

June 2022 Delta College Fantastic Faculty

Delta Fantastic Faculty: Mural Fortifies 'Sanford Strong' Community Efforts



Associate Professor of Art Andrew Reider was honored at the June 21, 2022 "Sanford Rising 2.0" event which commemorated the rebuilding of Sanford, Michigan, two years after the tragic damn flood. Sanford leaders believed public art was an essential element in their recovery and invited Andrew to contribute the mural "Shine on Sanford," which Andrew says, "honors the spirit of Sanford, its heritage, and its resilience as a community." The mural was featured as part of the celebration, and Andrew's work was honored with a commemorative plaque and a "Shine on Sanford,

Andrew Rieder Scholarship" in the amount of \$1000 to be presented to a Meridian Early College High School Student to attend Delta College in the fall of 2023. Andrew's mural painting process was recorded on Dateline Delta in Season 25 Episode 2502 (<https://video.deltabroadcasting.org/video/dateline-delta-7fstae/>) and Season 25 Episode 2503 (<https://video.deltabroadcasting.org/video/dateline-delta-kmzeek/>).

Delta Fantastic Faculty: Promising New LGBT+ Leadership



Associate Professor of Political Science Liz Ullrich will join **Professor of English Stuart Barbier** as the new co-chair of Delta College Prism Alliance. Founded by Stuart Barbier in 2006, Prism Alliance is a collective of faculty and staff who work to improve conditions for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and other (LGBT+) gender non-conforming students and employees on campus while at the same time working to educate our community on related issues. Full detail of the mission and history of Prism Alliance can be found here:

www.delta.edu/employees/prism/index.html. Already in her role as co-chair, Liz has worked proactively with Delta College leadership on such issues as inclusive restroom signage, equitable and inclusive healthcare, improving intersectional communication, and providing support to our college's new directions with Diversity Equity Belonging and Inclusion building. In addition to this leadership responsibility with Prism Alliance, Liz will continue her commitment as co-coordinator of the Delta College Safe Space program with new co-coordinator Karry Kiste-Tone, Associate Dean of Retention. Established at Delta College in 2009, Safe Space is a nationally recognized program in public schools, colleges, and universities, providing an avenue through which people can actively show their support of LGBT+ students within their community.

Delta Fantastic Faculty: Master Test-Maker Shares Skills with Other Educators



Professor of Psychology David "Dr. Dave" Baskind recently offered the webinar "Writing Effective Test Questions" through Hawkes Learning. In the session, Dr. Dave discussed issues to consider when writing test questions, the pros and cons of multiple-choice, essay, and true/false questions, how to write effective questions, as well as some controversies to consider with test items. The session was presented live with an interactive Q&A session. Dr. Dave is well-respected at Delta College as one of the leaders in effective test-making, now sharing his expertise in a globally accessible forum.

Delta Fantastic Faculty: Leader in CHARGE Syndrome and PCP



Professor of Psychology Nancy Hartshorne is one of the foremost leading international experts on [CHARGE syndrome](#) as it relates to education and has been invited to present at two conferences in June, one in Oberwesel, Germany, and one in Rome, on the benefits of person-centered planning (PCP) for individuals with CHARGE syndrome.

CHARGE syndrome is an extremely complex multisensory genetic syndrome that presents itself uniquely in each individual. CHARGE is an abbreviation for several common characteristics of the syndrome: coloboma, heart defects, atresia choanae (also known as choanal atresia), growth retardation, genital abnormalities, and ear abnormalities. Nancy and her husband know the complexities of this syndrome firsthand as their son, Jacob, was born with CHARGE. Now 33 years old, Jacob is deaf, visually impaired (called “deafblind”), has balance issues, no sense of smell (which affects taste), and many other syndrome-related issues.

Nancy and her husband, a recently retired CMU psychology professor, are at the forefront of research about CHARGE syndrome. Nancy’s doctoral research was on CHARGE, and they have both traveled the world consulting with parents and presenting information to professionals and families to support individuals with this syndrome. Nancy’s husband literally “wrote the book” on CHARGE, being one of the editors of the CHARGE Syndrome book that has had two editions, with Nancy contributing several chapters in each.

Asked if she would share more about her personal experience, Nancy readily offered that Jake lives next door to them in his own home with 24/7 care, for which CMU students are employed as carers. “His education and life is my true work legacy,” she expressed, “as I have fought very hard for him to be fully included and in the community, and coordinating his home and care is like a second job for me.”

“Jake is a joy to me and has given me so much. He’s a lovely person with an infectious grin. He is also the strongest person I have ever met. He has been a teacher to so many. Students studying to be special education teachers have often told me that Jake was ‘their best teacher at CMU,’ after working for him. So much of what they’ve learned working for him can be applied to many situations, including inclusive practices, behavior as communication, and the value and consistency of routine.”

Nancy explained that Jake is on the lower end of CHARGE in terms of developmental ability. “I know people with graduate degrees with the syndrome, so it runs on a huge spectrum.” The person-centered planning Nancy teaches is something she has been doing for individuals with disabilities for many years. “It’s a backward-chaining, brainstorming planning process to help someone with a disability and those who love and support them find concrete ways to plan and have the life they want. It began as a deinstitutionalization process but now exists to help individuals lead a life that has all of the choices and opportunities afforded to people without disabilities. In essence, it’s focused on shifting the power over people’s lives from social service agencies and other funding providers to the people themselves.”

Nancy has facilitated person-centered plans for people all over Michigan and the U.S. She has trained a group of people at Perkins School for the Blind in Boston, and they have instituted a practice of conducting a well-facilitated plan for each of their residential blind and deafblind students at the ages of 14, 17, and 20, to ensure smooth transitions into quality adult lives upon graduation. She has presented and trained on person-centered planning all over the world, which she will continue this summer.

Delta Fantastic Faculty: Teaching Reading Across the Disciplines to Increase Student Success



Associate Professor of English Angela Trabalka [pictured] is teaching EDU 395 Introductory Theory and Methods of Reading Across Disciplines to eight Delta College colleagues from a variety of disciplines: **Professor of English Stuart Barbier, Associate Professor of Nursing Meredith Bladecki, Associate Professor of Biology Carrie Burdzinski, Professor of English Ray Lacina, Instructor of Sociology Christina Miller-Bellor, Assistant Professor of Economics Paul Sander, Instructor of Nursing Molly Stapish, and Associate Professor of Nursing Wendy Szafranski.**

Angela explained the value of this course, “EDU 395 exists to provide professional development for faculty to increase support for student reading within their courses. Since reading expectations vary greatly from course to course, discipline to discipline, what works in some classes might not work in others. It’s easy to see why students might feel overwhelmed by such diverse expectations.” The course is being offered in a condensed four-week option, so the faculty enrolled hit the ground running and the pace is demanding, but Angela commends their work. “Faculty are having great discussions about student reading expectations and needs. As a result of the course, each will develop a set of resources aimed at helping improve reading – and therefore, overall – success in their courses. This includes a prior knowledge resource, disciplinary literacy resource, vocabulary resource, textbook resource, and sample annotations.”

There are two options for the course, one of which involves research. For this, Angela explains, “Colleagues will compile annotated biographies on a subject relevant to the reading within their courses. Reading skills are among the most essential for student success in college. Since our developmental education program has been so dramatically reduced, it will be especially important for all faculty to have explicit plans in place to help those students who struggle most, and reading support is a critical element of that work.”

Delta Fantastic Faculty: Spoken Word Inspired Music Raises Awareness for Mental Health



In 2021, a Florida musician by the name of brotherwell reached out to a number of poets across the U.S. with the goal of creating a collaborative album of music and poetry themed around mental health. **Assistant Professor of English Donny Winter** and former **Adjunct English Instructor Ameer Schmidt** were two of eleven poets who received invitations. Jared Morningstar and Heather Kanicki, both former Delta College English Instructors, were also contributors to this project. Throughout 2021, they wrote and recorded spoken performances of their poetry. Then, brotherwell composed alternative-style songs inspired by their pieces. The album has officially been released across different streaming/music platforms. For anyone who chooses to buy the album, all proceeds will be donated to [Tiny Changes](https://www.tinychanges.org/), a mental health non-profit organization. The full album can be accessed via brotherwell’s YouTube channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMtBxlpHYVLgSaJpYIPuFUQ>

Delta Fantastic Faculty: I'll Be There for You! Beyond the Classroom



Associate Professor of Management Lori Ziolkowski believes, “The BEST thing about teaching is the privilege of walking beside our amazing students as they accomplish their educational goals. Getting to know who they are as humans makes this job fun and rewarding. When COVID 19 moved all our learning to online classes, making personal connections became more challenging.” While Lori encourages students to call or text, most don’t. One student who did choose to connect was Haley Coleman, who is now a proud 2022 Delta College graduate. Haley had been in several of Lori’s online classes, and they forged a relationship, despite never meeting in person.

Initially, Haley would call Lori about clarification for assignments, then she would share her frustration and struggles in other classes, and eventually, she disclosed that she was recovering from surgery from a brain tumor that sidelined her when she was just seventeen. Lori adds, “I shared that I am also a cancer survivor and we found we had some things in common. Eventually, Haley would call and tell me about a great test score in accounting or how her interview went at Dow, and I would text her words of encouragement or just check to see how she was doing. We became ‘phone friends’ and it was always a pleasure to hear from her.” On April 13 of this year, Lori received this email from Haley’s mom.

Hi Lori,

My name is Melissa Coleman, I am Haley's mom. Are you currently Haley's teacher this term? She talks about Professor Lori, so I am assuming it is you. 😊

Anyway, we are planning a SURPRISE graduation party for Haley on April 24. She has been through a lot in her life since she was diagnosed with a brain tumor at 17. She spent 45 days in the hospital at UofM and had to learn how to walk and talk and do lots of other things after she got out of the hospital. One of the doctors mentioned she might not graduate so for her to graduate high school and then college is such a blessing. Haley has really enjoyed having you as a teacher and mentioned the two of you have never met in person. I would like to invite you to her party if you are available. Please let me know and I can send you the information.

Lori remarks, “What an honor to be invited to celebrate with Haley and her family! Of course, I went. It was a small venue, and Melissa recognized me when I walked in, likely because I was the only person she didn’t know. Haley was engaged in conversation across the room and eventually made her way over to us. She thought I was one of her mom’s work friends. Her mom introduced me, and the shocked look on her face was priceless. We hugged and chatted, and I met the rest of her family. I gave her a Delta College blanket as a gift, and we snapped a fun picture. The theme of her party was based on her favorite TV show *Friends*. How appropriate! I will always cherish this experience and the opportunity to get to know Haley – she’s a rock star! – and all our amazing students.”

Lori shares, with permission, Haley’s recovery testimony, which includes footage of her learning to walk and talk after surgery: <https://www.facebook.com/rfce.org/videos/1076680649038700/> [Have a box of tissues nearby.]