

CEEP unveils Excellence Gap report at National Press Club

The Center for Evaluation & Education Policy (CEEP) at the Indiana University School of Education unveiled results from “Mind the (Other) Gap!: the Growing Excellence Gap in K-12 Education,” a comprehensive study of student achievement test results from every state released during a news conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. on Feb. 4. The report finds that achievement gaps between high ability students from different economic, racial, and linguistic backgrounds in the U.S. are large and growing, and some of the top achieving groups aren’t performing as well as in the past. The authors indicate at the current pace of achievement, even improving gaps could take more than a century to close.



Plucker speaks at National Press Club

“Our entire national conversation about education has focused on struggling students” said Jonathan Plucker, the report’s lead author and the CEEP director. “Although helping these students is important, clearly we can also focus some energy on higher levels of achievement.”

The full report, with state-by-state breakdowns, is available at <http://ceep.indiana.edu/mindthegap>. Comments by Plucker and Burroughs at the National Press Club event can be viewed on the IU School of Education YouTube page, <http://www.youtube.com/iuschoolofeducation>.

Pike latest SOE faculty member to win prestigious AIR honor

The Association for Institutional Research (AIR) has selected Associate Professor of Higher Education and Executive Director of Information Management and Institutional Research at IUPUI Gary Pike to receive the 2010 Sidney Suslow Award. The AIR will present the honor at its annual meeting in Chicago this June.

The AIR award committee selects Suslow honorees "for their cumulative and ongoing scholarly efforts to keep institutional research on the cutting edge of research practice, policies

and procedures in higher education," according to the organization's Web site. Pike is a noted scholar on assessment of student learning and institutional effectiveness, educational measurement, and research methods and has written 46 refereed articles in scholarly journals and a dozen book chapters. He’s delivered more than 100 presentations and workshops across the U.S. and Canada.

Pike is the fourth Sidney Suslow Award recipient with ties to the IU School of Education. AIR awarded the honor to Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Don Hossler last year. In 2003, AIR recognized Trudy W. Banta, professor of higher education and senior advisor to the chancellor for academic planning and evaluation at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. In 2002, the Sidney Suslow Award went to George Kuh, chancellor's professor of higher education and director of the Center for Postsecondary Research.

First Lugar award goes to alumna

U.S. Senator Richard Lugar and Indiana State Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Tony Bennett presented the first “Lugar Education Patriot” award on March 13 to Indiana University alumna Dr. Peggy Hinckley. Hinckley is superintendent of the Metropolitan School District of Warren Township in Indianapolis, and she is a 1974 graduate of IU Bloomington who earned her bachelor’s degree in elementary education.



Hinckley with Senator Lugar

The honor is for “a school, school corporation, or education leader who has demonstrated leadership and initiative in improving the academic achievement and career preparation of Indiana students.”

Warren Township, an urban district which includes nearly 12,000 students with a poverty rate of more than 85 percent at some schools, made “Adequate Yearly Progress” (annual academic performance targets) in every school in 2007.

“I had heard Senator Lugar mention that he was going to create this award, but never in my wildest imagination would I ever dream that I would be the first recipient,” Hinckley said. “So I am really humbled because there are many superintendents doing good work in Indiana, and the fact they would single out Warren Township is a great honor.”

IUPUI hosting Noyce conference for 2nd year

For the second consecutive year, current and recent Noyce Scholarship recipients and higher education faculty came to Indianapolis for the Midwest Noyce Conference, April 8 and 9 at the University Place Conference Center and Hotel on the IUPUI campus. The conference was hosted by the Urban Center for the Advancement of STEM Education (UCASE), a joint project of the IU School of Education at IUPUI and the School of Science at IUPUI.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) funds the conference for invited Noyce recipients and Noyce program principal investigators from 15 states in the Midwest region. Educators and researchers from across the country discussed teaching issues with the participants. Dr. Penny Noyce, daughter of the scholarship namesake Robert Noyce (a founder of Intel and co-inventor of the microchip), spoke about her father's vision for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education.

Noyce participants commit to teaching in a high poverty, low-performing school upon earning their degree. The Midwest Conference is focused on supporting their work, with the theme of "Preparing Excellent STEM Teachers for Urban and Rural High-Needs Schools." Sessions featured an array of topics ranging from legal issues to learning assessment. "It will help round out the instruction," said Kim Nguyen, operations director for the UCASE. Nguyen said the conference is also intended to create networking opportunities for the teachers. "Retention in the teaching profession in high-needs schools is so much of a concern," Nguyen said. "So this is to address that concern."

Alumna wrapping up Fulbright exchange in England

An alumna of the IU School of Education wrapped up nearly four months as a teacher in England as part of the Fulbright Exchange Teacher program. Sara Abu-Rumman, who earned an elementary education degree in 2000, finished her teaching duties at St. Aubyn's School in Woodford Green, Essex, a suburb of London, on April 2. Abu-Rumman taught there after a teacher from St. Aubyn's came to teach in her third grade classroom at Chicago's Francis W. Parker School.

"I had always wanted to teach abroad," Abu-Rumman said, noting that she focused on international education when she returned to IU for her master's study. "The kids love my accent and really love knowing all about 'my school in America,'" she said. Abu-Rumman has connected with her Chicago classroom through internet video and her U.S. and British students have developed pen pal relationships.

St. Aubyn's is steeped in British formality—students wear

uniforms, line up for a morning pep talk from the head of the school and face punishment for talking in the several assemblies held each week. Abu-Rumman said pressure to perform on standardized tests seems to have had effects on students' love of learning in the British classroom. She's enjoyed discussing different teaching methods with her St. Aubyn's colleagues.



Abu-Rumman working with St. Aubyn's student

"I have had many discussions on reading and choosing books, how authors get their writing ideas, and the importance of real-world mathematics," she said. "I have used the integrated Indiana University approach to teaching and learning as much as I can here."

Faculty honored for teaching, mentoring

At IUPUI, two faculty have earned the Trustees' Teaching Award. A panel of peers selected Assistant Professor of Teacher Education Elizabeth Wood and Clinical Assistant Professor of multicultural and educational foundations JaDora Sables for the honor. The award honors faculty with a sustained record of teaching excellence who have a positive influence on learning.

Professor of instructional systems technology James Pershing is the winner of the Faculty Mentor award from the Graduate and Professional Student Organization at IU Bloomington and the IU Graduate School. An annual award goes to a faculty member who has demonstrated outstanding commitment and mentorship to graduate students.

Wells award again goes to ELPS student

For the second straight year, a student from the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (ELPS) department in the IU School of Education has won the prestigious Wells Graduate Fellowship. Oren Pizmony-Levy, a double major in Education Policy Studies and Sociology, has received the fellowship for 2010-2011.

The award carries the name of Herman B. Wells, IU president for 25 years then University Chancellor until his death in 2000. In his estate, Wells provided for an annual graduate fellowship to be awarded to students who demonstrate the qualities for which Chancellor Wells was renowned: leadership, academic excellence, character, social consciousness, and generosity of spirit.

Payal Shah, a comparative education PhD candidate in policy studies, was the recipient for the 2009-2010 school year.

