in the documentary and its companion e-book.”

Serving those who serve: Stith’s research on intimate partner violence helps military address issue

By Taylor Manges

Kansas State University distinguished professor Sandra Stith personifies the College of Human Ecology’s motto: “In a world focused on things, we focus first on people.”

The professor of marriage and family therapy is developing programs and tools to understand and treat intimate partner violence.

Working with the Department of Defense, Stith and her colleagues have developed a 15-item intimate Partner Physical Injury risk assessment tool to assess the likelihood that an individual who has had an alleged incident of intimate partner violence will have a subsequent incident.

They tested a 16-item tool that included factors that increase partner violence risk among civillians and factors commonly experienced by military personal—including deployment, post-traumatic stress disorder, frequent moves or isolation — to identify 15 states that most significantly predicted a subsequent incident.

Results of their research indicate that the 15-item tool is highly accurate in predicting a subsequent incident. The tool is currently being disseminated and mandated across all branches of service to enhance intimate partner risk assessment and management within the military.

The project’s second phase is examining if different treatment programs help lower an individual’s risk of a subsequent incident, which will then allow them to determine what kind of treatment or what length of treatment is most beneficial in reducing risk.

“Currently, some bases design their own treatment programs and tools to understand and treat intimate partner violence. We don’t want part of our history to be forgotten or assume that children are going to automatically know or pick up on what we think is important. We need to be very purposeful in what we share and what we teach them.”

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“Currently, some bases design their own treatment programs,” Stith said. “We might have some data to help decide if a provider should be using a more standardized approach.”

Stith credits the strong university-community relationship for providing opportunities for her and her team to volunteer and make a difference while obtaining her master’s degree and doctorate in Kansas State University.

“The research we are doing and the evidence-based practice we are teaching allows the kind of clinical work our students do,” Stith said. “Our students receive cutting-edge training about models of therapy they will use to help families.”

These experiences inspired Stith to continue working in the community when she returned to Manhattan to join the K-State faculty. She serves as a board member at the Manhattan Regional Crisis Center.

“I am personally excited to serve at the Crisis Center, where I once volunteered, because I feel like I got my start,” Stith said. “I was making domestic violence in an office with data, but going out to work with victims and helping support groups for victims of intimate partner violence gave me so much insight and credibility.”

Stith uses her research, scholarly achievements and family therapy they will use to help families.

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College of Human Ecology motto

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