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Through their creative and generous philanthropy, Maureen Kindel and other donors are leaving a legacy for tomorrow’s educators.
dean’s message

As the contents of this issue of EDvision attest, we are in the midst of an exciting period for our School as we fulfill President Lawton’s vision for LMU to engage with Los Angeles – city and Church – in a meaningful way. Our leadership in urban education – both through the positive impact our impassioned educators have on schools in the region and through our central role in education reform – can be seen in a myriad of recent activities.

In December, we convened charter school leaders to assist in the planning of a new Charter School Leadership Academy. This followed closely on the heels of our School’s hosting a week-long event commemorating the 30th anniversary of Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. More recently, our School hosted an important statewide conference on the subject of assessment and accountability in teacher education. In partnership with the Harvard Civil Rights Project, we co-sponsored a conference focused on issues pertinent to high school dropout in our Los Angeles public schools. We are forging a partnership with the Catholic Education Foundation to be the lead research institution on a study of the efficacy of Los Angeles Catholic schools, with a particular focus on minority students and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Our forward momentum will continue in October, when we co-host the second Education Summit at the Skirball Center. The ultimate goal of this summit is to form partnerships between business and education that will help create and support small learning communities to improve student achievement. And as we head into the 2006-07 academic year, we are in the process of building the infrastructure that will enable us to take on exciting new ventures while we continue with our important ongoing initiatives.

The LMU/Teach For America Partnership Program featured in this issue continues to be a great source of pride – ranked among the top Teach For America partnerships nationwide in corps member satisfaction. This issue is also dedicated to the generous philanthropy of our alumni and friends. I have begun the practice of meeting many of you when I travel to various regions of the country for conferences, and the experience is always energizing. Speaking for all of us here at the LMU School of Education, we greatly appreciate the role you play in helping to make possible our efforts to build a stronger, more equitable educational system for our children.

Shane P. Martin, PhD
Dean, School of Education
EDUCATION FOR ALL | NOVEMBER 28 - DECEMBER 2, 2005
The 30th anniversary of Public Law 94-142, which guaranteed students with disabilities the right to a free and appropriate education, was celebrated at LMU with panels, workshops, best-practices sessions, and documentary screenings. Speakers included Marlene Canter, president of the LAUSD Board of Education; Dr. Robert Rueda; and actor Henry Winkler. More information can be found at http://educationforall.lmu.edu/

DEAN'S CONVOCATION | NOVEMBER 14, 2005
The second annual School of Education Dean's Convocation took place in University Hall. In his presentation, “To Stand Against Forgetting: Integration of Theory, Practice, and Social Justice in Education,” Dr. Shane Martin spoke on current challenges in education, LMU's response, and the future of the LMU School of Education. For the full text, see http://soe.lmu.edu/facultystaff/dean/convocation_2005.asp

EVENING OF RENEWAL | FEBRUARY 15
The School of Education presented its first Catholic leadership award to Archbishop Timothy Michael Dolan for his outstanding pastoral work and contribution to Catholic education at the annual Evening of Renewal. Sponsored by the Catholic School Administration Program, this event provides an opportunity for graduates and current students of the program to connect, and for alumni to share their experiences and insights. Archbishop Dolan spoke on the topic, “The Last Word of the Teacher, Go and Teach.” “Our Catholic School communities do a splendid job educating young people academically, spiritually, socially, morally, and physically,” he said.

LUNCH HONORING SIR DANIEL DONOHUE | DECEMBER 7, 2005
Sir Daniel Donohue (right), trustee of the Dan Murphy Foundation and loyal friend and benefactor of LMU, was honored at a special lunch in December hosted by LMU President Robert Lawton. Given his significant philanthropic contributions, Sir Daniel was presented with an award for his lifelong commitment to the Catholic Church and the education of its youth. The Dan Murphy Foundation is a gracious supporter of various programs, in particular the PLACE Corps program at the School of Education.

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES MEETING | FEBRUARY 23
The School of Education hosted the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities meeting, where California’s superintendent of public instruction, Jack O’Connell, gave a keynote speech discussing accountability in teacher education. The day’s program included a panel discussion and presentations to promote discussion around the assessment of competent teacher candidates, producing quality teachers, and creating a fair and effective system of accountability. Additional speakers included, among others: Secretary of Education Alan Bersin (right, with panelist Carol Hodges, associate dean of education at USF); Linda Darling Hammond, Stanford professor; and Donna Gollnick, senior vice president of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

RECEPTION HONORING DOROTHY AND JOHN SHEA
OCTOBER 28, 2005
The School of Education hosted a fall reception at The Marymount Institute attended by students from the Partners in Los Angeles Catholic Education (PLACE) Corps and Catholic Archdiocesan School Teachers (LMU/LA CAST) programs, who had the privilege of meeting benefactors Dorothy and John Shea. The evening provided the Sheas with an opportunity to talk with many of the students their support of Catholic programs benefits. Highlights of the evening included compelling speeches by Barbara Moldovan from the LMU/LA CAST program and Erin Hughes of PLACE. Below: Along with President Robert Lawton and Associate Chancellor Fr. Al Koppes, Dean Shane Martin honored the Sheas with The Dean's Circle Award, bestowed on benefactors of $1 million or more for their visionary giving to education.

Above: Dean Shane Martin honors Dr. Alice Parker, retired assistant state superintendent and director of special education for the California Department of Education, who has worked in the field of special education for 36 years.

Below: At the annual Evening of Renewal, from left to right: Shane P. Martin, PhD; Sister Mary Elizabeth Galt, BVM, L.A. Archdiocese Chancellor; Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, PhD; Mary K. McCullough, PhD; and Fr. Michael Caruso, SJ.
**CORPS VALUES:** Through the LMU/Teach For America Partnership Program, a Talented, Energetic and Committed Group Helps to Bridge the Educational Gap

As an undergraduate at the University of Arizona, Chad Soleo planned to apply to law school. But before doing so, he decided he would spend two years gaining valuable experience as an educator at an under-resourced school through Teach For America (TFA).

As part of the LMU/TFA Partnership Program, Soleo taught English at Locke High in South Los Angeles while simultaneously taking courses at the School of Education toward his teaching credential and master's degree.

To say it wasn’t easy would be an understatement. Soleo was teaching a course for struggling readers, with students whose reading level was fourth-grade, at best. “Nothing can really prepare you for that experience,” he says. “It took a lot of patience and was very frustrating at first. But I hung in there, and I came to admire my colleagues and to enjoy the community. My experiences with the students kept me coming back.”

Indeed, Soleo never did apply to law school. Three years after completing the LMU/TFA Partnership Program, he remains at Locke, where, from his new position as assistant principal, he continues to address issues of educational inequality.

Nearly two dozen teachers at Locke are current Teach For America corps members or alumni of the program, most of them from LMU. The energy and dedication they have brought has made a tremendous impact in boosting the morale and academic performance at the historically low-performing school.

“They are life-savers,” says Dr. Frank William Wells, Locke’s principal. “With the pedagogy they bring and the ongoing professional development they receive, they’re helping to revitalize our school, taking us from one of the poorest-performing schools in the state to one that, at our current rate of growth, will be a California Distinguished School in three years. These Teach For America teachers are a breath of fresh air.”
At the age of 9, children in low-income communities are already three years behind their peers from higher-income communities in math and reading ability, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. These children are seven times less likely to graduate from college.

Teach For America seeks to close the educational gap through a national teacher corps of outstanding recent college graduates who commit two years to teaching in under-resourced public schools, and then become lifelong leaders in the effort to expand educational opportunity and eliminate inequities. A record 17,350 recent college graduates applied in 2005, and more than 3,500 corps members are currently teaching in more than 1,000 schools in 22 regions across the country. Teach For America alumni have started schools, become principals and district administrators, won accolades as teachers, and worked to expand educational opportunity while pursuing careers in law, public policy, medicine and business.

The program, established in 1989, puts corps members through a rigorous five-week summer training institute designed to impart teaching skills necessary to succeed in low-income communities. Corps members then teach — typically in schools with other corps members and Teach For America alumni — while studying for their credential and, in the case of program’s such as LMU’s, for their master’s degree. Teach For America provides additional support in the form of one-on-one meetings with program directors, program director observations, and regular meetings with other corps members and community liaisons.

In 2000, the LMU School of Education agreed to a partnership with Teach For America to provide graduate training and support for Teach For America teachers in the Los Angeles area, and over the years LMU has become the preferred university partner for Teach For America in the region, with the majority of Los Angeles corps members — including 126 of them in 2005 — enrolling at LMU. “It’s a great endorsement of our program,” says Dr. Shane Martin, dean of the LMU School of Education. “The feeling at Teach For America is that the LMU program provides the best value for their corps members, and trains them to be successful in the challenging world of inner-city schools.” In national surveys, the LMU/TFA Partnership Program has ranked among the top Teach For America partnerships nationwide in corps member satisfaction.

LMU’s strong commitment to the partnership is illustrated by the financial assistance provided to the Teach For America corps members it prepares: These individuals are guaranteed a 40 percent grant to subsidize the cost of tuition, and are also able to use an AmeriCorp voucher. All told, enrollees in the program can save approximately $10,000 per academic year.

“The LMU/TFA Partnership Program brings our school into some of the most under-resourced schools in the Los Angeles region, which helps us to fulfill our mission of promoting social justice and equity in education,” says Martin. “Nationally, Teach For America recruits highly motivated, qualified young people with a record of academic achievement and service, as well as that same commitment to equity and social justice, and this program brings some of those recruits to Los Angeles and our school.”

The success of the LMU/TFA Partnership Program in making a difference in inner-city schools is a key factor driving the current expansion of Teach For America in the Los Angeles region — from approximately 200 teachers in 2004-05 to nearly 300 this year, with plans to grow to approximately 500 by 2010. “The partnership that LMU provides in supporting our teachers throughout the credentialing process, and helping us navigate the ongoing support and professional development of teachers, is invaluable,” says Kriste Dragon, Teach For America’s vice president of regional operations. “Outside the realm of teacher support, because LMU is such an integral part of district reform and our missions of education equity are so similar, it all makes for a great partnership.”

Teach For America aims to expose future leaders in education and other realms to the challenges of teaching in low-income communities, and the program has had undeniable success in attracting many of the nation’s brightest recent college graduates. Among the 2004 corps members, the average college GPA was 3.5 and the average SAT score was 1310. Ninety-three percent held leadership roles on their college campus.

At the LMU/TFA Partnership Program, these new teachers hit the ground running. During the five-week summer institute in August, they begin teaching under the guidance of faculty advisers, and come September most are given their own classroom. “There’s a lot to learn in a short time,” says Eduardo Lara, the LMU/Teach For America Partnership Program’s director. “In addition to studying basic teaching practices and methodologies, they develop their lesson plans, management plans and long-term objectives. But what they lack in experience they make up for in energy, drive and passion.”
A high concentration of these corps members are placed in Local District 7 of the Los Angeles Unified School District, covering South Los Angeles. “The partnership has been a tremendous boost for the district,” says Dr. Sylvia Rousseau, who served as superintendent for Local District 7 until her recent retirement, and is now on the faculty at USC. The LMU/TFA Partnership Program teachers, joining novice teachers from other programs, are playing a major role in forming school-based learning communities and providing the support for one another that results in improved teaching and learning for students, Rousseau continues, adding: “Their presence is spreading hope fueled by the impressive results they are getting from students.”

“The Teach For America teachers are doing the things that great teachers do: setting high goals for their students and working relentlessly and purposefully to help them meet these goals, using student achievement data to inform their teaching,” says Brian Johnson, executive director of Teach For America-Los Angeles.

Nationally, more than 60 percent of Teach For America alumni remain in education following their two-year commitment, and 86 percent are engaged with low-income communities; in Los Angeles, 70 percent of the 800 alumni have remained in education – including 85 percent of the LMU/TFA Partnership Program graduates. Of the Teach For America alumni who no longer teach, many have become principals or are working toward systemic change in the areas of health, social services, law and public policy.

One reason the rate of LMU graduates staying in education beyond the two-year commitment has been significantly higher than the national rate is the level of support they receive at the School of Education, where an office headed by Lara is dedicated to helping them succeed. A university supervisor – typically a veteran teacher or LMU School of Education faculty member – provides on-site mentoring and consultation to a team of six LMU/TFA corps members. In addition to their coursework, the corps members attend a series of meetings designed to assist them in improving their teaching practice. “We’ve seen so many corps members change their plans after experiencing success in the classroom,” says Martin. “They might come here thinking they are going to do two years of teaching and then go to law school, but they fall in love with the profession and decide to stay.”

Kiersten Kansteiner, like Soleo, found that success in the classroom did not come easily – but that when it came, the rewards were tremendous. Kansteiner, a bilingual teacher at Markham Middle School in Los Angeles, graduated from the LMU/TFA Partnership Program last June and has continued to teach at the school. “It was very difficult at first,” she says. “But I had such amazing students – I think I ended up learning as much from them as they learned from me. And now, I can really see that my teaching is working. I can see that I’m making a difference in my students’ writing and speaking. I see the students getting excited about each other’s successes. And I see them feeling they have a safe space here – a lot of them stay during lunch or will come back to the classroom after school to do their homework together. It’s very gratifying.” At Markham, Kansteiner observes, the most beloved teachers tend to be the Teach For America alumni. “They have such drive and energy,” she says. “They’re the ones who are planning all of the dances and leading the clubs. It’s a great legacy for the rest of us to follow.”

The same is true at schools such as Locke. “These teachers are investing so much time in their students, both in and out of the classroom,” says Soleo. “They come in here and they don’t quit. They become leaders, and bring a level of energy to the school that really rubs off on the students.”

The LMU/TFA partnership is one way that the LMU School of Education lives up to its mission to promote equity in education for all students. The success of this program is improving public education throughout the Los Angeles region.
Poindexter at (310) 338-7314.

the reception. For more information on this event, call Chapter Co-counselor Dr. Candace

Joan Payden, president and CEO of Payden and Rygel, who is being honored for her ded-

Awards, including the prestigious Educator of the Year Award. This year’s recipient will be

in the field of education. The School of Education will also present its annual Recognition

bership exhibit the ideals of scholarship, high personal standards, and overall excellence

day. Family and friends are invited to attend both the ceremony and

APRIL 30

The Chi Lambda Chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, an international honor society in

KAPPA DELTA PI INITIATION AND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AWARDS EVENT

looking ahead

KAPPA DELTA PI INITIATION AND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AWARDS EVENT

APRIL 30 The Chi Lambda Chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, an international honor society in

education, will hold its annual initiation ceremony on April 30. Individuals elected to membership

honors

SHANE MARTIN | Elected president of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities Education Council.
PAUL AND ROSEMARIE SCHUMANN

Although Dr. Paul Schumann retired as director of secondary education 16 years ago, he continues to be revered and admired by former colleagues and students. Dr. Schumann recalls his 25-year tenure at LMU as one of great personal and professional growth. He credits this transformation to the university’s steadfast principle to value each individual in his or her entirety. “The university was unique, but especially the School of Education,” he says. Dr. Schumann’s gratitude has inspired him and his wife, RoseMarie, to make an estate gift through their trust establishing, after their lifetime, scholarships for School of Education programs.

A native of Pittsburgh, Dr. Schumann served in the army just after World War II, and then went into teaching. He came to California, teaching at Redlands Junior High and Whittier High School; in the new high school, he taught the first senior class as head of the English and Social Studies Department. His love was literature, and he eventually set himself apart as the only male figure in the West specializing in themes in modern literature written by women. Upon completing his doctorate in education, his next appointment was at the LMU School of Education as only the second director of student teaching over a 40-year period in the school’s history. Dr. Schumann feels his tenure was “rewarding,” “marvelous,” and one in which he experienced the remarkable growth of the department.

In retirement, Dr. Schumann reads voraciously and continues the volunteer work begun during his last years at LMU – accrediting trade and technical schools nationwide. To date, he has visited more than 125 schools. He also enjoys time with his wife, two grown children, and three grandchildren.

When asked about his philanthropic vision, Dr. Schumann can only repeat his gracious intent: “I want to give back to the School of Education all it gave me – the opportunity to evolve as a human being. My gratitude is overwhelming, and I hope my gift will stimulate others to consider what they might do.”

NEIL AND ELISA SHAMBAUGH

Neil Shambaugh, BBA ’50, credits his enduring loyalty to LMU to “a remarkable man and human being” – Rev. John Berkeley Ferguson, SJ. Little did Neil know when he arrived as a “bewildered” student at Loyola University in 1946 that this brilliant logic professor, who embodied the Jesuit philosophy, would play an instrumental role as a mentor and friend through the course of their lives. Fr. Ferguson presided over Neil and Elisa Shambaugh’s wedding in 1955 and remained close to the family until his death. To honor their dear friend, the Shambaughs have provided funds through a charitable gift annuity to the School of Education.

Neil came to California from his native Buffalo, NY, where he graduated from South Park High School. After graduation from Loyola, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and went to Officers’ Candidate School. At the completion of his military duty, he continued his education at Cal State Los Angeles, earning a teaching credential and master’s degree. Later, he obtained his administrative credential at USC and enrolled in the doctoral program. His first teaching job was at Huntington Park High School where, Neil says, the dedicated faculty and responsive students inspired him. “I couldn’t wait to get to school every day. It was the happiest time of my life.” In the 10 years at that school, Neil served as a teacher, Social Studies Department chairman, freshman counselor, and assistant in the vice principal’s office.

In all, Neil taught in the Los Angeles Unified School District for 32 years. He coordinated a national accelerated secondary teacher training program at USC. Reminiscent of today’s Teach For America program, its focus was “hard to staff” schools.

“Without the firm foundation of a solid education, our society is lost,” Neil says. “From my own experience, I know how one person can transform a young life in so many positive ways. Elisa and I hope this gift to the School of Education helps others to pursue an educational vocation. The well being of our youth and future generations depend on it.”

Neil and Elisa retired to Reno, NV in 1991. Elisa is, herself, a retired veteran teacher and reading specialist. They are very proud so say that among their four children, three are educators and two granddaughters are studying to be teachers.
JILL BICKETT AND ROBERT HUBBELL

Elementary-school sweethearts, Jill Bickett, BA ’78, MA ’81, and Robert Hubbell, BA ’78, JD ’81, attribute their life-long love of learning to the education they received from the Sisters of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary (RSHM) in North Hollywood at St. Patrick’s Grammar School, where they met in first grade. After graduating from Catholic high schools, both attended LMU. “The mission of social justice, and the importance of the intersection of the mind and heart at the core of both the RSHM and Jesuit philosophies, became part of who we are today, and is the major reason for our philanthropy to the Catholic institutions that have graced our lives,” says Jill.

After graduation from LMU in 1978, Robert went on to Loyola Law School, and Jill began a master’s degree program in English at LMU. As an attorney, Robert works in social justice areas of the law, and participates in a significant amount of pro bono work. Jill became a teacher and spent 23 years at Marymount High in Los Angeles, where she guided many young women through the turbulent years of adolescence. “I hope I was the inspirational mentor that the RSHM sisters and Jesuits were for Robert and me,” she says.

Robert and Jill agree that one distinctive aspect of an LMU education is the chance to belong to a community that cares and expects its members to use their gifts for the betterment of the world. Currently enrolled in LMU’s Doctorate in Educational Leadership for Social Justice Program, Jill says, “The program is rigorous, but challenging in the best kind of way. At the root of it is the philosophy that your education must be used for others. I am proud to be part of that.”

Jill and Robert want their legacy of dedication to Catholic education to continue. “One way to repay our gratitude is to give back and instill this philosophy in our three daughters,” says Robert. To this end, Jill and Robert have designated LMU’s School of Education as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy to ensure that generations of children may discover what it means to be “men and women for others.”

MAUREEN KINDEL

From the moment she saw the lovely tree-lined hallways of University Hall six years ago, Maureen Kindel knew that LMU held something special for her. Today, inspired by President Lawton’s vision to serve the Los Angeles community, she has settled comfortably as a Regent of the University (in her second term) and, most recently, as chair of the School of Education Campaign Board.

The social justice focus of the university and its celebration of being located in this great city resonate deeply for Maureen. Her own social conscience was awakened long ago by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s words and his leadership in the civil rights movement. Orphaned at age 11 and raised in a convent by Sisters, her sense of values also were formed at an early age.

A civic leader in Los Angeles for more than 30 years, Maureen was elected the first woman president of the Los Angeles Board of Public Works in 1980, overseeing 5,000 employees and administering an annual operating budget of $500 million. In 1987, she co-founded Rose & Kindel, the first woman-owned lobbying firm in California, with Cristina Rose. Considered one of California’s leading public affairs companies, the firm represents numerous women- and minority-owned businesses. Also active in international affairs for three decades, Maureen undertakes projects to empower those abroad, especially women, through voting and education. She is gratified to see the correlation between her work overseas and the changing cultural climate of Los Angeles.

Maureen felt a calling to education and is working toward a Master of Arts in Education through the School of Education. She is interested in the intersection between public education, public policy and politics, and within this, the effect on outcomes for minority children in Los Angeles. “The heart of LMU is all about building bridges to the community and recognizing that an excellent education is the right of every person, rich or poor. This is why I am here,” she says.

A fun-loving mother and grandmother, Maureen has generously made a personal pledge over the next five years. Her gift will provide funds for the dean to use at his discretion for new initiatives.
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WILLIAM H. HANNON FOUNDATION
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The School of Education is indebted to the William H. Hannon Foundation for its kind gift to provide scholarships for Catholic school educators.

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST FOUNDATIONS
$150,000

The LMU School of Education is proud to announce funding of $150,000 from the William Randolph Hearst Foundations. This generous grant will support the LMU/Teach For America program (see page 4) through the creation of scholarships for teachers in the program attaining their special education credential in conjunction with a master's degree.

CHAD R. DREIER
$200,000

The School of Education is deeply grateful to Chad Dreier ’69, chairman of LMU’s Board of Trustees, alumnus, friend, and benefactor. Mr. Dreier recently established a scholarship fund to provide assistance to an educator at the School of Education. This gift is part of a $1 million commitment to the University that will provide scholarships to several programs on campus.

DAN MURPHY FOUNDATION
$225,000

As a long-time champion of the Los Angeles Archdiocese and strong advocate of Catholic education, the Dan Murphy Foundation has once again come forward to support the LMU PLACE (Partners in Los Angeles Catholic Education) Corps with much-needed support of $225,000. This gift provides resources to assist in the leasing, renovation, and repair of convents needed to house the students so they can live together in a spiritual community of prayer for the two-year duration of the program.

STUART FOUNDATION
$300,000

In response to teacher shortages and lack of appropriate preparation in the fields of math and science instruction, the LMU School of Education is piloting a specialized professional development program for math and science teachers in charter schools that will become a national model. This pilot, which will be implemented in a Lennox high school, is made possible by a generous grant of $300,000 from the Stuart Foundation. The program will have three key components: research-based pedagogy for math and science, focusing on backwards instructional design and differentiated instruction; academic content support; and collaboration with both peers and a coach.

J.L. FORTSON, EDD ’79, is in her 14th year as the director of student teaching at the Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education and Psychology. Her research and writing interests include the pedagogy of instruction, urban curriculum development, multicultural education, and educational legislation and litigation. As an educational leader, she specializes in the creation of innovative programs to meet the needs of all students and their institutions. She has served as a consultant to the Bush and Clinton administrations on urban schools, and was appointed to the Teacher Assistance Corps at the U.S. Department of Education in 2003. She continues to work both at the national and state levels on matters concerning accreditation of teacher preparation programs.

MAROLYN FREEDMAN, MA ’94 AND ’95, is the coordinator of pupil services for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. She has been an educator for more than 25 years – as a teacher, counselor and school psychologist – and holds master’s degrees from LMU in both counseling and educational psychology. She is also a part-time lecturer at LMU and a school safety consultant. As coordinator of pupil services, she leads her school district’s crisis response team. She also serves as the school district’s liaison to the police department and mental health agencies. This year she was part of her district’s team to develop a new school for students with a history of school failure and incarceration in the juvenile justice system.

ESTHER HUGO, MA ’94, coordinates the Outreach Program for Santa Monica College. She is a College Board Trustee and chair of the College Board’s Guidance and Admission Assembly Council, and is past-president of the Western Association for College Admission Counselors. She also teaches in the graduate Counseling Department at LMU and for the UCLA College Counseling Certificate Program. In 2004, she earned a doctorate in educational leadership from UCLA. This year, she is being honored with the College Board’s Western Region Joe Allen Exemplar Award, in recognition of her outstanding programs at Santa Monica College and her service on behalf of counselors throughout California. She is also the owner of “Esther’s Cheesecakes: A taste of heaven before you get there.”

FRANCA DELL’OLIO, BA ’90, MED ’95, MA ’96, has returned to LMU to serve as visiting assistant professor and director of the School of Education’s Administrative Services programs. At LMU, she earned BA degrees in Spanish and history, as well as her single subject teaching credentials in these fields; her MA in bilingual cross-cultural education; and an administrative services credential. She is working toward her doctorate in educational leadership, administration and policy at Pepperdine University. From 1992 until rejoining LMU in 2005, she served the Culver City Unified School District as a high school Spanish and social studies teacher; coordinator of programs such as Advanced Placement, Site Improvement, and English Language Development; assistant principal of attendance, student activities and discipline; assistant principal of guidance, instruction and curriculum; and ultimately as principal of Culver City High School.

DONNA ANDERSON, MA ’99, has worked for more than 30 years as a fourth-grade teacher at Westchester Lutheran School (WLS), and has been recognized for her dedication by twice being named WLS teacher of the year and being honored at the LAX Chamber of Commerce Teacher “Eddy” Awards Banquet. An accomplished pianist, she became the full-time organist at Westchester Lutheran in 1993. In addition to playing for church service, she accompanies the Cathedral Choir, elementary school and Sunday school programs. Her love of children goes beyond those she has served in the classroom; inspired by her mother’s example, she has long supported children through Christian Children’s Fund.

MELISSA WYEYK, BA ’03, MA ’05, graduated from LMU with her liberal studies bachelor’s degree and then continued her education through PLACE Corps. In the summer of 2003, she began her coursework for her MA in child and adolescent literacy, as well as her final credential. Through PLACE Corps, she taught fifth grade full-time at St. Vincent School in Downtown Los Angeles. Since graduating in 2005, she has remained an active alumna, assisting with PLACE retreats and serving as a support person for Maria Regina, a PLACE Corps community, while continuing to teach fifth grade at St. Vincent School.
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